

Mini-Dissertation

Student name: Jacques Hendrik Linde
Student number: 21767221
Address: Drakensberg Boys Choir School
Winterton, 3340
Private Bag X20
Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa

Cell phone: +27 73 554 7477
E-mail address: u21767221@tuks.co.za
Supervisor: Dr Michael Joseph Barrett-Berg

**Personal value and continuous participation in choral singing
at an independent South African male high school**

by

Jacques Hendrik Linde

**A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the MMus (Performing Arts) degree**

**School of the Arts: Music
Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria**

Supervisor:

Dr Michael Joseph Barrett-Berg

Date: August 2023

Keywords to the study

Choral singing

Personal value

Choir participation

Male adolescents

Independent South African high school

List of tables

Table 1: Participants of the semi-structured interviews	27
Table 2: Participants of the focus group interviews	28
Table 3: Themes and sub-themes pertaining to the value attributed to choral participation	36
Table 4: Major and minor themes pertaining to the value of choral singing at Kearsney College	74

Table of contents

Keywords to the study	2
List of tables	3
Table of contents	4
Chapter 1: Introduction	6
1.1 Background to the study	6
1.2 Problem statement/research questions	8
1.3 Aim of the study	9
1.4 Research methodology	9
1.5 Trustworthiness of the research	10
1.6 Ethical considerations	11
1.7 Value of the study	12
1.8 Chapter headings	12
Chapter 2: Literature review	14
2.1 Self-determination theory and expectancy-value theory	14
2.2 The value of choral singing	15
2.3 Developing social identity and self-concept through choral participation	18
2.4 Hindrances for male adolescents to continuously participate in choral singing	21
2.5 Summary	24
Chapter 3: Research methodology	25
3.1 Research paradigm	25
3.2 Research approach	25
3.3 Research design	25
3.4 Sampling strategy	26
3.5 Data collection	29
3.6 Data analysis	32
3.7 Trustworthiness of the research	34
3.8 Summary	35
Chapter 4: Findings	36
4.1 Personal value	37
4.1.1 Passion and enjoyment	37
4.1.2 Belonging and support	43
4.1.3 Self-sufficiency	46
4.1.4 Shared ambition	49
4.1.5 Personal growth	52
4.1.6 Pride and legacy	54
4.2 Social value	55
4.2.1 Social experiences	55
4.2.2 Brotherhood	57
4.2.3 Teamwork	58
4.2.4 Cultural experiences	59
4.3 Musical value	61
4.3.1 Musical benefits	61
4.3.2 Enjoyment of music-making	63
4.3.3 Role model	66
4.3.4 Performances	67
4.4 Hindrances	68
4.4.1 Time and pressure	68
4.4.2 Gendered stereotypes	70
4.4.3 Covid-19	71
4.5 Summary	72
Chapter 5: Discussion	73
5.1 Major themes related to personal value	75
5.1.1 Passion and enjoyment	75
5.1.2 Belonging and support	77

5.1.3 Self-sufficiency	78
5.1.4 Shared ambition	80
5.1.5 Minor themes related to personal value	82
5.1.5.1 Personal growth	82
5.1.5.2 Pride and legacy	83
5.2 Major themes related to social value	83
5.2.1 Social experiences	83
5.2.2 Brotherhood	84
5.2.3 Minor themes related to social value	85
5.2.3.1 Teamwork	85
5.2.3.2 Cultural experiences	86
5.3 Major themes related to musical value	87
5.3.1 Musical benefits	87
5.3.2 Enjoyment of music-making	88
5.3.3 Minor themes related to musical value	91
5.3.3.1 Role model	91
5.3.3.2 Performances	92
5.4 Hindrances	93
5.4.1 Major themes related to the hindrances of male adolescent choral participation	93
5.4.1.1 Time and pressure	93
5.4.1.2 Gendered stereotypes	94
5.4.2 Minor themes related to the hindrances of male adolescent choral participation	96
5.4.2.1 Covid-19	96
5.5 Summary	96
Chapter 6: Recommendations and conclusion	98
6.1 Answering the research questions	98
6.2 Limitations of the study	100
6.3 Recommendations for future research	101
6.4 Conclusion	102
Sources	103
Appendix A: Semi-structured interview schedule	115
Appendix B: Focus group interview schedule	116
Appendix C: Observation schedule for choral rehearsals	117
Appendix D: Observation schedule for choral performances	118
Appendix E: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for participants of individual interviews	119
Appendix F: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for participants of focus group interviews	122
Appendix G: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for parents/guardians of participants under the age of 18	125
Appendix H: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for the Principal of Kearsney College	128

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will outline the background to the study, problem statement, aim, research methodology, trustworthiness of the research, ethical considerations, value of the study, and propose chapter headings for the dissertation.

1.1 Background to the study

“I thought choir singing was just for girls” is a common response whenever I admit that I have sung in choirs for practically my entire life. Attending one of the most prestigious boys’ choirs in South Africa largely shielded me from this gender stereotype, something I could however not escape when I attended my mixed secondary school for grades 10 through 12. Now, sitting in my office at Michaelhouse, I wonder if the students in my choir at this independent high school¹ for boys in KwaZulu-Natal experience being “shielded”, as I was in my boys’ school, or if they are exposed and placed in a gender stereotype as I was during my adolescent years.

Being a chorister at a boys’ choir school from the age of 11-15, was one of the happiest experiences of my life, and contributed enormously towards my personal well-being. I built lifelong friendships, travelled the world, and strengthened my spiritual connection to God, and the common factor in all of these personal growth activities was choral singing. I believe that, through music, I received a holistic education, not only by improving my skill as a singer and a musician, but also by improving my self-discipline, integrity, and understanding of the importance of teamwork. For the repertoire that we sang at the boys’ choir, we were required to study a variety of languages and musical styles, and we had to know the history and context of each piece that we studied, all of which added to how I was shaped into becoming the conductor I am today. Some of the best education I received happened because of my privilege to travel throughout South Africa and abroad. I am a strong advocate for education through travel. After all, I will never forget where the Eiffel Tower is, having seen it at the Champ de Mars and viewing the rest of Paris from the 276m observation deck. During my teenage years, the most vulnerable years in any young person’s life, music comforted me, provided safety, and contributed to my

¹ Independent high schools, as opposed to government high schools, are privately governed schools in South Africa.

emotional health. I was the happiest when I was singing with my friends. Why would I ever want to give that up?

Research shows that, around the world, there has been a decrease in male participation in choirs (Freer, 2007, 2010, 2015; Hawkins, 2015; Koza, 1993; McBride & Palkki, 2020; Nannen, 2017; Register, 2019; Warzecha, 2013; Watson *et al.*, 2017). Singing is often regarded as a feminine activity, which explains the unwillingness of many boys to participate in choral activities during their secondary schooling (Hawkins, 2015; Register, 2019). When an activity is considered feminine, it links to various non-masculine qualities, such as tenderness and delicateness, making the activity unappealing for boys who don't want to be considered effeminate. Whilst investigating a number of high school choirs in New Zealand, Watson *et al.* (2017) found that boy choristers feel vulnerable because of the gender-stereotype threat associated with choral singing, which becomes one of the factors that contributes to the 'missing male' phenomenon in choral singing activities (Brand, 2019; Freer, 2010). Boys who are victims of the gender-stereotype threat become easy targets for bullying and name-calling (Nannen, 2017).

On the other hand, choral participation provides rewarding experiences and benefits for many choristers, regardless of their gender. Seen from an international perspective, a substantial amount of research has been conducted to advocate for the positive outcomes associated with choral participation (Acquah, 2016; Bartolome, 2013; Bullack *et al.*, 2018; Clift *et al.*, 2010; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Jacob *et al.*, 2009; Lee *et al.*, 2016; Lucas, 2011; Major & Dakon, 2016; Sanal & Gorsev, 2014). Choral singing provides choristers with a variety of benefits that include social, musical, and personal advantages (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Major & Dakon, 2016), thus allowing singers to foster positive emotions within an environment that is stress-free, comforting, and satisfactory (Bullack *et al.*, 2018; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016). Within South Africa, choral music is deeply rooted within its culture and population and it is greatly valued within community organisations and institutions, such as schools, universities, churches, and community choirs (Barrett, 2007; Bartolome, 2018). South African choristers use choral singing as an unconscious tool to share their emotions, which develops or articulates their personal identities (Hammond, 2004). Although in recent years there has been a focus on the value of choral singing in South Africa, a thorough investigation into the existing literature shows there are no studies specifically related to male choirs. This study can

add to the discourse and possibly provide new insights into the value of singing as understood from the perspective of the male adolescent. In a country that is rich in choral music, this study could provide insight which can help recruit and retain boys in choirs both in South Africa and abroad.

From having been a chorister in a boys' choir who experienced the advantages linked to participation, to being a music educator at an independent male high school, I am a researcher who is positioned favourably to explore the personal values and reasons for boys' continuous participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school. This study explores the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of boys wanting to participate in choir at Kearsney College, an independent high school for boys situated in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. The Kearsney College Choir is an internationally award-winning ensemble in close proximity to Michaelhouse, the school where I teach. Kearsney College is well-known throughout South Africa for their outstanding music department and for having a positive influence on boys who participate in choral activities. This ultimately produces a living and flourishing product that contradicts the international threat of gender stereotypes that impacts male involvement in choral singing. Investigating the school's choral successes could provide valuable insights into male recruitment and retention, having relevance for choral music educators locally and internationally.

1.2 Problem statement/research questions

Choral singing enriches lives by granting musical, social, personal, and external benefits of a kind that allows male adolescents to experience a sense of belonging towards a group (Kennedy, 2002). Furthermore, singing within a choir can help boys fortify and develop their gender identities (Elorriaga, 2011; Lucas, 2011). Limited sources are available that describe the value of singing in male adolescent choirs throughout South Africa.

Choral singing can be described as a leisure-based activity at independent boys' high schools in South Africa. Two questions raised by musicologists, music educators, and choral conductors internationally are: "What are the attitudes of male adolescents from various regions, and their attitudes towards choral participation?" (Freer, 2010, 2015; Lucas, 2011; Nannen, 2017; Ramsey, 2013; Register, 2019); and, "How are various

groups of male choristers nested within mixed or single-sex choirs influenced by the gender stereotype threat?" (Warzecha, 2013; Watson et al., 2017).

There are numerous studies that provide an understanding of the values associated with choral singing within South Africa (Barrett, 2007; Barrett, 2017; Barrett & Vermeulen, 2019; Bartolome, 2018), and aspects that influence motivation and participation within school-choral communities (Bannerman, 2019; Jacob et al., 2009). Yet all of these studies investigated choirs comprised of both male and female singers. Therefore, this study will expand current knowledge about choral singing within South Africa, providing an essential understanding about male adolescent participation in choral activities.

The research problem, therefore, leads to the main research question of this study:

What personal value is attributed to participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school?

Two questions that are of relevance to the main research question are:

- What are the main motivations (intrinsic and extrinsic) that can be attributed to participation in a male high school choir as expressed by the singers themselves?
- What aspects contribute to continuous involvement in choral activities at Kearsney College?

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to explore the personal value that is attributed to choral participation, as experienced and expressed by boys attending an independent boys' high school in South Africa. In order to explore the personal value associated with choral participation, the membership benefits related to choral singing within a male adolescent choir will be explored. The study further investigates the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of young adolescent male singers who join choirs from the onset, and the reasons why they remain. This study adds to the limited literature on the value of choral singing in South Africa and provides new research specifically pertaining to the reasons why young men sing in choirs.

1.4 Research methodology

Chapter Three provides a comprehensive explanation of the research methodology employed in this study. The research paradigm adopted is interpretivism, which seeks to

understand the world from the perspectives of the participants (Ponelis, 2015). Through utilising qualitative research methods, I, as the primary researcher, have the opportunity to delve into the diverse meanings that the participants attribute to their respective issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Roulston, 2006).

For this research, an intrinsic case study design has been deemed most suitable, thus enabling an exploration of the intricacies within a single case (Stake, 1995). To ensure a purposeful selection of participants, a deliberate sampling strategy was employed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), specifically targeting individuals who are actively involved in the Kearsney College Choir. The data collection involved conducting semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with these choristers, as well as observing the choir's rehearsals and performances. These activities formed the foundation for data collection.

Upon completion of the interviews and observations, I transcribed the collected information, following the recommended procedure outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2018). Subsequently, the data was analysed to derive meaningful insights and draw conclusions from the findings.

1.5 Trustworthiness of the research

The quality of research is built on decisions made by the researcher, ranging from the formulation of the research questions, to the interactions with the participants, and finally to the interpretation of the findings (Bergman & Coxon, 2005; Freeman et al., 2007). Within this study, various validity procedures were employed to ensure that the interpretations of the data are trustworthy and of high quality. Qualitative validity is a process where the researcher, participants, and readers of the research review the accuracy of the findings through various procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Freeman et al., 2007). According to Creswell and Creswell, the use of various validity procedures would “enhance the researcher’s ability to assess the accuracy of findings as well as convince readers of that accuracy” (2018, p. 274). Member checking strategies will be utilised to ensure the correctness of data collected through interviews, as advocated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). To ensure that the member checking has been done efficiently, the researcher should report back to the interviewees

to provide them with an opportunity to comment on the findings as drawn from the analysis of the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

I will present findings using rich and thick descriptions, allowing the reader to gain valuable insight into the interviews. Providing “detailed descriptions of the setting, [...] or offering many perspectives about a theme, leads to the results becoming more realistic and richer” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 274). Adding to the trustworthiness of the research, the findings presented will include negative or dissonant information as sourced by the participants to counter significant findings. Presenting information that is both negative and positive allows this study to become a realistic representation of the participants’ experiences, therefore, making this research more valid (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The process of triangulation presents a logical explanation of themes gathered by various sources, as advocated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The themes that emerged within this study derived from various sources that included interviews and observational data and were used to substantiate and strengthen the findings.

1.6 Ethical considerations

All participants in this study have been required to give written consent to partake in this research. The aims and objectives of the study were clearly outlined for both the individual interviews (Appendix E) as well as for the focus groups discussions (Appendix F). Consent was obtained by the Principal of Kearsney College (Appendix H), who sought permission from the school board for the research to be conducted on Kearsney’s school premises. The participants of this study were vulnerable, since the majority of choristers were under the age of eighteen, which required further consent to be obtained from their parents and/or guardians (Appendix G). The participants’ rights and interests were fully respected, with their participation being voluntary and the possibility of their withdrawing from the study at any time being allowed without the fear of being prejudiced in any way. Participants remained anonymous and pseudonyms were assigned to protect the identities of the individuals. The data retrieved from this study will be stored safely and protected with an electronic format password at the University of Pretoria for the next 15 years.

1.7 Value of the study

Choral singing plays a crucial role in the cultural fabric of South Africa, and understanding the experiences and motivations of male adolescents participating in such activities provides valuable insights. Exploring the personal value these young individuals derive from choral singing can shed light on the impact it has on their personal development, sense of identity, and overall well-being. Additionally, investigating the factors that contribute to their sustained participation can better inform educational and community programmes, thereby helping to enhance the engagement and retention of male adolescents in choral singing activities. This study has the potential to assist choral conductors of male adolescent choirs to nurture the talents and passions of choristers while also promoting South Africa's cultural richness and diversity.

1.8 Chapter headings

This study is divided into six chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction, explaining the need and significance for this research to be conducted. The background to the study, aims, problem statement and research questions are clearly outlined.

Chapter Two provides evidence from existing literature about the value of choral singing in a variety of contexts, both locally and abroad. Similarly, this chapter also demonstrates the need for this study, by showing a lack of literature pertaining to the value of choral music as experienced by male participants in a South African high school. The chapter is divided into four sections: self-determination theory and expectancy-value theory, the value of choral singing, the development of social identity and self-concept through choral participation, and the hindrances for male adolescents to continuously participate in choral ensembles.

Chapter Three explains the research methodology in detail. This section includes the research paradigm, research approach and design, sampling strategy, and data collection procedures. An in-depth discussion of the methods of data analysis is provided, to ensure trustworthiness, which will be discussed further.

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and observations are presented in Chapter Four. The data are analysed and described in detail and the emergent themes and sub-themes are listed.

The penultimate chapter (Chapter Five) discusses the findings presented in Chapter Four, while correlating with the existing literature that discusses the phenomenon being investigated.

The final chapter (Chapter Six) provides recommendations for further research, outlines limitations to this study and presents concluding remarks.

Chapter 2: Literature review

There is a plethora of research on the benefits associated with participation in choral activities, both locally and abroad. However, literature pertaining to the value of choral participation, as experienced by male singers specifically in the South Africa context, requires investigation. This chapter is divided into four sections: self-determination theory and expectancy-value theory, the value of choral singing, the development of social identity and self-concept through choral participation, and the hindrances for male adolescents to continuously participate in choral ensembles.

2.1 Self-determination theory and expectancy-value theory

In all countries, the various cultures that prevail inside schools impact learners' experiences and motivation to participate in choral activities. Deci and Ryan (2008) investigated how self-determination theory (SDT) influences one's motivation to participate and experience value in an activity. In their study, they highlight the differences between autonomous and controlled motivation in SDT. Autonomous motivation occurs once an individual experiences both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits to an activity that integrates "into their sense of self" (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 182). Controlled motivation deals with an individual's experiences through both extrinsic and interjected regulation, where actions become partially internalised, which causes pressure on the individual's thoughts, affect, and behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2008). While both autonomous and controlled motivations provide energy and influence a person's behaviour, it is the autonomous motivation that evokes "greater psychological health and more effective performance" (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 183). Stewart and Lonsdale's research (2016) aimed to address the psychological benefits of participating in choral singing, by measuring the motivation of choristers compared to participants in other activities, such as team sports and solo singing. They reported that the participants described choral singing to be "more coherent or meaningful" (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016, p. 1240), which shows that being a member of a choral community influences the psychological well-being of choristers (Bullack et al., 2018; Clift et al., 2010).

For many decades researchers have investigated the achievement motivation of both adults and children alike (Burak, 2014; McPherson et al., 2015), and tried to understand their choices with regard to achievement tasks, persistence, motivation, and the

performance of those activities. Wigfield and Eccles (2000) constructed an expectancy-value theory model, informed by ability beliefs, expectancies of success, and the value of tasks. Expectancies and values are assumed to directly influence “achievement choices” (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000, p. 69), which in turn influences the fulfilment, determination, and perseverance of an individual’s actions. Internationally, researchers have aimed to address students’ motivation to participate in musical activities at school-level through the expectancy-value theory perspective (Burak, 2014; McPherson et al., 2015). McPherson et al. (2015) aimed to determine whether music students are more motivated to study academic subjects, and whether aspects such as gender and socio-economic status affected their motivation to study music at school level. By collecting data from 2,727 respondents ranging from grades five to twelve, they found that music students within Australian schools reported that they gained higher levels of “competence beliefs, interest, importance, usefulness, and less task difficulty than non-music learners” (McPherson et al., 2015, p. 142). In addition to the findings of McPherson et al. (2015), Burak found that the processes of learning an instrument can contribute to a learner’s “self-regulation, self-control, concentration, awareness and motivation” (2014, p. 132).

2.2 The value of choral singing

There are numerous studies that highlight the benefits of participating in various types of choirs, be it for social, personal, or musical reasons (Adderly et al., 2003; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Kennedy, 2002; Sweet, 2010). Bartolome’s (2013) research into the perceived value of singing at the Seattle Girls’ Choir (SGC) illuminates the many positive facets of participation in a choir, as experienced by the singers themselves. She found that the members of the SGC society benefit socially, personally, and educationally through choral participation. Both Kennedy (2002) and Sweet (2010) investigated the motivations behind boys in high schools joining choral music ensembles. In Kennedy’s study, boys primarily joined for intrinsic reasons as well as being influenced by their teachers and peers. Sweet (2010) lists four primary themes linked to choir involvement for grade 8 boys, including singing, relationships with other people, aspirations to join the school’s audition/elite choir, and the silliness of the conductor that made the activity fun. Jacob et al. (2009) found that university singers remain in choirs as a result of their previous musical experiences, along with social bonding, a sense of community, personal well-being and achievements obtained through participation. Einarsdottir and Gudmundsdottir’s research (2016) reveals that the personal enjoyment of singers creates

a positive social atmosphere, which becomes a major factor of motivation for participating in a choir. These social benefits allow singers to connect and share intimate experiences with their peers, leading to holistic growth within a safe environment, providing a sense of belonging (Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Jacob et al., 2009; Joseph & Southcott, 2018).

Singing in a choir improves the technical skill and overall music education of the singers, with studies highlighting how choral singing evokes a sense of accomplishment and success. A recent study found that university singers (without prior music knowledge or any comprehension of notation) acquired an understanding of certain concepts (intervals, note names, rhythmic durations) by learning the music *en passant* (in passing) (Barrett et al. 2019). The study underlines the importance for singers to have a grasp of intervals. This acquisition of learning-by-doing has not recently been reported on in the scholarly literature and it could have beneficial consequences for enhancing the choral experience of singers in amateur ensembles. Bannerman writes about personal development through choral singing, reporting that choristers value musical aspects that have to do with “vocal development, music literacy, meeting musical challenges, connecting to meaning in music, and music appreciation” (2019, p. 51). Choral singing provides an opportunity for choristers to improve their musical ability, technical skill, appreciation, and understanding of music in general (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Kennedy, 2002). Furthermore, an intrinsic motivation to sing in a choir not only improves choristers musically, but also leads to their sustained and continuous participation, thus allowing for continued growth and learning within the field of choral music education (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Jacob et al., 2009).

Studies have indicated that choral singing promotes positive influences on the overall health of singers, as it contributes to well-being and decreases stress levels (Acquah, 2016; Bullack et al., 2018; Clift et al., 2010; Jacob et al., 2009; Sanal & Gorsev, 2014). Clift et al. (2010) provided questionnaires to over 600 singers participating in English choirs and found that these choristers expressed that singing improves their health and well-being. Both Bullack et al. (2018) and Jacob et al. (2009) discovered that choral singing benefits choristers’ affective state, a finding which emphasises that singing in a choir promotes positive feelings and decreases stress levels. Acquah (2016) and Sanal and Gorsev (2014) support this view, by citing that the stress levels that choristers

experience decrease whenever they use correct breathing techniques while singing (thereby relieving their anxiety levels). Choral participation uplifts choristers emotionally, which assists them in managing tension and depression. This benefit has become essential for singers to have the necessary support to cope with problems like depression, which serves as a mechanism to maintain personal well-being (Acquah, 2016; Clift et al., 2010). Cognitive functions are kept active during singing, as choristers have to maintain high concentration levels while participating, eventually assisting the mind to become more resistant to mental deterioration (Acquah, 2016; Clift et al., 2010). Barrett (2017) and Bartolome (2010) both found substantial health benefits attributed to participation in choirs, as perceived and expressed by the singers themselves. Furthermore, studies related to the benefits of participation, as experienced by elderly singers, have been linked to improved health and social interactions (Joseph & Southcott, 2014; Varvarigou et al., 2012).

Internationally, there is a substantial body of research about the value of choir participation for men and boys. Although there are numerous studies that explore the benefits that male singers experience from choral participation, these studies are exclusively conducted outside of Africa. Powell (2014) studied the perceptions of choristers participating in various male choirs in Sydney, Australia. She discovered that males within the various choirs place an emphasis on the overall success of the ensembles and that they enjoyed the surrounding presence of others in their choir, emphasising the importance of male socialisation (Powell, 2014). Ramsey (2013) conducted a study with a suburban school in a Midwestern State from the United States, namely the Cedar High School Men's Choir, investigating the lived experiences of male adolescent choristers. She found that male adolescents share a 'brotherhood' built upon the importance of friendship, pride, and support through their membership in a choir (Ramsey, 2013). Essential factors that motivate male adolescents to continuously participate in choral activities include the importance of sharing their love of singing, and positive peer and teacher influences (Kennedy, 2002; Lucas, 2011). Participating in a male choir benefits choristers with regard to achieving personal success, developing expression, and developing their self-concepts (Lucas, 2011; Powell, 2014).

It is well documented that singing in South Africa is highly popular (Barrett, 2007; Bartolome, 2018; Hammond, 2004; Levine, 2005; Van As, 2014), with Hammond calling

this activity “vibrant” and “well-developed”, further adding that it is prevalent in “all sectors of society” (2004, p. 103). Yet only a few studies aim specifically to address the values associated with choral singing within the South African context. In 2017, Barrett (2017) conducted extensive research that explored the benefits of participating in a multicultural university choir (as expressed by the singers). The findings of Barrett’s research show that singing in a choir is “polygonal, and that such experiences are rewarding, plentiful, and even challenging at times” (2017, p. v). This study highlights the personal, social and musical value attributed to participating in a choir and underlines the important health benefits associated with singing. Furthermore, it provides evidence that participating in a choir creates an environment that is conducive to forming important relationships and promotes cultural integration between the choir members. Louw (2014) studied the significance of choral singing for choristers and conductors who participated in a national extra-curricular schools’ choral programme. She found that choristers in South Africa describe choral singing as “a way of living” (Louw, 2014, p. 93), where choir activities form an integral part of their lives. Barrett and Vermeulen (2019) substantiate the findings of Louw, reporting that music plays a significant role in the socialisation, resilience, and personal growth of choristers within a university choir. They discovered that, in South Africa, choral music influences the lives of singers, contributing to the benefits that are gained from participating in a collective music-making environment (Barrett & Vermeulen, 2019). Choral singing, is, therefore, an art form that showcases the diverse musical cultures found within South Africa (Bartolome, 2018).

2.3 Developing social identity and self-concept through choral participation

Belonging to a group and sharing an identification with others in the group is the foundation of social identity theory, a sociological framework which suggests that all individuals belong to certain social groups (Hogg & Abrahms, 1988). Stets and Burke define social identity as “how people come to see themselves as members of one group” (2000, p. 226), influencing their individual perspectives and the manner in which they react to matters from the collective’s viewpoint (Parker, 2009). These groups can be small or large, such as friendship groups or political affiliations respectively, with the former usually expecting membership to be earned in some way (Tajfel, 1981). Earning membership, shared awareness of pride, and the development of self-esteem are attributes that are usually associated with social identity (Major, 2017). Belonging to a peer group is a vital component for any individual to develop their social identity, and most

especially for adolescents (Newman et al., 2007). Social identity includes an individual's personal self-concept, as well as the emotional importance they attribute to membership of a specific group (McMillan, 1996).

Choral societies are strong social activities, fostering acceptance, belonging, and social approval amongst members, especially adolescents (Durrant, 2005; Hammond 2004; Parker, 2018). The benefits of participating in choral groups have been well documented in research, with a shared love of singing, unity of purpose, and a sense of belonging highlighted as the most significant positive outcomes among adolescents (Barrett & Vermeulen, 2019; Bartolome, 2013; Durrant, 2005; Parker, 2018; Sweet, 2010). Several studies have indicated that choral singing benefits choristers by helping them develop their social identities and self-concepts (Dieckmann & Davidson, 2018; Hammond, 2004; Major, 2017; Parker, 2018). In Parker's study (2018) a female high school adolescent choir was investigated to determine how the choristers developed a sense of social identity. Its findings indicate that teenagers spend a substantial amount of time attaching themselves to various social groups to discover and form their social identities. While studying cultural encounters within a lullaby choir, Dieckmann and Davidson (2018) found that singers encounter new and shared experiences as a by-product of belonging to a choir, allowing them to develop their social identities when they engage with various cultural groups in the ensemble. The intercultural exchange that takes place between choristers in a diverse choir influences their relations among their peers, since they are aware of each other's cultural differences and identities (Dieckmann & Davidson, 2018; Langston & Barrett, 2008). In a South African context, Hammond (2004) revealed how choral singing provides a platform for choristers to develop their identities, while simultaneously influencing the way individuals within these groups navigate their social identities in a diverse setting. Hammond claims that choral singing is a "non-threatening site for the recognition of identity" (2004, p. 107); one that expands and, because of its hybrid nature, also includes new and shared experiences between choristers of various cultures. This aspect exposes singers by allowing them to sing and engage with various individuals from different cultural backgrounds, so that they eventually form an environment of shared unity, fellowship, and compassion (Bartolome, 2018; Hammond, 2004; Langston & Barrett, 2008).

Parker (2009) claims that teamwork heightens levels of dependence and appreciation, which benefits the self-recognition, pride, and innermost feelings of choir members. According to Dabback (2018) and Parker (2009), the identity development of teenage choristers is largely orchestrated by the adults involved in the choir's activities, including the conductor and the parents/guardians of the singers. The parents/guardians influence the morale of the singers while also providing an assurance that they will remain committed and continuously participate in the choir's activities (Dabback, 2018; Parker, 2009). As the leader and role model of a choir, the choral conductor supports the identity development of choristers, by expecting professional standards from the ensemble and by being sensitive to the choristers' problems, thereby contributing to a safe environment where musical, and self-growth can be facilitated (Parker, 2009). Choral singing therefore becomes an art form that motivates singers to cooperate, understand, and trust their peers from various cultures, ethnicities, and backgrounds (Barrett & Vermeulen, 2019; Bartolome, 2018; Hammond, 2004).

Research by Parker (2009) and Sharma and Sharma (2010) suggests that musicians develop their self-concepts while participating in music-making ensembles. Adams's (2020) study into the views that adolescents have of their own singing ability (both through implicit theories and self-concept meaning systems) revealed that members participating in high school ensembles have a more fully developed sense of self. Parker's research illustrates that choral singing benefits singers, as it allows them to gain "self-confidence and acceptance into the group" (2009, p. 454). Furthermore, research has shown that participating in a choir allows choristers to experience heightened levels of self-confidence and self-esteem, and to develop their social and musical abilities (Bartolome, 2013). Barrett confirms that participating in a choir enables choristers to "be more confident as it provides them the space to be themselves" (2017, p. 114). Social interactions are important during adolescence because they contribute substantially towards creating a self-concept (Elorriaga, 2011). The camaraderie within a choral ensemble boosts the confidence and sensitivity of its choristers (Barrett, 2017), and being involved in an inclusive and safe environment benefits their growing concepts of self (Bartolome, 2013; Parker, 2009). Elorriaga (2011) studied the construction of male gender identity through choir singing at a Spanish secondary school, and found that once male adolescents discover their vocal identities, they use this as a social tool for self-expression (Elorriaga, 2011). Dabback's research into communal singing in the United

States at a Mennonite School choir programme, reveals that choral singing shapes a spiritual sense of mutual belonging and unity (2018). His research indicates that acknowledging exterior support, which includes families, friends, and the school locale, provides singers with the motivation to become involved. It also encourages musical engagement, which benefits the choristers to the extent that it “become[s] part of their sense of self” (Dabback, 2018, p. 248).

2.4 Hindrances for male adolescents to continuously participate in choral singing

The threat of being stereotyped, the change that takes place in an adolescent voice, and social influences have all been cited as reasons that lead to a decline of male attendance in choral singing activities (Brand, 2019; Hawkins, 2015; Nannen, 2017). Male enrolment in music ensembles, whether it be choirs or instrumental ensembles, has become a major problem internationally. As early as 1991, Stewart examined the different student and school characteristics that determine participation in music activities at high school. Her research revealed that there was an under-enrolment of males in music courses and that 61.4% of all music students were female. Her data sets were collected in 1982, through the National Center for Education Statistics. Elpus and Abril (2011) examined the demographic profile of band, choir, and orchestra students in the United States at high school level. They found that there was a significant underrepresentation of male adolescents in music programmes and ensembles, to the extent that “61.1% were female” (2011, p. 135). With regard to musical enrolment, Elpus (2015) estimated the participation rates of males and females enrolled in American high school music ensembles. He found that American music ensembles promote an overrepresentation of girls into music at secondary schools, indicating a consistent lack of male involvement in choral singing at high school level. Powell (2015) studied the perceptions of masculinity among male singers in Australian choirs and revealed that participants experienced negative attitudes towards masculinity and choral singing. She found that gendered stereotypes have an effect on an individual’s personal and creative expressions, even initiating challenges with regard to accessibility and acceptance when boys want to participate in choral activities.

Brand’s (2019) research into how male high school students perceived choral singing revealed that males ultimately consider choral activities to be more suited to their female counterparts. He indicated that the perceptions of male students are “disconnected from their perceptions of casual singing” (2019, p. ii), therefore causing a feeling of vulnerability

to sing in suitable circumstances. Nannen's (2017) research into exploring adolescent gender identity, as it relates to singing interest and participation in choirs, aimed to address the general lack of male interest in choral activities. She revealed that a group of 174 grade 9 students indicated that girls had higher interest rates in choral singing, a finding that shows how singing in a choir is considered to generally be a feminine activity. Gendered stereotypes affect boys who participate in choral activities at school. They are at considerable risk of being verbally and physically bullied by their school peers outside the choir, which can cause tremendous strain and uncertainty, especially in the development of their social identities (Hawkins, 2015; Nannen, 2017; Watson et al., 2017).

A striking aspect of the literature in recent years has been the adolescent voice change, and how it ultimately influences male adolescents' perceptions of singing. Fischer (2014) explains that the adolescent voice change entails physiological and psychological concerns. Freer found that the "reason boys didn't sing in choirs was because of issues surrounding the voice change process" (2007, p. 28). The vocal change affects boys during their adolescent period (Powell, 2015), therefore becoming an "unpredictable, unique, and variable" concept (Hawkins, 2015, p. 28). There is much research focused on how choral conductors can find pedagogical ways to assist young male singers through their voice change, but Killian (1997) argues that the majority of studies focus on the physiological aspects of the changing voice, failing to address the psychological disadvantages of undergoing a voice change during adolescence. Killian's (1997) research into the concerns surrounding the voice change of 141 males, a study that included both junior and high school boys, as well as men between the ages of 23 to 80, revealed that these males viewed their voice change either being something positive or were disconcerting. Kennedy's research at the former American Boychoir School delves further into the psychological disadvantages of the adolescent voice change (2004). She recommends that there be efficient support systems within choirs to promote a secure environment for the experience of emotional and vocal development. It is significant to note that, in 2017, the American Boychoir closed permanently, due to the financial difficulties that were a consequence of waning interest (Chow, 2017). Furthermore, in their studies Freer (2016) and Hawkins (2015) demonstrate how the voice-changing process negatively influences male participation in choral activities, as it makes the singers feel vulnerable over their vocal and personal identities. Freer (2015) conducted

85 interviews with boys from England, Ireland, Greece, and Spain, and likewise revealed that the voice change that males undergo during adolescence influences their participation in choral music education. He found that it can cause identity loss, ultimately resulting in boys withdrawing from choral activities. Freer mentioned that “some boys viewed their voice as damaged and decided not to reengage in singing during high school” (2015, p. 97). Freer (2016) expanded this study by investigating how boys at the London Oratory School understand and perceive the voice changing process, singing in general, and choral pedagogy. He identified that choristers experienced a sense of losing control and that they were not aware of the autonomy of the male adolescent voice change. Hawkins’s research into male choral participation in middle and high school level adds to this discussion, by showing that the male adolescent voice change can be quite “drastic” (2015, p. 90). One of the participants in his study mentioned that the boys in choir became “embarrassed in front of the girls when the teacher worked with them on their changing voices” (2015, p. 90), providing evidence that the vocal change process is not just challenging as a vocal phenomenon, but also an intimidating psychological and emotional experience that causes great uncertainty. Powell (2015) further mentions that boys stop engaging in singing activities, as the vocal change process is usually managed inadequately.

Social influences contribute to the choices and perceptions of male students to enrol in choral activities. Mizener’s (1993) examination of elementary students’ attitudes toward singing and choral participation, which included 542 responses, illustrated that more than half of the students were not interested in singing activities. This research further indicated that girls were more positive about choral singing activities, as they claimed to receive more support for their musical achievements compared to the boys who participated in choirs. While investigating the factors that contribute to adolescent choir enrolment in four Oklahoma public schools, Lucas (2007) investigated how social influence impacts the motivation of male adolescents to participate in choral singing. Lucas found that there were various factors that influence male choral participation; but the two main reasons why male students do not enrol in choral activities were that they did not like to sing and that they were not good singers. In contrast to Lucas’ study (2007), Kennedy (2002) found that boys were participating in choral activities because of their love for singing and because of the social aspects of these activities. He further adds that the “informants placed high value on friendships, the group experience, and field

trips” (Kennedy, 2002, p. 33). Despite Kennedy’s findings, Freer (2010) added to Lucas’ (2007) study when aiming to address the missing male phenomenon in choral programmes. He demonstrated how a lack of male role models in high schools would create a negative effect on the identities of boys who participated in music (Freer, 2010). In her study, Nannen mentioned that the “lack of friends and male role models, poor teaching and teacher relationships, and harassment of peers” (2017, p. 54) are all contributing factors that negatively influence boys’ pursuit of choral singing activities. Freer (2015) mentioned in his study that male adolescents are very naïve regarding the opinions of their peers, suggesting that boys will continue singing in choirs if their friends also decide to do so. Sweet’s (2010) study into the perceptions of 8th grade boys about participating in choirs reveals that they consider the views of their peers seriously. The lack of peer support becomes a determining factor that can negatively influence continued participation in choirs at school level (Freer, 2007; Kennedy, 2002; Sweet, 2010).

2.5 Summary

This chapter has presented a review of the literature on the self-determination theory and expectancy value theory, and the value of choral singing (in South Africa and abroad), further showing how these matters correspond with the developing social identities and self-concepts of teenage boys through participating in choirs. Factors that hinder male adolescents from participating in choral activities have been identified. The literature review highlights the need for this study, as there are no sources pertaining to the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits for male adolescents participating in choral activities in the South African context. The following chapter will explain and motivate the research methodology that will be utilised for this research.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

The following chapter presents the methodological choices made to conduct this study; which include explanations of the research paradigm and approach, research design, sampling strategy, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness of the research, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research paradigm

As a research paradigm, interpretivism requires us to “understand the world as it is from a subjective point of view” (Ponelis, 2015, p. 538) and as such, involves an approach where findings are drawn from the answers that participants provide in interviews. Creswell and Creswell maintain that “the goal of research is to rely as much as possible on the participants’ views of the situation being studied” (2018, p. 46). This study is therefore grounded by interpretivism, allowing the researcher to interpret the meanings and subjective perceptions that the participants (male adolescents who sing in a choir at an independent South African boys’ school) ascribe to their experiences of choral singing (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.2 Research approach

This study makes use of qualitative research methods to examine the personal value attributed to participating in a choir at an independent South African boys’ high school. Qualitative researchers aim to examine and construct the meanings that participants assign to certain problems or issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Roulston, 2006). Creswell and Creswell state that qualitative research “honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of reporting the complexity of a situation” (2018, p. 41). Holmes and Holmes expand on this view that the experiences of individuals are “a crucial and irreducible element” (2012, p. 75) of any qualitative study. Qualitative research is an appropriate framework to investigate and understand the meanings that boys accredit to their participation in choral singing and to, furthermore, highlight the personal benefits they experience as a consequence.

3.3 Research design

An intrinsic case study was the most efficient qualitative research design to incorporate into this study, since intrinsic case studies aim to explore the “particularity and complexity of a single case” (Stake, 1995). Yin explains why case study research can be a rewarding

research design, since it allows the researcher to explore the “holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (2009, p. 4). Furthermore, this design allows one to construct an in-depth analysis of a certain case, such as investigating “a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 51). In this research, it is of central importance to understand the opinions and attitudes of male adolescents, specifically by focusing on their motivation to engage and continuously participate in choral singing activities at their high school. Utilising a case study design for this research allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of a certain phenomenon (case). There are, however, also disadvantages that come with this design of inquiry. According to Margevičiūtė, “results cannot be 100% replicated or generalised” (2012, p. 140). The researcher can therefore not generalise the findings of a specific case study. The present study addresses the value of choral singing at a specific boys’ high school, namely Kearsney College. The findings do not extrapolate from these experiences to generalise findings about the experiences of male adolescent choristers in South Africa.

3.4 Sampling strategy

A purposeful sampling strategy has been employed in this study. Creswell and Creswell mention that purposefully selected participants serve a qualitative study best and that they aid “the researcher [in] understanding the problem and the research question” (2018, p. 262). Within case study research, purposive sampling takes place once the researcher identifies participants whom are capable of providing rich information that would enlighten a study to the highest degree (Noor, 2008). Creswell and Creswell state that purposeful sampling can only be achieved once the researcher identifies the population of the study, the type of sampling design, and the sample size (2018).

Kearsney College is the research site that was selected to collect data. Kearsney College is an independent boys’ high school situated in KwaZulu-Natal. The choristers of Kearsney College Choir (the case) were the participants used for this research. All of the choir’s members (53 boys) were invited to be observed and to participate in the study voluntarily, either through an individual semi-structured interview, or a focus group discussion. The research objectives, intentions, and procedures were communicated to each participant prior to the initiation of data collection. All participants provided their consent by signing the consent forms (Appendix E and F), with no individuals opting out of participation in the research. Purposeful sampling has been employed to elicit a broad

range of opinions. In selecting the 15 boys who participated in individual interviews, various factors were considered that would allow for the collecting of a diverse corpus of data. This included interviewing boys from different age groups and cultural backgrounds, boys with varying levels of musical experience, and members that had been in the choir for a different number of years. The participants of the semi-structured interviews can be viewed in Table 1.

Table 1: Participants of the semi-structured individual interviews

#	Participant (chosen pseudonym)	School Grade	Interview Duration
1	Brent	12	20:54
2	Coady	9	18:38
3	Diego	11	19:38
4	Frank	11	10:28
5	Jack	12	23:29
6	James	9	08:11
7	Jimothy	12	29:20
8	Ntaka	10	17:32
9	Peter	9	08:23
10	Pieter	12	09:31
11	Roberto	8	13:54
12	Ryan	9	10:35
13	Smev	10	18:05
14	Solomon	10	09:31
15	Tony	11	11:11

For the focus group discussions, the remaining 38 members were divided into grade-specific groups of around six to eight participants, using a structured approach such as Grade 10A and Grade 10B as examples. Notably, the Grade 8 and 12 cohorts formed unique focus group units since they had less students than the other Grade groups, and in descriptions, they were identified solely as “Grade 8” or “Grade 12”. Leedy and Ormrod (2016) suggest that participants should be grouped into age groups, as this allows them to be interviewed along with their peers. Making them feel more comfortable in this way would then arguably reveal richer data. The focus groups were structured to encompass a range of perspectives, including participants from different languages, cultures, musical

backgrounds, and varying levels of experience of singing in the College Choir. The participants of the focus group interviews can be viewed in Table 2.

Table 2: Participants of the focus group interviews

#	Group	Participants (chosen pseudonyms)	Interview Duration
1	Grade 8	Andreas Ian Kat Themba	17:07
2	Grade 9A	Alex Cole Eric Gqamile Jan John	17:45
3	Grade 9B	Daniel Lulo Oliver Toby	16:28
4	Grade 10A	Qawe Herschel Rory Harry	16:46
5	Grade 10B	Scott Manny Aeron Darwin	14:37
6	Grade 11A	Theo Lunga Brandon Olwethu	11:11
7	Grade 11B	Alex Gregory	17:08

		Vincent Bradley Zipho	
8	Grade 12	Steven Kayden Jayden CJ Luke Zac Luyanda	16:48

During the focus group interviews, every participant was assigned a pseudonym in order to ensure the confidentiality of the information gathered from the interviews.

3.5 Data collection

Since this research follows an intrinsic case study design, the data was collected from a variety of sources, which included both semi-structured and focus group interviews, as well as fieldwork observations that were conducted over a period of three months between May and July 2022. The recorded findings of the current study encompassed a series of three weekly rehearsals held on Sundays, culminating in a joint performance with the Missouri State University Chorale.

The aim of the interview process is to unpack the experiences of participants and gain a better understanding of the “deeper levels and nuanced descriptions” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 143). In qualitative research, interviewing includes unstructured open-ended questions to express participants’ views regarding a certain case (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher the flexibility to gain clarification (Noonan, 2013), and they serve to “produce alternative perspectives on the experience under study” (Polkinghorne, 2005, p. 143). To ensure the accuracy of the findings, I conducted multiple face-to-face sessions with participants (Polkinghorne, 2005), and I was consistent and flexible while asking questions during all participants’ interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The questions for the interviews were informed by the literature and formulated into an interview guide (Appendix A). Creswell and Creswell recommend that qualitative interview questions should include “open-ended questions

and responses” (2018, p. 41), and this approach was followed when collecting data for this research. A “small, purposive sample” (Hox & Boeije, 2005, p. 593) was used for the semi-structured interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal value attributed to choral singing at a South African independent boys’ high school. While conducting individual interviews, I approached the boys in a professional manner and interacted with all participants respectfully. Prior to initiating the interviews, each participant completed a consent form. The interviews were conducted at Kearsney College and within an environment conducive to candid conversations. These interviews, lasting approximately 20-25 minutes each, were recorded using a voice recorder application on my personal smartphone. I had a voice recorder application prepared on my personal laptop as a contingency in case the battery of my smartphone were to deplete.

The data collection interviews were conducted within the music director’s office located at Kearsney College’s music school. Notably, the interviews were deliberately held separate from the choir’s rehearsal venue. The chosen setting was the director of music’s office due to the students’ rehearsal location, which happened to be the school’s chapel. This decision was made to ensure convenience for the students, as they could easily walk from their rehearsal to the interview site. The music director’s office proved to be an ideal choice for conducting interviews. It offered a serene and private environment, characterised by ample lighting, proper ventilation, and comfortable couches that provided suitable seating for the students. The space was well-suited for carrying out the interview process effectively. Prior to formally commencing with the interviews, I took steps to establish a comfortable and amicable atmosphere. I engaged with the boys, initiating conversations to build rapport. During this initial interaction, I posed various questions to get to know the participants better. Additionally, I requested them to sign the consent forms and provided them pseudonyms, all of which were prerequisites before proceeding with the interviews. To ensure confidentiality and in order to foster trust, I assured participants that their responses would remain confidential. I also provided them with the opportunity to seek clarification about the research study’s objectives and goals. I successfully conducted individual interviews with all 15 participants. For each participant, I took note of the date, time, location, and chosen pseudonyms. Furthermore, I made certain that every participant completed and signed their consent forms before the commencement of their respective interviews.

Each interview was transcribed verbatim. To protect participant anonymity, any aspect of the interviews that could identify an individual through association (such as the head boy of the choir) was omitted from the data. Transcriptions were assembled using the audio recordings of the interviews from my smartphone. After compilation, I meticulously reviewed each transcript, taking comprehensive notes for potential follow-up inquiries. Upon compiling the transcripts, a member-checking approach was employed. This involved granting participants the opportunity to review and amend their responses during rehearsal breaks, without their conductor present. A thorough overview of each interview facilitated this member-checking process. Participants were encouraged to make necessary edits or clarify confusing aspects, which I, as the researcher, incorporated. Once the member-checking phase concluded, participants returned their transcripts to me, expressing contentment with their statements.

Focus group interviews allow participants to engage with the topic of interest and, through meaningful discussion, build trust among the case's members (Stewart et al., 2007). Halkier argues that focus group data should be "understood as social enactments" (2010, p. 71), which requires unstructured and open-ended questions to obtain useful information for the eventual research findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Focus group interviews benefit the research by illuminating purposeful data related to the subject of interest, providing a richness of information that then allows thick description. Furthermore, the physical environment plays an integral part in the successful cohesion of the participants, because it influences their interactivity and the amount of data that can be retrieved from the group (Stewart et al., 2007). According to Creswell and Creswell, the recommended number of participants in focus group discussions should be "six to eight interviewees" (2018, p. 333). The focus groups for this study were guided by an interview schedule (Appendix B) that is similar to the semi-structured interview guide (Appendix A), but due to the number of participants, the questions were limited (Stewart et al., 2007).

Similar to the individual interviews, participants in the focus groups were assigned pseudonyms and divided into groups based on their grade levels. Each member of a focus group completed their consent forms prior to the interviews, and these pseudonyms were recorded along with their responses through note taking by the researcher. This

approach ensured accurate transcriptions following each interview. The focus groups interviews adhered to the same member-checking protocols utilised in the individual interviews, guaranteeing the precise representation of participants' perspectives.

Qualitative observation is a process where the researcher “takes field notes on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research site and records observations” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 333). Creswell and Creswell (2018) argue that interviews may at times miss out on important information, whereas observations can assemble the missing data. During the observation process, the role of the researcher is to become a part of the subject under investigation, in order to gain a better understanding of the activities and the behaviours of the participants (Kawulich, 2005). In this study, I participated by attending a total of three two-hour long choral rehearsals held once a week over a three-month observation period, alongside a concert performed by the choir. Two structured observation schedules were utilised to record relevant field notes for rehearsals (Appendix C) and performances (Appendix D), with the aim to elicit a report on the culture and participant behaviour of the group (Kawulich, 2005). During these observations, close attention was given to the research questions of this study, while insights, reflections, and interpretations on the behaviours of the participating choristers, were included as data by the researcher.

3.6 Data analysis

The process of data analysis in a case study allows the researcher to explore and acknowledge the subjective opinions that participants ascribe to a particular phenomenon (Lyons, 2007). Lyons (2007, p. 6) describes the analytic approach as an “interpretative activity”; the meanings that participants attribute to their participation in the case are of central importance. Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommend that the data analysis procedure should follow sequential steps and involve various levels of analysis. The data collected from this study's semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and observations have followed a predetermined procedure to formulate general themes. The researcher organised and prepared the data for analysis, re-read all the data, coded it, generated descriptions and themes, and represented these descriptions and themes. This same procedure applied to the observation schedules of the choral rehearsals and performances. To formulate general themes, my analysis of statements made by the participants were put into verbatim quotes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Throughout, the

aim of my analysis was to provide a “detailed description of the participants’ [...] experiences” (Lyons, 2007, p. 13).

The data analysis in this study centered around three core areas: Firstly, the personal value male adolescents attach to choral singing, as conveyed by the participants. Secondly, the primary motivations, encompassing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, driving participation in a male high school choir, as voiced by the choir members. Lastly, the factors contributing to the sustained engagement in choral activities at Kearsney College.

A qualitative computer software programme (Atlas.ti, version 23) was used to sort and analyse the raw data. Friese (2019) explains that the purpose of Atlas.ti is to visually integrate the findings in a way that allows the researcher to gain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Creswell and Creswell mention that CAQDAS (computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software) programmes “help researchers organize, sort, and search for information in text or image databases” (2018, p. 268). Technology greatly aids researchers in collating various forms of data, thereby making the process more efficient than manual coding.

The themes surfaced throughout the data collection phase, and the transcribed information was systematically organised and compiled in an ongoing manner. The codes were pinpointed using the Atlas.ti software, with the intention of aligning them with the study’s aim and research inquiries. After identifying the codes, they were categorised into overarching themes, enhancing the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Evidence obtained from both interviews and observations were systematically coded and organised into diverse categories, facilitating my subsequent interpretation. The process of identifying themes during the data coding was both comprehensive and meticulous. The data derived from interviews and observations amounted to 120 typed pages, requiring over 5 months for thorough analysis and categorisation. When commencing the coding of each interview’s transcript, thoughts, comments, and viewpoints related to the specific question themes were colour-coded on the respective transcriptions. Upon completing the coding of each interview, I extracted significant viewpoints and organised them within the coding feature of Atlas.ti. The

described procedure was applied to all individual and focus group interviews, as well as the observational data.

After arranging and consolidating the respective data, the data analysis revealed four primary themes: personal value, social value, musical value, and hindrances. Once these themes were identified, all the information underwent validation and review by my supervisor. Following this validation process, my supervisor and I identified various sub-themes. Upon identifying all the main themes and sub-themes, verbatim quotes from interviews and observations were systematically categorised using Atlas.ti software. This organisation resulted in the creation of four distinct documents corresponding to each theme. Only when my supervisor and I were content with the arrangement of themes and sub-themes did we classify the data as reliable.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the research

The quality of any research is built on the decisions that researchers make, which ranges from the formulation of research questions through to their interactions with the participants, and finally to their interpretation of the findings (Bergman & Coxon, 2005; Freeman et al., 2007). In this study, I have employed various validity procedures to ensure that my interpretations of the data are trustworthy and of a high standard. Qualitative validity is a process where a study's researchers and participants, along with the readers of a research report, review the accuracy of the findings by using various validity procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Freeman et al., 2007). According to Creswell and Creswell, the use of various validity procedures "enhance the researcher's ability to assess the accuracy of findings as well as convince readers of that accuracy" (2018, p. 274). I used member checking strategies to ensure the accuracy of data that I collected through interviews, as advocated by Creswell and Creswell (2018). To ensure that member checking has been done efficiently, a researcher should report back to the interviewees to give them an opportunity to comment on the findings that were drawn from the data analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

I present findings with rich and thick descriptions throughout this dissertation, so that readers of this research can gain valuable insight into the interviews. Providing "detailed descriptions of the setting, [...] or offering many perspectives about a theme, leads to the results becoming more realistic and richer" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 274). Adding

to the trustworthiness of this research, the findings that are presented include negative or dissonant information, as sourced from the participants, to counter significant findings. Presenting information that is both negative and positive allows the study to realistically represent the participants' experiences, therefore increasing the validity of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The process of triangulation has been used to present a logical explanation of the themes that were gathered from various sources (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). These sources include interviews and observational data, which have been used to substantiate and strengthen the research findings.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has delved into the research approach, design, and procedures that were employed in this study, along with the methods that were chosen to enable data analysis and interpretation. This allowed me to make the findings that are presented in the following chapter (Chapter Four).

Chapter 4: Findings

I just value the feeling that it gives me. It's a feeling that you don't get anywhere else, the feeling that sends shivers down your spine and gives you goosebumps.
 (Brent)

The quotation above provides evidence of the rich empirical data that emerged from one of the face-to-face interviews with Brent, a chorister in the Kearsney College Choir. The data gathered from the semi-structured individual interviews, focus group interviews, and observations of choral rehearsals and performances were transcribed and categorised into four main themes, and further divided into several sub-themes. The main themes were identified by extensively reading and coding 26 pages of raw data. Based on the data collected from all interviews and observations, the following main themes were generated: personal value, social value, musical value, and hindrances. As expressed by the research participants, Table 3 illustrates the findings made from the interviews and observations that are relevant to the valuing of, and continuous participation in choral singing at an independent male high school in South Africa.

Table 3: Themes and sub-themes pertaining to the value attributed to choral participation

THEME 1 PERSONAL VALUE	THEME 2 SOCIAL VALUE	THEME 3 MUSICAL VALUE	THEME 4 HINDRANCES
Sub-themes	Sub-themes	Sub-themes	Sub-themes
Passion & enjoyment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emotional benefits ● Touring Belonging & support Self-sufficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Confidence ● Self-concept ● Leadership Shared ambition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sense of achievement 	Social experiences Brotherhood Teamwork Cultural experiences	Musical benefits Enjoyment of music-making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choreography ● Message-bearing Role model Performances	Time & pressure Gendered stereotypes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of male interest in choral singing ● Bullying Covid-19

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus ● Sense of competition <p>Personal growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time management skills ● Professionalism <p>Pride & legacy</p>			
--	--	--	--

4.1 Personal value

The data pertaining to personal value was extensive, with participation being considered deeply significant to the choir's members. Table 1 lists six sub-themes under the main theme of personal value: passion and enjoyment, belonging and support, self-sufficiency, shared ambition, personal growth, and pride and legacy.

4.1.1 Passion and enjoyment

The following verbatim quotes express the love and passion for choral singing, as expressed by the choristers, and how this passion has motivated them to continuously participate in this school activity:

It became [an integral] part of my life. Whenever I hear music, I would usually do something to it. [Choral singing] has created a big passion and I feel [motivated] to do this. (Coady)

Over the years, I've gained such a love and passion for [choral] singing and the art of music and what it offers to you as a person in terms of happiness. It allows us to portray the stories of people and what they experienced. To put that on stage is amazing, and that's what keeps me going to choir. (Diego)

One of the grade 12 students, who was leaving the school at the end of the academic year, described how he would be missing his involvement in the Kearsney College Choir:

Honestly, it is amazing to see myself being in Matric now where it is like the final stretch, final tour, final experience, and I'm not sure what the future holds. If it were up to me, I would still stay singing in the choir. (Jimothy)

During a choir rehearsal, observation data noted that some boys were displaying an enjoyment of the music itself and started smiling while they were singing. It was evident that these boys enjoyed making music together with their peers during rehearsals. The choristers of the Kearsney College Choir mentioned how they valued the beauty of choral singing:

I enjoy music, and the choir is one of the best ways to dive into different genres of music and having to sing that in voice groups. (Jayden – Gr. 12)

That is also one of the best parts of choral singing, it brings people around you closer while making music, making it sound beautiful and making things happen. (Frank)

There are moments when you are singing a song, and you're kind of still singing and moving but almost stop and realise that this is an incredible experience, it is what I want to do. (Jack)

In his interview, Jack mentioned that his love and passion for choral singing had motivated him to join as many choirs as he could. Participating in the choir at school had made him aware of his singing "talent".

During an observation of a performance of the choir, it was evident that the choristers of the Kearsney College Choir focused on entertaining their audience with their repertoire, choreography, and overall stage presence. Choristers who participated in the focus group interviews described how performing on a stage with a choir contributed to their love of choral singing:

It is the performances, I just love going on a stage. (Theo – Gr. 11A)

The first performance you ever do with the choir you never forget. (Daniel – Gr. 9B)

In addition to the above-mentioned quotations, observation data revealed that the choristers of Kearsney College enjoyed participating externally in choral activities. The boys enjoyed singing in choirs not necessarily associated with the school, which shows the profound effect that choral music has on their lives. There were a few of the choristers in the Kearsney College Choir who also participated in the regional KwaZulu-Natal Youth Choir in their spare time.

Another chorister expressed that participating in the Kearsney College Choir provided an opportunity for boys to appreciate choral singing. Diego, a Grade 11 student, mentioned that participating in the choir as a junior student made him feel “grateful”. He continued by stating:

I’m now in grade 11 and next year is my senior year, I’ve never regretted [singing in the choir]. It has been the best opportunity I have had, and I’ve loved every moment of the choir, it has opened so many doors for me. (Diego)

Various choristers at Kearsney College saw their participation in choral singing as an activity that brought them joy. In the Grade 9A focus group discussion, John indicated that the reason he joined the choir was to “enjoy the music” through singing. Vincent and Gregory, participating in the Grade 11B focus group interview mentioned that they “enjoy” choral singing because of the friendships found in the choir. Another Grade 11B participant, Bradley, explained that his choral experience had added “music and joy”, and something “new” to his schooling life at Kearsney College. Observations revealed reflective data showing the pure joy that the boys showed during their warm-ups before concerts and performances, thus preparing them and making them attentive. A few of the participants who were interviewed individually described their overall enjoyment of performing on a stage. In his interview, Ryan cited that performing with the choir made him “savour moments” of being together with his friends on stage. In another individual interview, Pieter indicated that he “enjoys performing” with the choir.

Several participants mentioned that they enjoyed being valued in a choral setting. Lunga from the Grade 11A focus group quoted that he “enjoys” being equal with his peers while singing. Cole from the Grade 9A focus group specified that he enjoyed being the “point

of attention” during choral performances. The data derived from the interviews indicated that the boys enjoyed the various elements related to choral singing at Kearsney College. In his interview, James indicated that, for the boys at Kearsney College, the very enjoyable part of choral singing was to “sing and hear the drums playing”. Ntaka mentioned that the advantage of singing in the Kearsney College Choir was hearing the “sound that becomes food for his ears”. In an individual interview, Jimothy mentioned how much he enjoyed filming a music video with the choir during the Covid-19 pandemic:

[One of the music videos I enjoyed making was] “The World is Ours”. To be able to create that video and the message that was sent through that video [was truly an amazing experience]. (Jimothy)

Another nine participants agreed with the above meanings of enjoyment that their peers ascribed to participating in the Kearsney College Choir. A further ten participants and four focus group interviewees shared their opinions concerning their love and passion for choral singing. Further aspects related to the sub-theme of passion and enjoyment include emotional benefits and touring.

- **Emotional benefits**

The data that was collected shows that various participants commented on how choral singing had uplifted or benefitted their overall moods during College Choir rehearsals and concert performances.

Choral singing to me, not a lot of people understand, but once you have been in a choir, you listen to the sound, the chords, and the whole group of people together singing to create some sound, it evokes an emotional response in me that [I] cannot find anywhere else. (Pieter)

I enjoy music a lot and it helps me escape all my issues and further negativity that comes from school whether it is getting bad marks or having to deal with annoying people. (Scott – Gr. 10B)

The boys enjoyed their involvement in choral activities at school. Choral singing became an activity where the boys could express their inner feelings about themselves and the music:

It gives me the chance to express myself and my inner feelings. (Qawe – Gr. 10A)

It is a way to show emotion and it is nice like that. (James)

It's incredible to see how much a boy can open up and how much of his inner being shines through. (Brent)

Choral singing was an activity where boys could “open up”, which allowed them to express themselves through singing. Various participants mentioned how the choir had become an activity at school where they could escape their daily stresses, as choral singing tended to uplift their moods:

I find music a happy place, so if things are going bad, I feel music is a sense of comfort. (Herschel – Gr. 10A)

I enjoy music a lot and it helps me escape all my issues and further negativity that comes from school whether it is getting bad marks or having to deal with annoying people. (Scott – Gr. 10B)

Personally, once I start singing, I know that I am in my zone now and that I am comfortable, relaxed, and stress-free. (Manny – Gr. 10B)

While observing one of the choir rehearsals, it was evident that most of the boys experienced the choir as a space where they could relax. Many of the choristers had smiling faces after rehearsals and performances. During the interviews, several choristers alluded to performances being an antidote for their worries. Jimothy mentioned that the choir was “all smiles” when they walked off stage, corroborated in two focus groups, as the choir brought them “happiness” when they performed (Bradley – Gr. 11B), and boosted the “hype and adrenaline” to an international level (Aeron - Gr 10B).

One of the respondents that participated in a focus group interview mentioned how his focus on a performing stage stimulated his emotional well-being:

It is the focus when you are on stage for 20 minutes or half an hour, it is as if all of your problems are left behind and you are just focused on the conductor and the choir you are singing with, and that is a feeling you cannot find elsewhere. (CJ – Gr. 12)

Choral singing allowed these boys to engage with music internally. It allowed them to gain freedom of expression by singing and sharing collective experiences with which they are comfortable. The choir at Kearsney College was a place where its students could be happy and excited to sing with their friends. During various observations, data revealed that the boys in the choir enjoyed being jovial with their friends, thereby creating an environment that can be described as happy. It was evident that these boys enjoyed the company of their peers both before and after rehearsals and performances. Furthermore, ten participants added additional quotations about the positive emotional benefits associated with their participation in the College Choir.

- **Touring**

Various participants revealed that touring with the choir was both a factor that motivated them to join, as well as a reason to stay. In his interview, Coady mentioned that touring with the choir provided him with a purpose to “remain” in the choir. In two other individual interviews, Ntaka described that singing and touring with the choir elevated his “love” for the activity. Smev indicated that touring with the choir gave him “a reason to join” the choir.

For most of the boys who participated in the choir, touring is an integral extrinsic motivating factor that convinced them to join from the onset. During observations at the choir’s rehearsals, it was evident that the choristers showed extreme excitement for their upcoming international tour to Austria. Rehearsing the concert programme for the tour motivated the boys to work hard and focus on the rehearsals. It was evident that the tour was an immense motivating influence for the boys:

I can't wait [for the upcoming international tour], we are going to see and experience so many countries in just a few days, so I am really excited about that. (Solomon)

For me, the best part is going on an international tour with the choir. [Bradley – Gr. 11B)

Up to now, it has been a very nice experience to be involved with the choir, and to be honest, I just really wanted to go on this tour because I have heard some nice things about going on tour. (Vincent – Gr. 11B)

A further thirteen participants shared similar views to those expressed in the quotations above, underscoring the observation that touring held great value for the choristers as a by-product of their participation.

Not all of the participants had positive opinions about touring with the school choir. In his interview, Coady revealed that he experienced a sense of “pressure” knowing that he would go on tour with the choir. He stated that the upcoming international tour made him feel “nervous and anxious”. In his interview, Smev revealed that he would not be touring with the choir due to of personal reasons:

Recently, with these nine-hour rehearsals, it feels like I'm just putting in all the work with no gain. I feel a lot of negativity towards the choir. At the moment, I really don't want to go to rehearsals. I frequently ask myself what will I get from this?

4.1.2 Belonging and support

The choristers who participated in the interviews mentioned the importance of choral singing as something that evokes a sense of belonging. Brent recalled the following memory when he was asked how choral singing made him feel:

[Choral singing makes me feel] whole. It's different from orchestral music. I think there's just something so naturally beautiful about the human voice compared to that of an instrument. It's earthy and vibrant. When you're singing in a choir, singing something beautiful that has harmonies built on one another, it makes you [feel]

whole. Your insides resonate and your rib cage vibrates and that's just beautiful. It gives that sensation of presence.

Participating in a choral ensemble evokes a "sensation of presence" (Brent) for the high school boys. Through observations, it was clear that the choristers enjoyed their rehearsals, because it is a safe space for them to learn and make new music together. Correspondingly, several participants described the role that music plays in facilitating a safe space in the choir:

That's where I found a place where I could express myself and a place [where] I could show what I could do and be valued in the space. (Diego)

I enjoy my first team rugby and academics, [and] all those things are hard work. But when I come to the choir there is an aspect of it where I can enjoy myself and relax and where I could just be myself around other people. (Frank)

In our choir, there aren't any stereotypes as vivid as in the school. (Ntaka)

Brent mentioned that the "belonging factor" of choral singing allows boys to open up and be their true selves; therefore, it becomes a mechanism for these boys to gain an insight into who they are:

It's incredible to see how much a boy can open up and how much of his inner being shines through. It's almost like we know each other so much deeper and personally, you have been through the choir together than a normal friendship which is quite something.

Diego supported this statement from Brent by saying that the choir offered him a space in the school where he could gain a sense of comfort around his peers. He mentioned that singing in the choir at Kearsney College offered a friendly space where the boys could go and participate in an activity where "nobody is criticising you for who you are or what you believe in". In his interview, Smev shared his experience of how choral singing had helped him settle into Kearsney College:

[Singing in a choir is] completely new to me, and I am a little disappointed that I didn't try it sooner because it is one of those things that, when you get it, you get it, and it feels like you belong.

Numerous participants shared the same view as Smev, indicating that the choir allowed them to find their footing in the all-male high school:

I didn't know where I fit into the whole school environment [when I arrived here]. The school with the hierarchy belittles you, so once you come into the choir it's like a family. (Diego)

I wanted to be a part of an experience. I already had some prior skills so I thought that it would be fun to sing in the choir. (Cole – Gr. 9A)

Everybody is accepted and nobody is left out. (Andreas – Gr. 8)

Observations revealed that the majority of the boys who participated in the College Choir felt valued, allowing the choristers to feel important, which evoked a palpable sense of belonging. At one of the rehearsals, a leader in the choir mentioned that one of the boys was celebrating his birthday. The choir then sang “Happy Birthday” to him as the percussionists played along on the instruments. The choir responded very energetically, and the facial expression of the birthday boy lifted immediately.

Within the focus group interviews, a few boys spoke about the support they received from their peers and families outside of the school choir and how this made them feel certain about their choices to participate in choral singing activities at Kearsney College:

I've got friends outside at school [watching] our performances and they enjoy the concerts. They would also tell me how proud they are of me and the choir for doing so well. (Gregory – Gr. 11B)

One of my friends wanted to join the choir and they came and watched [one of our recent performances]. They do enjoy hearing the choir and they do respect the choir. (Ian – Gr. 8)

Whenever my friends see me in my choir uniform, they would check me out and wish me luck for the concert. (Rory – Gr. 10A)

On the contrary, a few of the choristers mentioned that their decision to join the school choir influenced their friendships outside of choir negatively. There were peers at school who did not understand their decision to sing in the choir. One of the Grade 10A focus group interviewees, Herschel, highlighted that his school friends who did not sing in the College Choir (or any other choir) did not, at times, “support” his own decision to sing. In the Grade 9B focus group interview, Oliver mentioned that some of his school friends “bring him down” and that their friends outside of choir “misjudge” the choir members.

In contrast, observational data gathered at one of the College Choir’s performances, showed that the school’s parent body supported the choir and held it in high esteem. After the performance, the parents of the choristers were visibly proud of the boys. These parents showed their pride as they shared their congratulations with the boys by hugging and exchanging high-fives directly after the performance. It was evident that these parental gestures provided reassurance for the boys’ decision to participate in choral activities at Kearsney College.

Another 25 quotations, retrieved from both individual and focus group discussions, substantiate the importance of belonging to the choir.

4.1.3 Self-sufficiency

In his interview, Diego recalled a memory where he expressed how singing in the Kearsney College Choir allowed him to gain a sense of freedom and independence:

On the one tour [when] we went to Sun City, we stayed in one of the hotels and it was me and my grade eight peers who stayed in one room, it gave us a sense of independence. We were staying in a house all by ourselves which was like a hotel room. We stayed there for two or three nights and we had a braai together, we stayed together, we sang songs, and we even did some singing on the roadside there to get some pocket money. The whole thing about singing together as a choir is the unity, brotherhood, and independence [you gain from being] in the choir.

Data from the interviews and observations indicate that aspects relating to confidence, self-concept and leadership were all positive attributes gained by boys as a result of their involvement in the College Choir.

- **Confidence**

A few of the choristers mentioned how participating in the choir helped them gain more self-confidence. Through the observations of the choir's rehearsals, it was evident that, when a boy sang a solo extract with the choir, it evoked a sense of self-assurance, meaning that choral singing presented a space where male adolescents developed their self-confidence. The singers mentioned the following aspects that were related to gaining confidence while singing in the Kearsney College Choir:

Being part of a choir breaks down that barrier of social anxiety or stage nerves.
(Brent)

[Choral singing] forces people to get out of their comfort zones and [that] builds confidence. (Qawe – Gr. 10A)

Slowly growing stage presence helped a lot in terms of building my self-confidence.
(Jayden – Gr. 12)

[It becomes] easier for me to talk to larger groups of people because I must teach a larger group of boys for choir. (Brent)

In contrast, during the interviews, a participant indicated that he experienced a lack of confidence while participating in the choir. In the Grade 9B focus group interview, Lulo mentioned feeling “embarrassed” to perform in front of his friends who do not sing in the College Choir.

- **Self-concept**

Many of the comments that were shared by participants in the individual and focus group interviews highlighted the perceived benefits of developing a positive self-concept. In Pieter's individual interview, he emphasised that music made it possible for him to “express” himself and thus he experienced an “emotional” component through choral

singing. The following quotation describes the integral role choral singing plays in developing the self-concepts of male adolescents:

It is up to the individuals [participating] in the choir and how open they are to learning new things and engaging with something [that is] strange to them. If you are in the choir as a boy, that [sets] you aside from other men because you already have this openness and desire to learn more, to be more in touch with yourself. (Brent)

Several choristers commented on how participating in the choir helped them to develop a positive image of themselves:

Every time I go to choir, it becomes that space where I could just sing, where I could show who I really am. (Frank)

For me being in the choir, even though I am not the most musical and not the most “dancy” and not being most of the things, being exposed to those things inspired me to grow and to work towards being better and growing myself. (Jimothy)

Whenever I listen and sing choral music, I almost feel like I am becoming a better person. (Solomon)

A further 15 quotations were identified that are of relevance to the positive development of the male adolescents’ self-concept.

- **Leadership**

Various participants highlighted how the choir at Kearsney College allowed them to develop leadership qualities. Through observing the rehearsals, data was gathered which highlights the responsibility boys accepted when they were elected into leadership roles, including ensuring discipline being maintained. During individual interviews, senior boys who held such positions expressed the following:

Even if you aren’t the strongest [chorister], or the most confident singer or dancer, [the leaders] are all there, [to] assist the younger choristers. (Jimothy)

I have a role in the choir, I've got a job to do, and that is to sing to the best of my ability and to lead my [voice] group. (Ryan)

It was evident that participating in choral activities at the all-male high school presented these male adolescents with an environment conducive to developing their leadership skills.

4.1.4 Shared ambition

The choristers who participated in the interviews spoke of an overall determination shared by the choir boys as a collective. Many participants framed this determination to sing in the choir in terms of ambition. According to them, at Kearsney College, choral singing requires extra work and dedication for the choir to remain at its absolute best. In a focus group discussion with the Grade 12 boys, Steven mentioned that the choir follows the saying “you reap what you sow”. In the Grade 9A focus group interview, Cole explained that participating in the choir requires “the same work ethic and effort” that a first-team rugby player would put into his sport. Ryan said the following when he explained the shared ambitions of the boys in the choir:

Putting in all this hard work, you can only look towards greatness, and I know that if I come here that I am going to rehearse and that I am going to learn great things. As a choir, we are going to improve so much and perform on an international level.

After attending the rehearsals of the Kearsney boys and carefully observing their attitudes there, it was evident that these choristers took their choir participation very seriously. In the Grade 9B focus group interview, Oliver revealed that the entire choir shared “a common goal” to achieve their ambitions as a group. This mindset was also communicated in the Grade 9A focus group interview:

To be a part of a choir is being a part of something much greater than yourself. It helps you with your future. In a company, for example, everybody is working towards one goal and our choir is like that. (Gqamile – Gr. 9A)

In preparation of the choir's tour to Austria, it was noted what strategies were used by the director to steer the collective towards this common goal. The conductor motivated them by mentioning that his previous choir had won a gold medal at the World Choir Games in Cincinnati performing one of his own arrangements, "Awakening the Ancestors", which was also included in the College Choir's tour programme that year. He encouraged the current choir at Kearsney to set a goal for themselves that they might give an even better performance of this work at the competition in Austria.

In one of the interviews with a junior boy in the choir, it became evident that touring overseas motivated the choristers extrinsically and drove them to constantly improve:

To go on a tour in your first year is scary, you must know your music compared to most years. You must understand the stakes and understand what you must do. Knowing that you must put in work to achieve what you want to do drives you.
(Jack)

Three choristers mentioned that they felt more determined whenever they were going to perform with the choir:

Every time there is a choir rehearsal, I know that in the end, it is all going to be worth it because of performing. (Solomon)

The experience when you see all of your hard work from all of those rehearsals that you have done pays off once that light hits your face on stage. (Bradley – Gr. 11B)

The whole experience, being with your friends, performances, and the goals that you set. It is all just one big experience. (John – Gr. 9A)

Nine participants shared the same belief concerning the shared ambitions of the boys in the College Choir. The data pertaining to a shared ambition is further subdivided into aspects that relate to a sense of achievement, focus, and a sense of competition.

- **Sense of achievement**

Several boys mentioned that their participation in the Kearsney College Choir evoked a sense of achievement, which motivated them to continue singing in the choir. One of the participants remarked on his sense of accomplishment when he gained mastery of repertoire that was difficult to sing:

After you have learned a song and you have performed it, I enjoy the feeling of patting myself on the back and that I have learned those moves and memorised those words while having fun at the same time with my brothers, that is what I value. (James)

Observation data revealed that the choristers gained a sense of achievement when they successfully completed a difficult piece of music. This allowed the boys to feel accomplished and happy. After having dedicated most of a rehearsal session to their “Ancestors” medley, the boys seemed very happy to have worked hard on this challenging piece. There was a palpable feeling of achievement amongst the members in the choir.

With regard to the choir’s performances, the choristers felt a keen sense of achievement after a performance that evoked a positive response from the group. They felt very happy and proud of their performance. One of the interviewees mentioned the role that an audience plays in creating a sense of achievement for the boys in the choir:

At the end of performances and that feeling you get once the crowd cheers for you, that feeling is just something that always gets me. (Solomon)

Another 18 statements from the interviews are of relevance to this theme and substantiate and saturate the notion pertaining to a ‘sense of achievement’ as an integral theme to the group.

- **Focus**

The data that was collected provided evidence that male adolescents see their association with the choir as beneficial in teaching them how to focus towards a specific goal. In the Grade 10B focus group interview, Aeron commented that choral singing improved his focus, as he got to “work cohesively” with his peers. In his individual

interview, Jack mentioned that choral singing enabled him to “focus on the conductor and the music”. It was apparent that the male adolescent choristers gained focus when the choir remained disciplined on warm-ups and subsequent rehearsal proceedings. During observations of rehearsals it became noticeable how the boys developed good concentration skills when they focused on the conductor and on matters of musicality.

- **Sense of competition**

Two participants of individual interviews, Coady and Jimothy, described the competitiveness of the boys in the choir:

[It is about] working towards a performance, and I want to make the most of it and try even harder than I normally would [every time I come to choir]. I want to achieve something cool. There’s always a goal in our choir. Our conductor wants us to achieve at least one gold medal at the World Choir Games or win something. But like the boys, we want to be world champions. We enjoy the sense of competitiveness. (Coady)

The same way a team does when they’re on that field winning and representing a country or a school, there’s that same way I feel whenever I am singing in the choir. (Jimothy)

While observing the choir during rehearsals, it was evident that the conductor motivated the choir by mentioning their previous successes at competitions. This became a big motivating factor for the boys, as it evoked “a winning mentality”.

4.1.5 Personal growth

The choristers who participated in the interviews mentioned that choral singing allowed them to develop and improve certain personal traits. These included time management skills and professionalism.

- **Time management skills**

The boys participating in the Kearsney College Choir emphasised how choral singing allowed them to gain good time management skills. As they described it, this beneficial tool could be applied to their busy schedules, which included singing in the choir,

academics and personal lives. In his interview, Diego explained that the boys should know “how to manage their time” if they wanted to participate in the choir’s activities. Alex, from the Grade 9A focus group said that punctuality played a “big” role in the choir and that the singers should “be on time” for rehearsals. In the same focus group, another participant expressed the following:

If you know that a rehearsal starts at a certain time, then you need to be there on time. (Eric – Gr. 9A)

The male adolescents at Kearsney College developed good time management skills while singing in the choir, which also helped them in other school activities. In his interview, Diego believed that the time management skills he had adopted from participating in the school choir also assisted him to plan more efficiently so that he could complete his homework:

The choir boys end up using one period of that [homework] session where we get the chance to do homework and then go to choir, which kind of puts us on the backfoot but at the same time, it comes down to how well you can manage your time. (Diego)

- **Professionalism**

The findings highlight that the Kearsney College Choir allows boys to develop a strong sense of professionalism, as two of the singers expressed in their interviews. Brent described his enthusiasm by explaining that he is “amazed” with the level of professionalism found in the Kearsney College Choir. Diego was of the same opinion and said that touring with the choir made him “feel like a professional singer”. In the Grade 12 focus group discussion, Steven mentioned that the conductor and the other leaders of the choir were responsible for inculcating professionalism in the choristers. He summarised this viewpoint by stating that every chorister was “responsible to know and learn their own work”. He maintained that this was an essential component of performing to a professional standard.

4.1.6 Pride and legacy

The Kearsney College Choir carries a positive image both within and outside of the school. The choir has a broad network and enjoys relationships with choirs locally and abroad. It's reputation quickly became evident during field observations, by seeing how they enjoyed a collaborative performance with the Missouri State University Chorale from the United States of America. Prof Cameron LaBarr, the conductor of this visiting choir, had especially reached out to Kearsney College to share the stage with the choir. The findings show that boys at Kearsney College value the choir's positive reputation, a factor that often motivated them to join the ensemble from the onset:

Just the name of it, if you sing in this choir, most people will know who you are and have expectations. People know that you [are] good. That drove me to join. (Coady)

You come here and you see what they can perform on a world-class stage and a world-class level and the energy they bring to the stage, that for me really told me I want to be here, and this was the place that I want to be. (Diego)

It's the reputation of the Kearsney College Choir [that made me join]. That goes with all our big and well-known choirs. When people think of Kearsney they normally think of rugby and the choir. (Jack)

The choristers at Kearsney College took great pride in their participation in the school choir. In the Grade 12 focus group interview, Kayden said that, when the choristers performed, they left "everything" on stage. This created a great "sense of pride" amongst the singers. Jayden from the Grade 12 focus group mentioned that he felt great "pride" when participating in the Kearsney College Choir. Brent mentioned that it was very important for senior students to uphold the legacy of the choir:

I value honouring what I have been through and what others before me have been through and carrying on that [legacy]. (Brent)

Another 38 interview statements relate to the positive perceptions of the Kearsney College Choir.

4.2 Social value

The data analysis revealed that the choristers value the social aspect that was a by-product of their involvement with the Kearsney College Choir. Sub-themes concerning the social value of participating in the choir were identified and organised under the rubrics of social experiences, brotherhood, teamwork, and cultural experiences.

4.2.1 Social experiences

The data analysis provides evidence that the social experiences that boys had in the choir played an integral role in producing good social relations among the choristers. During the observations of rehearsals and performances, it was noted that the boys enjoyed each other's company before and after events. Male adolescents enjoy socialising when they attend choir rehearsals where they share plenty of laughter, give 'bro' hugs, and can be playful. The social aspect of singing in the Kearsney College Choir became a motivating factor for male adolescents to join and continuously participate in choral activities at the school. After rehearsals, the boys enjoyed the company of their friends before they returned to their respective boarding houses to study. Jimothy revealed that, through his participation in the choir he had built "strong and meaningful friendships". Peter mentioned that the friendships that are formed and maintained in the choir are "important". He indicated that these friendships were a source of "motivation" and that socialising with peers was a "fun factor" that inspired the boys to attend rehearsals. The following statement, which was shared in the Grade 8 focus group interview, indicates that the bonds of friendship formed while singing in the Kearsney College Choir motivates the boys to attend rehearsals regularly:

I enjoy the friendships in the choir, we have a good bond and I enjoy singing with my mates. (Kat – Gr. 8)

Choral singing allows male adolescents to develop social skills and form their own identities. In his interview, Ntaka said that participating in the choir made it possible for him to "communicate easier" with his peers. When asked how choral singing affected his communication skills, Pieter made the following statement:

For me specifically, who struggles socially, it is a place where I could go and make friendships through music and not necessarily through speaking or being a social person, but rather through singing and being in harmony with the people around me. (Pieter)

On the contrary, Aeron from the Grade 10B focus group interview mentioned that he struggled to engage socially with his choir friends:

The person sitting next to me in the choir mentioned that I had poor social skills and that I won't have friends in the choir.

As a result of struggling socially in the choir, this participant mentioned that he did not find it easy to "communicate" and "situate" himself among his choir friends. Despite this negative occurrence, the participants mentioned how the social factor in the choir created a sense of enjoyment.

I just find singing in the choir fun. It is just something different to be with friends in a choir and it is something I do enjoy. (Gregory – Gr. 11B)

In a focus group interview with the Grade 11 B group, Vincent mentioned that the social aspect and the humour between conductor and choristers brought "life to the choir":

[Within some of the] rehearsals, [I sometimes enjoy] watching other people get shouted at for misbehaving. It is really funny. It just brings life to the choir.

During observations, it became evident that the male adolescents enjoyed the company of their peers before the commencement of a warm-up session or choral rehearsal. Data analysis further provided evidence that the participants valued the social aspect of touring with the Kearsney College Choir.

You find yourself becoming much closer together as a choir when you are away from home. When you're at home, you are very comfortable in your own house, but when you're touring, you bond closer together because you're all one against the world. You find that you make incredibly good friends over tours. (Brent)

In the Grade 12 focus group interview, CJ described the social factor when travelling with the choir on tours as being a “different experience” compared to other school clubs or activities:

It is a different experience because I have been on tours for hockey but going on tour with the choir is something else because it is 60 boys instead of 11 and you know everyone quite well.

In his interview, Jack mentioned that touring with the school choir allowed them to meet choristers from “different choirs”. It also provided an opportunity to meet and get to know choristers from abroad.

4.2.2 Brotherhood

The members of the Kearsney College Choir regard singing in the choir as an activity that promotes a brotherhood. Based on observations of the choir, it was evident that there was great spirit shared among the singers before their performances. Various participants highlighted the unique brotherhood that was found within the Kearsney College Choir. In his interview, Pieter explained that this brotherhood “inspired” him to participate continuously and that singing with his peers helped him “emotionally”. Ryan mentioned that the choristers share a “sense of relatability”. The following quotation was recorded during the Grade 10A focus group interview. It describes the affect that the choir’s brotherhood has on the choir members:

If one person is behind, there are people that are always there to help. I feel we have a very different bond compared to other groups and people in the school. The fact that we spend a lot of time together creating music brings us together emotionally. (Qawe – Gr. 10A)

The senior students were adamant about the importance of brotherhood within the choir. Brent mentioned that there was a great “sense of brotherhood in the choir”, and choristers “stood up” for one another. He emphasised that the senior students in the choir supported the juniors in the school blocks. Jack indicated that the choir’s brotherhood was promoted through a “common bond” that the boys shared with one another.

In his individual interview, Jimothy explained the uniqueness of the choir's brotherhood:

[With regard to the brotherhood in the choir], there are unique things that happen and unique nuggets that get dropped, unique moments, you either end up joking about them or laughing about them, talking about them, thinking about them, singing about them, dancing about them afterward, but other people wouldn't get that experience. (Jimothy)

A few of the junior choristers mentioned that they looked up to their senior choir peers as role models, thereby sharing a unique bond. In his interview, Coady mentioned that the junior boys got to build sympathetic "friendships with the older boys in the choir". He also stated that the brotherhood contributed towards the "family" element in the Kearsney College Choir.

In the choir you can be from anywhere, you can be short and small, you can be tall and huge, you do not have to be an academic to be in the choir, you can come from anywhere. Everyone can contribute and plays a big role. It is a new brotherhood. You learn more about the people and it is a different way of being in a team. (James)

In contrast to this statement, another chorister maintained that the sense of brotherhood was not as strong as is to be believed. Brandon mentioned that some of the choristers put their "personal needs" ahead of the choir. According to him, this deteriorates the "choir's needs" and influenced the brotherhood in the choir negatively.

The data analysis, however, generated another 97 quotations relevant to the brotherhood found amongst the male adolescent singers in the Kearsney College Choir, thereby making this theme a significant finding.

4.2.3 Teamwork

The majority of choristers highlighted that participating in the Kearsney College Choir made them value the ensemble's team spirit. Ian from the Grade 8 focus group mentioned that choral singing taught the choristers "teamwork" and getting to "work with people on becoming one", and that singing in the choir was not about "themselves". In his interview,

Jack said that at Kearsney, choral singing becomes a “massive team” effort. Jimothy supported Jack’s statement with the following words:

The same way a team does when they’re on that [sports] field winning and representing a country or the school, there’s that same way I feel whenever I am singing in a choir. (Jimothy)

According to the statements that participants made in their interviews, teamwork formed part of the choir’s social ethos. The boys specified that choral singing had taught them how to work together with their fellow choristers, thus allowing them to become more cohesive with each other:

Everyone contributes to choral singing and you all focus on one thing which is a good sound and a unique sound. (Jack)

While observing the attitudes of the choristers in a rehearsal, it was evident that they enjoy setting goals for one another. Eric, who is a Grade 9 student indicated that participating in the choir encouraged students to “work towards one goal”. In the Grade 10A focus group interview, Herschel mentioned that the “challenge” of singing in a choir was that the choristers should work collectively, “to reach the standards” of the choir and the goals that had been set. The teamwork in the choir created a sense of “family” for the choristers, inspiring them to work more diligently – both for the choir and for their peers:

The whole thing about singing together as a choir is unity and brotherhood and independence in the choir. (Diego)

It is a brotherhood here in the choir. You learn more about the people and it is a different way of being in a team. (James)

It is [very] special, everyone contributes and plays a big role in the choir. (James)

4.2.4 Cultural experiences

Kat made the following statement in an interview, when he was asked about sharing his view on the cultural diversity of the Kearsney College Choir:

In the choir [we have] guys who [come] from completely different cultures, everybody is different but you are still united together by the choir, and through the choir, you become one.

During the individual and focus group interviews, various participants agreed that the choir presented them with a space where they could socialise with other choristers who came from different cultural backgrounds. From observing and studying the boys' attitudes during choir rehearsals, it is documented that they enjoyed socialising with their peers, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. Brent stated that he had “learned so much about other cultures, beliefs, practices, and the way of life” through socialising with his peers in the choir. Jack explained that socialising with his choir friends from different cultural backgrounds allowed him to gain insight and “see into different cultures”. In his interview, Jimothy mentioned that “building relationships” across cultural groups was an “interesting” aspect of choral singing, as it allowed him to “learn more” and become more “intrigued by his peers”.

During the observation period, it was evident that the boys enjoyed learning and associating themselves with the languages and cultures of South Africa and the rest of the world. Singing in the choir at Kearsney College allows male adolescents, through exposure to and interactions with their friends, to become more aware and gain an appreciation of the different cultures found in South Africa:

I enjoy learning from other cultures, and it is not just something to do with the cultures, but also, I learn something from my country as well. (Peter)

I think I can have a lot more real conversations with people from other cultures because I no longer have this prejudice of cultural barriers. (Brent)

I find that learning new words and meanings of songs of [various] cultures would enhance my perception of different cultures. (Pieter)

Through observing the Kearsney College Choir during various rehearsals, there was, at times, a clear divide between choristers who came from different cultural groups. It was

evident that some of the male adolescents did not make an effort to mingle with boys from other cultures. At specific occasions, the boys would tend to navigate towards other boys from cultures and languages that they felt comfortable with.

4.3 Musical value

Four sub-themes evolved from the data analysis with regard to the perceived musical value of the male adolescent singers at Kearsney College, namely musical benefits, enjoyment of music-making, role model, and performances.

4.3.1 Musical benefits

In their interviews, the majority of boys agreed that participating in choral singing activities at Kearsney College allowed them to enjoy various music benefits and gain valuable skills. A considerable number of responses were collected that substantiated the perceived musical value of participating in choral singing at Kearsney College.

During the observation period, it was evident that participating in the choir provided an opportunity to develop good musical skills, gain musical knowledge, and acquire healthy singing techniques. During rehearsals, the conductor and choir leaders always had an expectation that the choristers should approach the music with great sensitivity. This allowed the boys to focus on developing their musical skills. In the Grade 10B focus group interview, Aeron explained that his membership in the choir allowed him to “gain good musical skills”. He continued by explaining that singing in the Kearsney College Choir provided a “new experience” for him, as the choir allowed him to improve his “sight-reading”, adding that singing in the choir allowed the boys to “work with other people in a voice group and on blending”. Various participants shared their views on how choral singing benefitted the choristers musically:

You gain so many new skills in the choir like reading music and singing with good technique. (Frank)

I get to learn tons of new things [in the choir], like what a semitone is, semitone up and down, when you are flat and all of the different phrases [and terminology]. (Smev)

Especially for someone who actually wants to go into music in the future, you learn new ways to sing and do things. (Andreas – Gr. 8)

It does teach you some music theory. It allows you to have a passion for music and you gain the ability to learn. (Brandon – Gr. 11A)

Various participants indicated that participating in choral singing allowed them to value the art of music-making. In his interview, Jimothy mentioned that singing choral music became an “important part” of his life “as a music and art student”, which allowed him to “value the music” that he experienced in the Kearsney College Choir. In another interview, Brent explained that boys who were musical had a foundation on which to continue learning and “broaden their knowledge and understanding” of choral music. To validate the quotations of Jimothy and Brent, the observations proved that choristers illustrated a great deal of music knowledge and engagement during rehearsals. The boys formed part of the overall music-making process, where the conductor drove the singers to speak about what they were learning in rehearsals, thereby allowing them to share knowledge and terminology with one another. One of the Grade 11 focus group participants mentioned the following:

[Choir] does teach you some music theory. It allows you to have a passion for music and you gain the ability to learn. (Olwethu – Gr. 11A)

Participating in the College Choir allowed the boys to engage with choral music from various genres and cultures. In his interview, Brent explained that the choir aimed to accommodate and “perform art from different cultures”, which allowed the choristers to “fully engage” by “learning and understanding” various forms of music. Observation data collected during rehearsals and performances showed that most of the boys related to the singing of indigenous South African choral music. This observation is confirmed by the following participant statements:

We do all kinds of music in the choir. We don’t just learn music, we learn the music for meaning and that is where the whole idea of learning about different cultures that are found the choir. (Olwethu – Gr. 11A)

It is also a very good touch into South African roots, I mean this is South Africa, so for a choir to be able to do that while still doing pop and all those things, just wow, it inspired me a lot. (Jimothy)

The diversity of the cultures, gave us both choral music, and classical music, they gave us South African, deep Johnny Clegg South African music, and that brings people together to learn more about different music. (CJ – Gr. 12)

The following quote from Frank summarises the perceived musical value that the Kearsney boys experience when they sing in the College Choir:

Music has no language, it has no ethnicity, it has no race, it is just the beauty of the sound of it that makes people come together. (Frank)

From the collected data, another 53 quotes were generated that relate to the perceived musical benefits of participating in the Kearsney College Choir.

4.3.2 Enjoyment of music-making

Several choristers mentioned that choral participation had allowed them to learn, enjoy, and appreciate the art of choral music. In the focus group interviews, Ian from the Grade 8 group mentioned that he “enjoys singing”, which from the onset provided him with a “reason” to join the choir. A substantial number of responses related to music enjoyment and enrichment were generated during the interviews. The participants indicated that they valued their participation in the Kearsney College Choir because of the enrichment that choral singing offered them. Choral singing provides male adolescents with new ways to value their choir membership, as was explained by a participant from the Grade 10B focus group. Scott clarified that he “enjoys the singing itself” and that his choral participation gave him new ways of “exploring” his voice. Smev supported this statement, by saying that choral singing was enriching through musical learning. In his interview, Smev explained that he “generally enjoys” choral singing as he “learns something new every day”. Another chorister, Ryan, stated that he enjoyed the “sounds” that the choir produced through singing, and that he “savours those moments”. Pieter provided the following quote when asked how he valued and enjoyed his participation in the choir:

The whole process and journey you go through to get to the result compared to the beginning is crazy and I really enjoyed that. I enjoy performing a lot, it has always been a part of me.

Two further sub-themes have emerged from the data that were collected, namely choreography and serving as message bearers.

- **Choreography**

The participants mentioned that they valued choreography while performing choral music and that it became something they particularly enjoyed while singing in the choir. In his interview, Solomon said that he enjoyed how the choir rehearsals became more “fun” when dancing was added to the music that they sing in the choir. Rory from the Grade 10A focus group values choral singing because it allowed him to learn a new dancing skill as well:

[In the choir] we learn different ways of singing and [we] learn how to dance.

Coady indicated that the choreography performed with the choir’s repertoire aimed to “replicate the cultures”. In the Grade 10A focus group discussion, Herschel stated that learning the choreography allowed choristers to work “cohesively” with one another. He further said that choreography allowed the choristers to work together, since the singers “helped” each other with movements, which he felt made the choir “become better” as a collective group. Rory from the Grade 10A focus group provided the following interview quotation that supports the idea that choreography improves group cohesion:

One of my friends always helps me to do my dances better and it is not like someone is laughing at you whenever you are flopping the movements, most of the time, it is people that really want to help you and the choir to become better.

During the observation period, it was noticed that the Kearsney College Choir focused on showcasing their abilities; for example, their use of choreography, to the detriment of the singing and overall musicality. Both in rehearsals and performances, choreography affected the blend between the voices and even caused some choristers to develop a

tendency to sing in a shouty manner. At times, the choir's intonation was hampered when the singers had to move to the music.

Despite this, the choreography played an integral role in the male adolescents' understanding of various indigenous cultures of Africa and appreciated by the participants. Qawe from the Grade 10A focus group said that the choir aimed to make students gain an understanding of where "movements originate" from. He also felt that it was "important to learn about a culture" through movement. The boys at Kearsney College appeared to value the musical aspect of choreography, since it assisted students to concentrate better on the music itself and to develop cross-cultural cohesion with their peers. It was also evident that moving while singing helped the boys to engage with the music intrinsically. Peter said that the choreography the Kearsney College Choir performed became an element of pride. In his interview, he spoke enthusiastically when he explained that "not many other choirs" performed movements to such an extent as the Kearsney boys did.

- **Message-bearing**

In the Grade 10A focus group discussion, Herschel stated that choral singing allowed the boys to share the meanings of a text and its music with their audiences, something he enjoyed very much. He explained that choral singing allowed him to "express his feelings" and added that the choir focused on performing music to "send a message to the people who are listening". This aspect allowed the choristers to express their feelings and gain motivation through choral singing. Observations provide evidence that the message-bearing element of choral singing was taken seriously in the choir's training. During rehearsals, the conductor would focus on explaining the meaning of a text and demonstrate how to approach various genres of music. This allowed the boys to gain basic knowledge of every item in their repertoire. Message-bearing was a common goal shared by the singers, as indicated by a participant in the Grade 10B focus group interview:

[Our goal is] to create a performance that is so good that it mesmerises everyone in the audience. (Scott – Gr. 10B)

4.3.3 Role model

The boys participating in the interviews acknowledged the role that the conductor played in creating a positive choir environment at Kearsney. During rehearsals, the conductor set clear goals to be achieved, conveyed a clear understanding of each piece's context, and facilitated a positive working environment for musical learning and enrichment. The conductor motivated the boys and encouraged them to work hard for the collective good of the choir. In the Grade 10B focus group interview, Manny commented that the conductor made it “fun” for the boys to participate in choral singing. The same participant added that the director contributed to the “home” feeling he got when he sang in the school choir. In his interview, Ntaka indicated that the conductor “shows empathy” towards the boys, making him “reliable and helpful” towards the students at Kearsney College.

In one of the rehearsals, there was a real sense of togetherness when the conductor shared a joke with the choir. It made the boys feel part of the entire team activity. During the choral rehearsals, the conductor applied various teaching techniques to create an environment where male adolescents could enjoy learning music from various cultures and genres. In their choir practices, it became an expectation for the boys to illustrate a great deal of musical knowledge and to engage with the music. The conductor expected the boys to remain attentive and focused. In the interviews, various participants described how the conductor had helped them gain knowledge about their musical development. Ntaka indicated that he “values” the “quality” of the directors repertoire choices, which promoted inclusivity through diversity. In his interview, Diego provided the following quote, which highlights the important role that a choir's conductor played in creating an inclusive environment:

He's always open to all cultures and that's why I think he tries to make that pot full of cultural activities [come together for us all to sing], today we sang a German song, yesterday we sang a Zulu song and we will be singing an Afrikaans song later. (Diego)

The choral conductor played an integral role to make choral singing at Kearsney College an inclusive educational experience. As Smev stated it in his individual interview, the

choral conductor “pushes” the boys “with any chance he gets”, which “benefits” their musical development.

It was evident that the director of the Kearsney College Choir was not only a knowledgeable, passionate and caring educator, but an adult which the boys trusted and could confide in. There was a deep respect between both parties and it was clear that the conductor was seen as a strong role model for the boys.

4.3.4 Performances

During the interviews, participants described the sheer joy that they experienced when performing on stage with their fellow choristers. In the Grade 10B focus group discussion, Scott commented that “performing” on an “international stage” showed how much the boys from Kearsney College could “achieve”. Bradley in the Grade 11B focus group interview mentioned that participating in the choir offered a “chance to sing at exquisite venues” along with their peers, in venues such as a “huge cathedral”. Vincent from the same focus group discussion indicated that this made choral singing “fun”. Some of the boys made the following statements concerning their enjoyment of performing in the Kearsney College Choir:

[The performances] made me remain in the choir. If we didn’t go on any tours or perform regularly, I don’t think I would have lasted in the choir for long. (Coady)

[I value] performing in front of big crowds and the adrenaline of performing. (Solomon)

I always heard that the choir here participates in the World Choir Games, so I thought that I always wanted to be part of that. (Daniel – Gr. 9B)

Within the school’s choir, male adolescents at Kearsney College are given the opportunity to perform on national and international stages. The participants stated that performing in the choir was an activity that they enjoyed very much.

4.4 Hindrances

In the process of analysing the collected data, several participants identified hindrances related to their choral participation at Kearsney College. These are categorised into three sub-themes, namely time and pressure, gendered stereotypes, and Covid-19.

4.4.1 Time and pressure

Various participants indicated having gained negative attitudes concerning the amount of time that they would need to sacrifice in order to participate in the Kearsney College Choir. In their interviews, many of the choristers claimed that their schooling lives were affected due to their commitment to the choir, and that choral singing affected their study and personal time negatively. In the Grade 12 focus group interview, Luke mentioned the “demanding” schedule at Kearsney College and said that the students should “compromise” between various activities at school. He added that there were days in his life at Kearsney that felt “taken up”. Zipho from the Grade 11B focus group discussion shared the same view, when stating that the choristers “give up their day” when they participate in choral activities at the school. He continued by expressing the following:

On Friday afternoons, our peers would go home and relax after a busy week, or they could prepare for the test on the following day, but [as choristers], we have to work hard [on Friday evenings]. (Vincent – Gr. 11B)

Brent said that it became a challenge to find a “balance between choir, sport, and academics”. As he explained, the choristers at Kearsney College found themselves “under time pressure” as a direct consequence of singing in the choir. Ryan portrayed choral singing as a “tiring” activity that demanded plenty of “effort”, which at times made the singers experience “frustration”. The following interview quotes are relevant to time constraints as a result of participating in the Kearsney College Choir:

It feels sometimes that choir can take away my time with my friends. (Coady)

It’s really demanding of your time and your effort. At Kearsney we are only allowed two prep sessions and obviously, during the day we are all [busy] with sports and we come back to have a shower, go to supper, then it’s choir and we are sitting in rehearsals. (Diego)

Choir takes up so much time which is usually academic time and my academics do get affected. (Ntaka)

Being in Matric we have a very demanding schedule in terms of academic portfolio tasks. The time that we could use to study or do academic work is taken by choir a lot of the time, which can be quite frustrating. (Pieter)

A huge disadvantage [of my participation in choir] that I find is time. I know we always say that we do not have enough time, but we get busy with other work and sports. Time is a very big factor and not just for music but for everything at school. (Darwin – Gr. 10B)

Alex, a participant from the Grade 11B focus group interview mentioned that male adolescents experienced “a lot of pressure” because singing in the choir interfered with other school activities. In an individual discussion with Diego, he mentioned that there were numerous days when he felt that he had “so much work” on his hands as a result of his choir participation. During the observation period, various choristers arrived late at numerous rehearsals because of their participation in extra-academic classes or sport-related activities.

In his interview, Jimothy said that he experienced leadership pressure in the choir. He mentioned that there was a substantial amount of pressure and “expectation” for him to carry out leadership responsibilities for the choir, and that it was not always easy for leaders to “fulfil” the needs and wants of their choir peers:

There are a lot of expectations and there are a lot of things that people want me to do, people want me to say, people want me to fulfil. (Jimothy)

A total of 61 interview quotations were generated relating to the sub-theme of time and pressure, experienced as a consequence of singing in the Kearsney College Choir. It is therefore a significant finding of this study.

4.4.2 Gendered stereotypes

Various participants indicated that, as a consequence of their participation in the Kearsney College Choir, they experienced discomfort over gendered stereotypes that were directed towards them. As indicated by Zac from the Grade 12 focus group participants, there was a general assumption that the term “choir boys” was used to target the choristers at Kearsney College. He continued by mentioning that “choir boys” are usually seen “as less” compared to the boys participating in sports. Several participants admitted to being affected by gendered stereotypes while they participated in the choir. In his interview, Jack appeared quite despondent when he indicated that there was a regular occurrence where boys would ask him, “How can you be a guy singing in the choir?”, and stating that “choir boys are soft”. Jan from the Grade 9A focus group interview explained that some choristers suffered from the effects of toxic masculinity. He clarified that there were assumptions directed towards choir boys where other male adolescents at Kearsney said that “choir is a gay thing” and not a “masculine thing to do”. Brent explained that, ever since he started singing from a young age, it seemed “different” for boys to be singing in choirs. Coady supported Brent’s comment by saying that the boys who do not participate in choral singing at Kearsney College view the boys in the choir as being “different” and “soft”. Two further sub-themes are listed below pertaining to a lack of male interest in choral singing, and bullying as a result of participation in the choir.

- **Lack of male interest in choral singing**

During the interviews, participants specifically shared their views on the lack of male interest in choral singing at their school from the collective school community. In his interview, Smev explained that he used to be like the other boys who did not participate in choral activities at Kearsney. He emphasised that he used to be “scared” to sing, due to his uncertainty that “singing in a choir is not for me”. In a focus group discussion with the Grade 12 students, Luyanda clarified that there was a “stigma” present in their school concerning what “boys think of the choir”. He continued with the following words:

A lot of the time, parents would idolise rugby but not support the choir as much. I think a lot of boys throw the shade on choral singing because they do not always understand it that well. (CJ – Gr. 12)

From observing the College Choir at one of their performances, there was noticeably minimal attendance and support from learners who did not sing in the choir. At this performance, one such student attended the concert and seemed very disinterested in the performance of his fellow Kearsney peers. In the Grade 11 and Grade 12 focus groups, the senior boys shared similar responses about the attitudes of their peers outside of choir, who apparently believed that they were “wasting time” by singing in the school choir. Scott highlighted the fact that his friends who do not participate in the choir “judged” him for putting a lot of “effort” and “time” into this activity. Luyanda mentioned the following after he had listened to what his peers had to say in the interview:

They do not understand the time and effort we put into the choir, they do not see what we actually do. (Luyanda – Gr. 12)

- **Bullying**

A small number of students from the interviews mentioned being bullied as a consequence of their participation in choral singing. Gregory from the Grade 11B focus group said that he was bullied in class time, when his peers would make “fun” of him singing in the choir. Thato from the same focus group discussion agreed. When school mates would make “fun” of his participation in choir, it made him feel “annoyed”. Several other participants also mentioned being bullied as a result of participating in the choir:

Whenever the choir is mentioned in classes, they would sometimes make comments or tease you. (Harry – Gr. 10A)

They would bump you unnecessarily on the sports field. (Jan – Gr. 9A)

They definitely give us a lot of banter. (Winston – Gr. 12)

4.4.3 Covid-19

The data analysis revealed that Covid-19 had a substantial impact on choral singing at Kearsney College. In the interviews, various participants mentioned that the Covid-19 pandemic affected the choristers’ overall morale. In his interview, Brent indicated that the “brotherhood” and “connectivity” between the choristers had taken a “hit”, which had affected the “learning space” for the students participating in the choir. He continued by

explaining that the pandemic made the singers come back to school with elevated “negativity”. In another individual interview, Jimothy said that many choristers at Kearsney College had lost interest in choral singing during the Covid-19 pandemic, causing them to “leave the choir” after the national lockdown.

In his interview, Jack shared the following story on how Covid-19 had affected his choral singing experience at Kearsney College:

This year has been tough [for us as a choir]. Normally when you are with the Kearsney College Choir, you are with each other for three years before you go on a big tour or even a big performance. Now with Covid, we have lost that chemistry with each other. It was a dreading and horrible feeling. In my first year (2020) we were supposed to go to Belgium, Flanders for the World Choir Games. We ended up having only one performance which is my own personal highlight up to now since I only joined the choir in 2020. Missing out on a beautiful tour to Flanders, which I have never been to, was quite sad. Just the experiences of being in the choir, you just miss it, it was like two years of your life, gone.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter the findings pertaining to the value of choral participation for adolescents attending an independent male high school are presented in detail. The subsequent chapter, Chapter Five, will delve into a comprehensive analysis of these findings, exploring their correlation with existing literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Chapter Four presented the findings that delve into the intricate and multifaceted insights of male adolescent participants in choral singing at an independent South African male high school. Prior research conducted within a South African context (Barrett, 2007; Barrett, 2017; Barrett & Vermeulen, 2019; Bartolome, 2018) highlights the value of choral singing, although there is a scarcity of global studies examining the attitudes of male adolescents towards choral participation, which is evident by Elloriaga (2011), Kennedy (2002), and Lucas (2011). The current study seeks to contribute to the existing knowledge by exploring the perceived value of choral singing, specifically within the context of a male adolescent high school choir. This study aims to fill a gap within literature through the targeted interviews and observations, utilising a South African high school male choir as a case study.

In Chapter Four, three main themes emerged from the data analysis that are relevant to the value of choral singing. The boys at Kearsney College spoke about the personal, social, and musical value attributed to their involvement in choral singing, which is similar to the themes that emerged in research conducted by Adderly et al. (2003), Barrett (2017), and Bartolome (2013). Adderly et al. (2003) investigated the motivation of high school music students in a large American high school in a Northeastern city to join and remain in music ensembles, whereas Barrett (2017) conducted a case study with a mixed choir that involved 76 members of the University of Pretoria Camerata, focusing on the value and social capital of participating in a choir. In her research with the Seattle Girls' Choir, Bartolome (2013) also lists personal, social, and musical value as significant findings in her research, while further adding supplementary findings to do with choir as community enrichment, choir as ambassadorship, and choir as advocacy. In contrast, this current research provides a new perspective on the value of choral participation through the eyes of adolescent boys who attend an independent South African high school. By introducing previously uncharted phenomena into the ongoing discussion, the findings within this study add value to the already existing literature and further heighten our understanding of the value of singing within a choir.

In this chapter, the findings are grouped into major and minor themes (Table 2) concerning the value that male adolescents attribute to singing in a choir. These themes were generated through extensive analysis of the data that are presented in Chapter

Four. The major themes are grouped according to extensive responses that touched on the same viewpoints, whereas minor themes are categorised into the unique opinions and experiences that were expressed by fewer participants regarding the value that they attached to choral singing at Kearsney College.

Table 4: Major and minor themes pertaining to the value of choral singing at Kearsney College

THEME 1 PERSONAL VALUE	THEME 2 SOCIAL VALUE	THEME 3 MUSICAL VALUE	THEME 4 HINDRANCES
Major themes Passion & enjoyment (emotional benefits/touring) Belonging & support Self-sufficiency (confidence/self- concept/leadership) Shared ambition (sense of achievement/focus/sense of competition)	Major themes Social experiences Brotherhood	Major themes Musical benefits Enjoyment of music- making (choreography/message -bearing)	Major themes Time & pressure Gendered stereotypes (lack of male interest in choral singing/bullying)
Minor themes Personal growth (time management skills/professionalism) Pride & legacy	Minor themes Teamwork Cultural experiences	Minor themes Role model Performances	Minor themes Covid-19

5.1 Major themes related to personal value

The personal value that male adolescents attributed to participating in choral singing at Kearsney College was reported and categorised into four major themes: passion and enjoyment, belonging and support, self-sufficiency, and shared ambition.

5.1.1 Passion and enjoyment

The data found that the majority of male adolescents participating in the Kearsney College Choir joined the ensemble because of their love and enjoyment for singing. In line with findings from existing literature, this study reveals that the profound effect that choral singing has resides in the possibility of fostering important friendships. The participants in this research expressed the importance of emotional benefits as a byproduct of their involvement in choir, and listed touring as an extrinsic motivating factor. Various choristers specified that their love and passion for choral singing motivated them to continue participating in the choir. Having a passion for singing thus becomes an intrinsic factor that motivates singers to participate in choral activities voluntarily, which is well substantiated in literature (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Jacob et al., 2009; Joseph & Southcott, 2014; Kennedy, 2002; Lucas, 2011).

In this study, male adolescent participants expressed a view that singing in the choir at their school provides 'new' experiences and an opportunity for them to enjoy singing with their peers, especially during rehearsals. This finding corresponds with the research of Barrett, who found that choristers experienced a "feeling of connectedness" (2017, p. 133) during rehearsals which elevates the significance of singing in a choir. Bartolome (2013) revealed that sharing friendships in a choral setting becomes a noteworthy benefit for singers. Participating in the Kearsney College Choir made the singers feel valued, which became a source of motivation for the boys to continue participating in choral singing at their school. This finding relates to the research conducted by Einarsdottir and Gudmundsdottir (2016), who identified that the enjoyment individual participants derived from singing as a group activity was something that motivated them to participate in their choir voluntarily. The male adolescents in my study indicated that singing in the choir made them aware of their singing talents and that performing on a stage contributed to their passion and love for the activity. The study by Lucas (2011) suggests that male adolescents' singing abilities and their enjoyment of singing in a choir become influential

factors for continued involvement. The present study adds to the literature about male adolescent choral singing. It shows that teenage boys primarily joined the Kearsney College Choir for the love and enjoyment of singing. The data reveals that choral singing provides them with enticing opportunities to enjoy singing with their friends, thereby adding value to the experience of participating in the choir.

The participants explained that singing in the choir at Kearsney College allowed them to experience a sense of joy, which uplifted and benefitted their overall mood. The activity provided an emotional and creative outlet for them to express their feelings to one another, as a by-product of singing with people that share the same passion, which helped them to escape their daily stresses. This notion corresponds with research that investigated the positive influences of choral singing on emotional well-being (Acquah, 2016; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Bullack et al., 2018; Clift et al., 2010; Jacob et al., 2009; Sanal & Gorsev, 2014). A prominent study from Iceland investigated the motives of singers who participated in ten amateur choirs, revealing that music participation allows singers to experience “leisure, relaxation and fulfilment” (Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016, p. 51), a finding which corresponds to this research. Choir participation gives choristers a space where they can experience a sense of relaxation, allowing them to relax and escape their daily stress and tension. Data from observation and interviews revealed the positive feelings they experienced exuded a vibrant energy that uplifted their spirit and overall joy. This finding is similar to those of both Bullack et al. (2018) and Jacob et al. (2009), who mention that choral singing benefits singers’ affective state by promoting positive feelings. It was evident that the boys were visibly quiet and preoccupied at the start of rehearsals but left feeling energised and enthusiastic. Clift et al. found that choral singing improves choristers’ “quality of life, wellbeing, and physical health” (2010, p. 19-20). The current study offers evidence that male adolescents benefit emotionally through their participation in an all-male high school choir.

The participants specified that touring with the Kearsney College Choir is a strong motivating factor behind their reasons for joining and for their continued involvement. Various studies highlight the significance of touring with a choir (Amuah, 2013; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Bjerkén, 2013; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Kennedy, 2002; Werner & DeJardin, 2009). Both nationally and internationally, the promise of touring is an extrinsic factor that promotes a positive work ethic in rehearsals, while

additionally adding an element of excitement to singing in the College Choir at Kearsney. Touring is an important motivating factor for many choirs (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013); an enriching one which adds to life experience and education (Barrett, 2017) and creates opportunities for social bonding (Amuah, 2013; Bartolome, 2013). There are very few studies that highlight the significance of touring as an aspect of participating in a male adolescent school choir. Listing an added benefit, this study provides evidence that male adolescents become more dedicated in rehearsals when they work on their touring repertoire. Although this motivating factor was shared by the majority of the group, the data revealed that added pressure and angst, as experienced by two participants, was a direct consequence of preparing for the international tour.

5.1.2 Belonging and support

During the interviews, the choristers explained that participating in the choir allowed them to experience a strong sense of belonging, a notion that is well substantiated in literature (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Hammond, 2004; Jacob et al., 2009; Joseph & Southcott, 2018; Parker, 2018). According to the participants in this study, choral singing evoked a shared feeling of safety (Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Jacob et al., 2009) and value (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Jacob et al., 2009; Parker, 2018). A sense of belonging is “derived from music engagement [...], allowing participants to focus their attention on the collective endeavor [...], creating what is experienced as an accepting and welcoming climate of belonging” (Bartolome, 2013, p. 409). The participants indicated that singing in a choir evokes a sense of presence (Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Powell, 2014), which contributes to the safe space for them to learn and enjoy music.

The data collected provides evidence that choral singing creates a welcoming environment for male adolescents, conducive to both expressing and being their true selves. This finding correlates with research conducted by Elorriaga (2011), which maintains that male adolescent choristers fully express themselves once they find their vocal identities. Participants in the current study mentioned that having a sense of belonging to the choir allows them to be more open, and aware of their true selves, leading to what Parker called “further social identity development” (2018, p. 234). The finding in the study is, on the surface, quite similar to a discovery by Parker (2018). However, it stands out because it revolves around male singers, differing from Parker’s

study which focused on female participants. A significant finding in this study relates to how male adolescents develop their identities through their involvement in the Kearsney College Choir.

The choristers mentioned that the support they received from their families and friends reassured them of their decision to join the Kearsney College Choir. This type of encouragement is a common theme in literature pertaining to choral participation (Dabback, 2018; Kennedy, 2002; Mizener, 1993). Throughout the data collection period, it was evident that the parent body of the school supported their children and held the choristers in high esteem. After a performance, the parents gave hugs and high-fives to their children to demonstrate their support. These results correspond with research by Dabback (2018) and Parker (2009), which highlight the significant role that parents play in providing reassurance for their children's choices to participate in singing activities. This phenomenon accommodates "positive external motivation and support to reinforce involvement and motivate musical engagement" (Dabback, 2018, p. 248).

In contrast, several participants indicated that their decision to join the school choir impacted their friendships outside of the choir negatively. Choristers revealed that a few of their friends who did not participate in the choir did not support their decision to sing in the group. From observing the Kearsney College Choir at their performances, it was observed that there was minimal attendance from non-choir boys which showed a lack of peer support for musical activities at this all-male high school. Peer support plays an integral role in the enrolment of choir singers (Brand, 2019), and a lack of approval from friends outside the choir may cause further complications in male attitudes towards choral singing (Powell, 2015).

5.1.3 Self-sufficiency

During the interviews, the participants revealed that singing in the Kearsney College Choir allowed them to gain positive attributes that contributed to their personal growth. These included confidence, self-concept, and leadership skills. This finding corresponds to the vast international body of literature that substantiates the role of choral participation in manifesting a singer's sense of self (Adams, 2020; Barrett, 2017; Barrett & Vermeulen, 2019; Bartolome, 2013; Chorus America, 2009; Dabback, 2018; Elloriaga, 2011; Freer, 2014; Jacob et al., 2009; Parker, 2009; Sharma & Sharma, 2010).

Singing in a choir increases “self-confidence and self-accomplishment” (Bartolome, 2013, p. 403), which allows singers to become more confident as they associate with others in a comfortable environment (Barrett, 2017). According to several participants, being a chorister helped them break down the barriers of social anxiety, since choristers are expected to work together and develop a reciprocal understanding, both as singers and as peers. Barrett’s research into the attitudes of choristers in a multicultural South African university choir confirms that this camaraderie boosts further confidence levels amongst the singers (2017). In this study, observational data showed that male adolescent singers hyped each other up before big performances, which illustrates a positive atmosphere which benefits the members’ confidence levels. According to the boys that were interviewed, choral singing allowed them to step beyond their accustomed boundaries and become better aware of their true inner selves, which is similar to the findings of Barrett’s study (2017).

Various choristers claimed that singing in the Kearsney College Choir benefitted their development of positive self-concepts, a notion supported in literature (Parker, 2009; Sharma & Sharma, 2010). Adams (2020) has written that adolescents who participate in high school choir activities experience higher levels of self-concept because of their singing. The singers at Kearsney College noted that they enjoyed their time singing in the choir and that this activity allowed them to prosper. Furthermore, the participants in this study described choral music as a means to express themselves, thereby making singing an emotional outlet for them. The findings of Lucas (2011) and Powell (2014) indicate that participating in an all-male choir gave male adolescents valuable opportunities to express themselves and develop their self-concepts, which corresponds with the findings of the current study.

The data suggests that singing in a choir allows one to build and develop strong leadership skills; a finding supported by research (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Jacob et al., 2009; Powell, 2014; Ramsey, 2013). In the Kearsney College Choir, senior students were handed immense responsibilities when chosen for leadership roles. Observational data reveals that the choir’s leaders were expected to assist the conductor in ensuring that the group’s discipline was maintained during rehearsals and before performances, as well as during the choir’s warm-up sessions. During the data collection period, it was

documented how the consistent work of the choir's leaders created an environment that was conducive to optimal learning, especially during rehearsals. This allowed the boys to nurture good leadership skills. These findings relate to Barrett's (2017) research, which demonstrated that participating in a choir presents singers with an opportunity to develop efficient leadership skills. Bartolome's (2013) research shows that leadership roles allowed the members of a choir to feel empowered. This encourages members to deliver "artistic and administrative inputs" as they participate in a choir (Ramsey, 2013, p. 201).

5.1.4 Shared ambition

The choristers agreed that singing in the choir required an impeccable work ethic and a continuous commitment to achieve their common goals and ambitions. Throughout the data analysis, shared ambition emerged as one of the main themes, further comprising of sub-themes that include a sense of achievement, focus, and a sense of competition. In the Kearsney College Choir, boys are expected to work as a team to achieve their goals, and they should therefore make the necessary effort to achieve and uphold the choir's reputation. Teamwork is an integral component of choral participation, as it is required "to accomplish group goals, including leadership, accountability, and giving of oneself" (Parker, 2009, p. 230). It is thus important to create an environment where choristers work together as a team to ensure the success of the ensemble (Langston & Barrett, 2008). As per the recorded observations, the conductor was responsible for managing and inspiring the singers in the choir, an essential component of choral music education and leadership. He was highly successful in motivating the members to be accomplished in their performances and in setting realistic goals to achieve, which allowed the boys to become more ambitious and determined. Some participants revealed that the entire experience of performing with the choir and working towards common goals increased their dedication, which correlates to findings in literature (Deci & Ryan, 2010; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Any activity that instils autonomous motivation among its members allows them to experience both intrinsic and extrinsic value in that activity (Deci & Ryan, 2010). This then creates a positive influence on the determination levels of members who participate in a given task (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

In their interviews, the boys agreed that participating in the Kearsney College Choir made them feel a great sense of personal achievement. Various studies have highlighted achievement as a personal benefit that musician experience in an array of settings

(Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Jacob et al., 2009; Kennedy, 2002). Observational data verified that the members of the College Choir become happier and experienced a feeling of accomplishment when they were able to sing demanding musical compositions, studied during rehearsals throughout the year. This finding is substantiated by Barrett, who has noted that choristers experience a sense of achievement when “mastering a difficult song” (2017, p. 42). Several of the choristers in this study indicated how, after performances, they experienced a sense of achievement that brought further positive emotions and pride, correlating with the findings of Jacob et al. (2009). The experience of achievement demonstrates that participating in the choir results in a positive mood once collective goals had been reached.

The current study has substantiated the connection between achievement and positive emotions. It has demonstrated that engaging in choir activities assisted male adolescents in enhancing their emotional wellbeing and cognitive capacities, including their concentration abilities. The participants highlighted that being a chorister enabled them to gain higher focus levels through singing. Aquah (2016) and Clift et al. (2010) have shown that cognitive functions remain active, allowing choristers to experience heightened concentration levels whilst singing. This notion ties into the current research, as male adolescents worked cohesively during rehearsals in order to achieve their shared ambitions as a choir.

The data analysis reveals that the competitive spirit in the Kearsney College Choir can be considered another significant finding of the study. The boys explained that participating in the choir laid a foundation for them to become competitive singers. This enabled them to gain inspiration through the activity. The singers mentioned that working towards performances and tours, such as the World Choir Games, added an element of excitement to what would normally be considered a purely leisure activity. This finding illustrates that the spirit of competition is an immense motivator for boys to enrol and continue participating in choral singing at Kearsney College. Bartolome illustrates that the spirit of competition within the Pretoria East choral culture is a highly valued “driving force” (2018, p. 274) for choirs in the area. The current study therefore adds to the literature concerning the elevation and value of competition in choral singing in South Africa, proposing that this competitive nature extends beyond the borders of Pretoria East (Bartolome, 2018), and most likely engrained in the culture of the people. The literature

illustrates that this competitiveness is a fundamental factor in choral singing, both locally (Bartolome, 2018) and internationally (Hammond, 2004).

5.1.5 Minor themes related to personal value

According to individual participants, singing in the Kearsney College Choir leads to other personal experiences that further contribute value to the activity. Minor themes related to the personal value of singing in the Kearsney College Choir were identified by the singers which include personal growth, and pride and legacy.

5.1.5.1 Personal growth

The participants highlighted that singing in the choir helped them develop traits that contributed to their personal growth. In this study, these attributes include time management skills and gaining professionalism.

According to the choristers who were interviewed, managing their time in connection with the numerous choral activities is an integral skill that contributes to the success of the choir. Barrett's research explains that "time management is a form of self-discipline" (2017, p. 50). It requires great skill for choristers to manage their load of schoolwork and other activities. In this study, the boys revealed that it became a necessity to manage their time effectively, and that it further benefitted their overall approach to optimally planning their school and personal activities. This finding is supported in the literature (Adderly et al., 2003; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Chorus America, 2009).

Throughout the data collection period, it was evident that the Kearsney College Choir allowed boys to develop professionalism, which contributed to the success and prestige of the ensemble. The male adolescents mentioned that the core component of the choir's success rested upon the professionalism of the boys and how they took responsibility to prepare for rehearsals and performances. Various choristers indicated that they felt professional when performing with the choir on world-class stages, especially when on tour. Comparing these findings to the literature, both Barrett (2017) and Bartolome (2013) have shown that singers are expected to take responsibility for preparing and learning their work before rehearsals, which adds to the success of any choir. Barrett's study (2017) argues that being accountable to a choir promotes a professional image, whereas Bartolome adds that members experience strong choral performances as a means to

promote “an image of professionalism and music accomplishment” (2013, p. 412). The findings of the present study are therefore similar to those of Barrett (2017) and Bartolome (2013), but uniquely so as it relates to the perspectives of male adolescent choristers.

5.1.5.2 Pride and legacy

The Kearsney College Choir has a reputation in South Africa for being an exceptional choir, an aspect which contributes to the legacy of the school, worth protecting by its current and future members. The appealing reputation of the choir was palpable during observations, especially in regard to the choir’s performance with the Missouri State University Chorale (USA), under the direction of Prof. Cameron LaBarr. Several participants indicated that the choir's reputation motivated them to join the Kearsney choir, which enabled them to continuously participate in choral singing activities. International research has illustrated that males place an emphasis on the success and pride of a choir (Powell, 2014; Ramsey, 2013), which is relevant to the findings of the current study. Developing a sense of pride through a respected reputation, and representing a school through choral singing, becomes an important aspect of continuous participation (Powell, 2014), which evokes a sense of pride when male adolescents form part of a singing culture, therefore, “viewing membership as a privilege and honor” (Ramsey, 2013, p. 99). The findings of the current study coincide with the results of both Powell (2014) and Ramsey (2013) as it was evident during observations that the choristers take great pride when participating in the school choir. Several participants have indicated in their interviews that they always perform to the best of their ability and that it is of utmost importance to uphold the positive legacy of the school choir.

5.2 Major themes related to social value

The male adolescents at Kearsney College stressed that interacting within a social environment while singing in the choir is a pivotal reason for their participation. The data was sorted into two major themes which includes social experiences and brotherhood.

5.2.1 Social experiences

An imperative facet for members singing in choirs is the social experience attached to participation, a notion well recognised in literature (Acquah, 2016; Bannerman, 2019; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Brand, 2019; Cliff et al., 2010; Dabback, 2018; Durrant, 2005; Hammond, 2004; Jacob et al., 2009; Joseph & Southcott, 2018; Kennedy, 2002;

Parker, 2018). When collecting data for the current study, the male adolescents specified that the social experiences found in the Kearsney College Choir played an integral role in fostering good relations amongst the choristers. This finding corresponds to the research of Kennedy (2002), which illustrates that boys place high value on the social aspect of choral singing. The participants of the current study highlighted that the social experiences found within the Kearsney College Choir became an influential factor in motivating them to continually participate in the ensemble. Similarly, Einarsdottir and Gudmundsdottir signified that social experiences become a major factor in continuous motivation for choristers as it “increases people’s happiness and is good for the soul” (2016, p. 43), a pivotal aspect for singers to remain in choirs (Jacob et al., 2009). In the current study, the male adolescents stated that engaging socially with their peers during rehearsals allowed them to build strong, meaningful, and important friendships. This further resulted in singers feeling accepted, as it contributed towards a sense of belonging within the group, leading to increased social status amongst each other (Durrant, 2005; Hammond, 2004; Parker, 2018). Pertaining to the importance of male adolescents socialising within a choral context, the findings of the present study add to literature, stipulating those social experiences in the Kearsney College Choir evoked continuous participation from its members.

5.2.2 Brotherhood

Choral singing promotes a strong brotherhood amongst the members of the Kearsney College choir. When observing the ensemble at one of their performances, it was evident that the choristers share a strong sense of brotherhood when they exchanged high-fives and ‘bro hugs’ before going onto stage. The trading of positive feelings before a performance underlines the unique brotherhood found within the choir, and is supported in literature (Ramsey, 2013). The participants of the current study expressed that having a brotherhood within the choir evokes inspiration for male adolescent choristers to continuously participate in choral singing at Kearsney College. This, in turn, facilitates the development of healthy bonds among the singers. Having a common bond with their peers resulted in choristers supporting each other. In their interviews, the junior boys in the choir indicated that sharing a unique bond with their senior peers promoted a ‘family feeling’. A strong brotherhood in the choir provided an opportunity for singers to contribute and play a significant role within the ensemble. In literature, it is well documented that male adolescents find importance in sharing their love for choral singing through positive

peer influences, which becomes a major motivating factor of continuous participation (Kennedy, 2002; Lucas, 2011), highlighting the noteworthiness of male interaction amongst adolescents (Powell, 2014). The present study relates to these findings but adds to literature pertaining to the ‘brotherhood’ element in male adolescent choral singing by showcasing the significance of relationships between junior and senior members. Another finding of the current study is the contrast between positive and negative opinions regarding the brotherhood in the choir. During the interviews, one of the members participating in the Kearsney College Choir indicated that certain choristers would put their personal needs ahead of the ambitions of the choir, which negatively affected the brotherhood in the choir. When observing the discipline of the male adolescents during rehearsals, it was evident that members arriving late for choir practice, or showing a lack of determination towards the activity, was not in line with the overall ethos, jeopardising the brotherhood and ambitions of the collective.

5.2.3 Minor themes related to social value

The data analysis revealed two minor themes that are relevant to the perceived social value as expressed by the members within the Kearsney College Choir, namely teamwork and cultural experiences.

5.2.3.1 Teamwork

An imperative facet of choral participation at Kearsney College is teamwork which forms part of the social ethos of the choir. The choristers value the team spirit found in the choir, which encouraged singers to work together to achieve their goals, resulting in a unified image. This finding relates to the literature of Barrett and Vermeulen (2019), Bartolome (2018), and Hammond (2004), where they advocate that choral singing motivates and develops a coherent understanding, cooperation, and trust amongst its members. In one interview, a participant mentioned that choristers felt as if they were part of a sports team when singing in the choir, as it instilled a team factor similar to that in sport. During the observation period, it was noticed that the young males enjoyed setting goals amongst each other which encouraged the boys to work towards certain achievements whilst participating in the choir. According to Parker, being part of a team among male adolescent singers results in experiencing a range of emotions, such as feelings of acknowledgment, accomplishment and “strong feelings of pride” (2009, p. 256). The present study builds upon this notion by highlighting how the sense of ‘team’ fosters a

sense of unity amongst choristers, ultimately contributing to the brotherhood aspect that enhances and nurtures a ‘family-like’ atmosphere among male adolescent singers. Literature advocates for a supportive morale amongst choristers, which provides reassurance towards their commitment to an activity (Dabback, 2018; Parker, 2009), allowing singers to continuously participate in choral singing. Several studies have found that the success of any choir is built upon the members’ willingness to work together as a team (Bartolome, 2013; Langston & Barrett, 2008; Sweet, 2010).

5.2.3.2 Cultural experiences

The Kearsney choristers agreed that participating in the choir created an atmosphere and presented opportunities for them to socialise with peers from different cultural backgrounds. When observing the choir during the data collection period, it was evident that the male adolescents enjoyed socialising with their friends during rehearsals regardless of their cultural differences. The extensive research of Barrett (2017) provides evidence that choral singing within a South African university choir promotes cultural integration between members. The findings of this study are therefore similar to Barrett’s study (2017) and adds to the research pertaining to the social value and cultural integration between choristers within South African choirs. Several participants within the current study indicated that socialising contributed to their education pertaining to the difference between the cultures, beliefs, and practices, of their fellow choristers. During the interviews, the young males stated that singing in the choir allowed them to gain an awareness and appreciation of each other’s differences which assisted in breaking down cultural barriers. Encountering new and shared experiences within a multicultural choir allows members to develop their social identities when engaging with various cultural groups (Dieckmann & Davidson, 2018) becoming an activity for singers of a “hybrid nature” (Hammond, 2004, p. 107). The findings of the present study highlight these intercultural exchanges, which allows choristers to gain awareness of their differences, adding to the element of choral singing becoming a unified and compassionate environment for its members (Bartolome, 2018; Hammond, 2004; Langston & Barrett, 2008). Despite this utopian notion, while observing the male adolescent choir, there were some divisions amongst choristers of different cultural backgrounds. Certain individuals within the group preferred not to associate themselves with boys from other cultural groups as they steered towards their own comfortability of language and culture. This aspect relates to findings of Barrett (2017) where he provided evidence of cultural barriers

within a university choir, stating that choristers deriving from different cultures tend to group themselves separately which “causes factions within [a] choir” (Barrett, 2017, p. 120).

5.3 Major themes related to musical value

The male adolescents in the Kearsney College Choir place considerable importance on the perceived musical value as a byproduct of their involvement, making it a major theme within this study. The research findings, however, suggest that the personal and social value derived from their involvement outweighs the significance of the musical aspect. The study conducted by Bartolome (2013) presented a contrasting viewpoint to the significance of boys singing in the choir. According to her research, choral participation contributes to the accumulation of musical value (Bartolome, 2013), whereas the focus on the male adolescent choir observed in this study leaned more towards the personal and social value, rather than the musical value. This finding correlates to the research of Barrett (2017), in which the value of participation within a university choir was largely social and personal, as expressed by the singers themselves. This study further highlights two themes, namely musical benefits, and the enjoyment of music-making.

5.3.1 Musical benefits

Participants mentioned developing good musical skills, healthy singing techniques, and gaining a thorough musical knowledge when singing in the choir at their school. Various studies highlight that participating in a choir allows singers to gain various musical benefits and skills (Bannerman, 2019; Barrett, 2017; Barrett et al., 2019; Bartolome, 2013; Dabback, 2018; Jacob et al., 2009; Kennedy, 2002). It was evident when observing rehearsals that it is an expectation and integral aspect of their singing to approach the music with great sensitivity. Various young males in the choir had previously not sung in choirs. Despite this, most of them indicated that singing in the choir offered a new and enticing experience, as it allowed them to develop sight-reading skills, taught them about working together as a team and educated them about the importance of blending with other voice parts. This finding adds to the literature of Barrett et al. (2019) and Bannerman (2019), wherein choristers without prior music knowledge acquire an understanding of music concepts when singing in an amateur choir which enhances the singing experience of these members. The studies of Barrett (2017), Bartolome (2013), and Jacob et al. (2009), specify that choral singing promotes continued growth and learning. The data of

the current study provides evidence that singing in the choir at this independent male high school allowed male adolescents to develop a passion for choral music through a positive learning environment, which evoked intrinsic motivations for singers to continually participate in the activity (Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Jacob et al., 2009). The current study also found that participating in the Kearsney College Choir allowed the choristers to value choral music through the music-making process. Essentially, the choir lays a foundation for students who had previously sung in choirs to continue developing their singing techniques and broaden their knowledge and understanding of choral music, while simultaneously offering this opportunity to members that had no prior experience. When observing the choir during rehearsals, it was evident that the conductor gave attention to educating the singers in regard to the music-making process by constantly sharing his knowledge, explaining terminologies, and providing meaning to every piece being sung.

The male adolescent choristers fully engaged through learning and understanding various forms of music, including indigenous South African choral music, which allowed the boys to gain and appreciate the different cultures found in their choir. This finding corresponds and adds to the aspect of music becoming a tool for members to share their emotions through singing (Hammond, 2004). Most of the students in the Kearsney College Choir are young South African citizens from various cultural groups, offering them a great experience where they can come together through singing to learn more about each other's cultures. The research of Barrett (2007) and Bartolome (2013) highlight that choral singing in various South African choirs carries great value to its members, whereas the current study found that male adolescents attending a South African male high school have an appreciation for choral music, adding to the conversation and insight into the value of choral singing from a young male perspective.

5.3.2 Enjoyment of music-making

Choral participation at Kearsney College allowed its male adolescents to enjoy and value the learning and performing of choral music. This study identified two additional sub-themes that are pertinent to the enjoyment of music-making among male adolescents in the Kearsney College Choir. These sub-themes encompass choreography and message bearing. Various studies have been conducted worldwide that signify the intrinsic value associated with choral singing that leads to further enjoyment of the activity (Adderly et

al., 2003; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Kennedy, 2002; Sweet, 2010). The choristers highlighted that the pure enjoyment that comes with singing motivated them to join the ensemble from the onset, as it allowed them to explore their voices during adolescence and granted them the opportunity to learn something new during every rehearsal. The male adolescents stipulated that they find it enjoyable when performing with the choir on stage, while simultaneously valuing the sound they produce when singing collectively. Both the studies of Kennedy (2002) and Lucas (2011) illustrate that sharing the art of music-making through singing becomes an essential motivating factor for male adolescents to continue participating in choral singing, which is similar to the findings of this study. The current study adds to the existing literature pertaining to the enjoyment of choral singing from the male adolescent perspective, indicating that participating in a choir becomes a space where young males can discover their male voices.

In the interviews, one chorister declared that singing in the choir during the daunting times of the Covid-19 pandemic triggered a sense of happiness when the group produced a music video. He indicated that the experience of producing videos with the choir allowed male adolescents to heighten their creative levels and share strong messages through videos in a time of disconnection and where the choir did not perform in front of live audiences. Paparo (2021) carried out a global investigation into the perceptions of participation in Eric Whitacre's virtual choirs from singers across 31 countries where he found that respondents gained a sense of personal satisfaction. Singing on a choral music video during the pandemic "afforded opportunities [...] due to geographic isolation" (Paparo, p. 92) for singers to connect, and in comparison, to the results of the current study, allowed male adolescents to gain creative skills when participating in a virtual choir project at Kearsney College. Therefore, these findings are unique regarding male adolescent involvement in virtual choir productions.

An element that allowed the male adolescents to intrinsically value their membership in the choir, is the use of choreography, which enables singers to engage with music using movement. Choirs within a South African context make use of choreography to express a message through song (Opondo, 2004). Opondo (2004) conducted a study at the fourth annual African Music and Dance Showcase at the University of Kwazulu-Natal in Durban in 2001, which featured two groups of females performing traditional song and dance. She found that these groups make use of dancing and song to articulate messages to government and males based on social, historical, and political themes pertaining to their

personal lives, which were expressed using movement. The current study's outcomes are therefore similar to Opondo's study (2004) where the male adolescents stated that the choreography used in the choir aims to replicate the traditions of various indigenous cultures found in South Africa. Furthermore, the participants enunciated that the use of choreography allows them to gain a thorough understanding into where various movements originate from. The findings in this study added that choir rehearsals become more exciting for singers when learning a new skill, which is dancing to choral music. Moving to choral music, as expressed by the male adolescents, allows them to concentrate better on the execution of the music being sung, which further develops a healthy cohesion with peers cross-culturally evoking a sense of pride amongst the members as they showcase their skill to audiences.

In contrast, this study revealed some inconsistencies in the results. It was observed that the male choir members displayed a strong emphasis on executing choreography with precision during rehearsals and performances. However, this intense focus on choreography had a detrimental effect on the choir's intonation, overall blend and musicality. The mixed findings concerning the use of choreography in this particular male adolescent choir are noteworthy and contribute to the existing literature on choreography and male adolescent choral singing within the South African context.

Choral singing allows male adolescents to communicate the text and meaning of pieces when participating in the Kearsney College Choir, and as indicated by its members, adds another enjoyable factor in their choral participation. Communicating messages to audiences allows choristers to value their performances (Barrett, 2017). The participants explained that the element of bearing messages to their audiences accommodates development of expression, allowing for intrinsic engagement in choral music to take place for male adolescent members. During rehearsals, the conductor would spend a large amount of time communicating and demonstrating the meaning of the choir's repertoire which allowed choristers to fully envisage the text of the music. The participants stipulated that the element of 'message bearing' adds to the overall ambitions of the group, where it becomes a goal for the singers to create an appealing performance for their audiences. As described by Barrett (2017), the element of message-bearing allows choristers to "touch the lives of audience members [...] through song", and to "act as an instrument to convey important messages and emotions" (Barrett, 2017, p. 124). The

findings of the current study match the statements made by Barrett (2017) adding that male adolescent singers value the art of singing through expressing the meaning of text in their repertoire.

5.3.3 Minor themes related to musical value

Through the analysis of data, two minor themes were identified that are relevant to the musical value attributed to choral singing at Kearsney College, namely seeing the conductor as a role model, and the value they attribute to their performances.

5.3.3.1 Role model

An aspect that benefits further musical enrichment for the male adolescent choir, is the integral role the choral conductor plays in manifesting a positive and inclusive environment for all singers. During the observation period, the conductor set clear goals for the group of young men to achieve within the choir year and shared the context of every piece the choir was performing.

In the interviews, the singers shared their admiration towards their conductor, stating that he contributes and creates a positive environment by being reliable and helpful to his choristers, which is a finding that corresponds to the literature of Dabback (2018) and Parker (2009). In literature, Parker (2009) found that the conductor of a male adolescent choir becomes a role model for its members once he/she contributes to a safe environment where musical learning and self-growth are facilitated. It was evident that the director of the Kearsney College Choir applied various techniques in his teachings, allowing male adolescents at this school to enjoy learning choral music from different genres and cultures. The role model, therefore, manifests an inclusive environment where the male adolescents value the conductor's repertoire choices, pedagogical techniques, and leadership traits which all aim to include the diversity of students found in the choir. The present study found that the conductor plays a pivotal role in creating an environment that is favourable for optimal learning to take place. The use of humour further fostered a sense of togetherness between the male adolescents and their conductor whom they see as a role model. Being a 'fun' conductor for male adolescents is an aspect that corresponds to the literature of Sweet (2010). In Sweet's study (2010), the researcher discovered that the silliness of a conductor becomes a primary component that contributes to a positive and continuous involvement for boys participating in choir. The

findings pertaining to the role model indicates that the choral conductor plays an integral role in creating an inclusive environment for choral music education that is of value for male adolescent singers and contributes to the continuous participation in choral singing at the male adolescent high school.

5.3.3.2 Performances

Within the interviews, the participants stated that they value the experience of performing with the Kearsney College Choir. Various participants described that the performing aspect of choral singing at Kearsney motivates them to audition for the choir every year. Research into the motivation and importance of performing in a choir reveals several factors that influence the singers' decisions to remain in the ensemble (Barrett, 2017; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Lucas, 2011). Choral singing allows singers the opportunity to perform a wide range of repertoire, which creates the opportunity for choristers to work together as a team to perform music competently during concerts (Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016). This gives participants a “purpose” (Barrett, 2017, p. 123) when singing in a choir, adding a fun element into choral singing for male adolescents (Lucas, 2011). The research results of the current study support these findings and adds that male adolescents participating in an independent male high school in South Africa value their performances as it allows them to experience a feeling of achievement when singing on world-renowned stages and festivals throughout South Africa and abroad. In contrast to Bartolome's (2013) findings, where members of the SGC community expressed that performing in the choir was not central to their ongoing participation, this study reveals contrasting results. The male adolescents engaged in choral singing at Kearsney place a high value on performance, particularly when singing in front of large audiences and at prestigious events like the World Choir Games. Furthermore, they consider performances as a primary source of motivation to join the choir right from the beginning. Consequently, the findings of this study diverge from those of Bartolome (2013) and shed light on the distinct perspectives of male adolescents in choral participation. Moreover, this study adds to the discussion that performing with a choir becomes an extrinsic motivator for choristers where they would join a singing ensemble for external reasons that do not include musical aspects (Barrett, 2017; Brinson, 1996).

5.4 Hindrances

In the literature review, various studies have identified the under-enrolment of male adolescents in singing activities in schools across the globe (Elpus & Abril, 2011; Elpus, 2015; Powell, 2015; Stewart, 1991), which is usually affected by gendered stereotypes and social influences (Brand, 2019; Hawkins, 2015; Nannen, 2017). The data from the fourth chapter was compared and related to relevant literature. This led to the identification of various hindrances as a result of choral singing at Kearsney College. The data of the current study indicates that the hindrances of singing in the Kearsney College Choir include time and pressure, gendered stereotypes, and Covid-19.

5.4.1 Major themes related to the hindrances of male adolescent choral participation

Time and pressure and gendered stereotypes are two major themes generated throughout the data analysis relating to hindrance for male adolescents participating in the Kearsney College Choir.

5.4.1.1 Time and pressure

Singing in the Kearsney College Choir requires choristers to 'sacrifice' their time to participate in the ensemble and the singers expressed that this caused a negative attitude towards the activity. It is well substantiated in literature that choral singing requires significant input and a great deal of time and energy from choristers (Barrett, 2017; Brand, 2019; Powell, 2015; Stewart, 1991). The participants indicated that singing in the choir affects their study and personal time negatively, which caused several singers to feel as if their days were consumed by choir. This aspect relates to the findings stipulated in Barrett's study, where he indicated that "rehearsals and concert performances can add to [choristers'] levels of stress, especially with regard to their academic programmes" (2017, p. 133). The current study shows that members attending an independent male high school experience elevated stress levels due to other academic and sports responsibilities for the choristers to adhere to, apart from just singing in a choir in their spare time. This finding is similar to the outcomes of Powell (2015), where she studied the perceptions of male adolescents in choirs in Australia, stipulating that male adolescents singing in choirs experienced various problems related to time commitments and loyalties. A common obstacle, as indicated by the male adolescent singers in this study, is finding an effective balance between their schoolwork, sports, and choral

activities at Kearsney College. This finding adds to the discussion of the time dilemma that male adolescents experience when singing in choir. Male adolescents are expected to invest a lot of their time while singing in a choir (Stewart, 1991), which causes various conflicts to arise, especially when young males must deal with academic work and sports commitments (Brand, 2019). Participating in choral singing is a co-curricular activity within schools across South Africa, whereas other adherences such as sports activities are mandatory at independent male high schools throughout the country. The time dilemma poses significant problems in the motivation and continuous participation in choral singing for male adolescents (Brand, 2019; Powell, 2015; Stewart, 1991). The hindrance of time, according to the participants, make choristers experience tiredness and frustration from the demanding schedule at their school.

5.4.1.2 Gendered stereotypes

The choristers at Kearsney College indicated that they experienced a level of discomfort regarding gendered stereotypes as a consequence of their choral participation. The data of the current study identified two sub-themes related to gendered stereotypes that includes lack of male interest in choral singing and bullying. This corresponds with the findings of a study that investigated the perceptions of masculinity amongst male singers in choirs from Australia. Powell found that the “gendered stereotypes affect has important implications for individuals in terms of personal and creative expression, and challenges the way music education and choir is accessible and acceptable to boys” (2015, p. 233). Gendered stereotypes across the globe affect male adolescents participating in choral singing at their schools which leaves them being targets of abuse by their peers, which can affect their social identity development (Hawkins, 2015; Nannen, 2017; Watson et al., 2017). As indicated in this study throughout the data analysis, the male adolescents indicated that they experience substantial discomfort when their friends outside of the choir use the term ‘choir boys’ to describe and target the male adolescents singing in the choir. The participants stated that they are usually seen ‘as less’ compared to their peers participating in sports and that certain boys describe choral singing as an activity that accommodates ‘soft and gay’ boys, and that the boys singing in choir are ‘different’ compared to other boys. The gender stereotypes associated with male adolescent choral singing prove that various choristers suffer from toxic masculinity, which entails people challenging the idea that “men are not allowed to emote or show any sign of vulnerability” (Brand, 2019, p. 28).

In the interviews, an individual in the choir admitted that he used to be scared to sing in front of his friends, which influenced his self-confidence. This is an example of a stigma related to male adolescent choral singing, as certain boys who want to sing in an ensemble are often influenced by what other boys might think of the choir. Numerous research studies have emphasised the critical role that a lack of peer support plays in diminishing the sustained participation of male adolescents in choral singing at school level (Brand, 2019; Freer, 2007; Kennedy, 2002; Sweet, 2010). Brand (2019) conducted a research study into male high school students' perceptions of choral singing and revealed that participants perceived singing in choirs more suited for females, which caused a feeling of vulnerability. When observing the choir at their school for one of their shared performances with the Missouri State University Chorale, it was evident that there was a lack of interest by boys not singing in the choir as they failed to attend the concert. The lack of male interest in choral singing was best explained in one individual interview where the participant implied that the boys who do not sing in the choir assume that choristers in the Kearsney College Choir were being judged for putting in effort into a "less" relevant activity.

Within the Kearsney College Choir, several choristers mentioned being bullied as a consequence of their participation in choral singing. In a study that investigated the issues pertaining to male choral involvement at the middle and high school level in the United States, Hawkins found that "adolescent males may endure personal and social costs" (2015, p. 156). This aspect highlights that boys participating in singing activities at school usually become targets for verbal and physical bullying (Hawkins, 2015). Studies have been conducted globally indicating that the aspects of gendered stereotypes and a lack of peer support create a vulnerable environment for male adolescents participating in choral activities (Hawkins, 2015; Nannen, 2017; Watson et al., 2017). In the current study, a few participants mentioned being bullied during class time where their fellow school peers would tease them for being in the choir. This aspect makes male adolescent choristers experience an increase in anxiety and depression, which leads to them to be ostracised in class, which could potentially influence their continued participation.

5.4.2 Minor theme related to the hindrances of male adolescent choral participation

The analysis of data presented Covid-19 as being a minor theme that caused a hindrance for a number of choristers in the Kearsney College choir.

5.4.2.1 Covid-19

According to the participants, the Covid-19 pandemic had a considerably negative social impact on choral singing at Kearsney College. For many months choristers did not have the opportunity to bond socially with their choir peers making them feel both isolated and separated from their friends. In a study that investigated the emotional well-being of community choral musicians during the early stages of lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic in the United States (Youngblood et al., 2021), the researchers found that choristers indicated that they experienced “decreased well-being as a result of cancelled rehearsals and performances, unfamiliar online musicking practices and a loss of community” (Youngblood et al., 2021, p. 206). Furthermore, the research identified other themes that included elevated sadness, worry and grief concerning separation from fellow ensemble members (Youngblood et al., 2021). Voices Off, a study highlighting the impact Covid-19 had on the social art form of choral singing, which affected the social bonds between choristers and their feelings of connectedness (2020), aesthetic experiences, flow, and all physical aspects that includes physical training, vocal training, and breathing training (Theorell et al., 2023). The current study added that the pandemic affected the overall morale of the choir, the brotherhood, connectivity, and the learning space between male adolescent singers at Kearsney College. The male adolescents were distraught when the pandemic resulted in the cancellation of their international tour in 2020, affecting the chemistry and overall ambitions of the choir. One member of the choir reported that a small number of choristers returned after the pandemic with increased negativity, leading to a decline in the enthusiasm of several young males for choral singing at Kearsney College. Consequently, they decided to withdraw from the ensemble.

5.5 Summary

This chapter focused on the expressions of male adolescent choristers at Kearsney College, and their views on the personal, social, and musical significance of being part of the school choir. The discussion addresses the challenges faced by male adolescents in a high school choir, and the findings of the study (as presented in Chapter Four) were compared to that of existing literature. The choral singing experiences of male

adolescents at Kearsney College are complex and multifaceted, providing evidence of their perceived personal value and ongoing commitment to choral singing in this independent South African male high school. It is important to note that the participation of male adolescents in choral activities generally yields positive experiences, but as mentioned in the hindrances section of this chapter, some singers shared negative outcomes. Nevertheless, these young males emphasised the personal value they derived from participating in the Kearsney College Choir, which motivated them to continue their involvement throughout their high school years.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and conclusion

The study delved into the personal value associated with choral participation as expressed by male adolescents attending an independent male high school in South Africa. The research focused on understanding the benefits of membership, the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that drove singers to join the choir initially, and the reasons behind their continued engagement in singing in their school choir. By exploring these aspects, the study provided insights into the unique experiences and expressions of personal value that choral participation holds for these young men.

6.1 Answering the research questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What personal value is attributed to participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school?
- What are the main motivations (intrinsic and extrinsic) that can be attributed to participation in a male high school choir as expressed by the singers themselves?
- What aspects contribute to continuous involvement in choral activities at Kearsney College?

The present study demonstrates that male adolescents attending an independent South African male high school reap numerous advantages by participating in the choir. This involvement not only enhances their overall choral singing experience, but also stimulates personal, social, and musical growth. A thorough examination of existing literature on the importance of music participation supports these findings (Acquah, 2016; Adderly et al., 2003; Bannerman, 2019; Barrett, 2017; Bartolome, 2013; Bullack et al., 2018; Clift et al., 2010; Dabback, 2018; Einarsdottir & Gudmundsdottir, 2016; Jacob et al., 2009; Joseph & Southcott, 2018; Kennedy, 2002; Louw, 2014; McPherson et al., 2015; Sanal & Gorsev, 2014; Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016; Sweet, 2010).

By comparing the research results with the existing literature, the discussion chapter presents compelling evidence that choral singing provides a comprehensive and rewarding experience for male adolescents in the Kearsney College Choir. This activity nurtures and challenges young males, empowering them to:

- experience joy, uplifting their emotional well-being;

- engage in a diverse range of musical forms and genres through singing and movement, fostering enjoyment amongst choristers;
- participate in a positive and inclusive environment that allows male adolescents to express themselves through music-making. They receive support from their role model, the choral conductor, which fosters a sense of belonging and value;
- forge strong, meaningful, and lifelong friendships, creating a ‘family’ bond within the choir;
- develop positive life attributes such as self-confidence, self-concept, leadership skills, time management, and professionalism through singing;
- cultivate interdependence and appreciation for choral music by collaborating in a team to achieve shared goals, fostering unity among the singers and contributing to the unique brotherhood in the choir;
- foster cultural integration by developing a cohesive understanding with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Furthermore, the male adolescents participating in choral singing at Kearsney College identified several challenges that contribute to negative perceptions:

- insufficient peer support negatively affects choristers’ friendships outside of choir, creating complexity in their attitudes towards singing;
- some choristers lacked determination and discipline, which had a negative impact on the brotherhood of the choir;
- certain members developed negative attitudes towards singing due to the perceived ‘sacrifice’ of personal time required for participation. This demand for significant input, time, and energy, often leading to elevated levels of stress among the male adolescents;
- participants also indicated that they experienced toxic masculinity within their school, making them targets of verbal bullying.

Despite the challenges faced by male adolescents participating in choral singing, it is noteworthy that all members willingly invested a significant amount of time and effort into this activity at Kearsney College. This demonstrates that the benefits of participating in the choir at the male high school far outweigh the challenges. It is evident that engaging in choral activities at Kearsney College created a secure environment where male adolescents could freely be themselves and feel valued within a diverse environment.

Furthermore, these activities provided enriching experiences for the choir members, enhancing their overall development.

The findings of this study indicate that male adolescent singers in a high school choir at Kearsney College are motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, contributing to their continued participation in choral activities. This study provides compelling evidence of the intrinsic motivations that drive these male adolescents. One such motivation is the choir's reputation, which instils a strong sense of inner pride among its members and encourages them to join and remain in the choir throughout their high school years. The singers expressed that developing a love and passion for choral singing through enjoyment is another intrinsic factor that motivates them to engage in and share the art of choral music through music-making.

Furthermore, the study provides evidence of significant extrinsic motivating factors that play a crucial role in the sustained participation of male adolescent choristers. The male adolescents highlighted the choir's captivating opportunities to go on tours, both within South Africa and internationally, which not only foster a strong work ethic among the members, but also reinforce the sense of camaraderie and teamwork within the choir. The choir's involvement in prestigious competitions like the World Choir Games serves as a significant extrinsic motivator for boys to continue their participation in the Kearsney College Choir. Additionally, the social experiences associated with the choir greatly enhances the boys' engagement and enables them to thrive in a supportive brotherhood. These experiences inspire young males to remain dedicated to the choir.

6.2 Limitations of the study

Since this study utilised a qualitative methodology, it is crucial to acknowledge that the research outcomes are limited to the particular context and focused on a single case. During the interviews conducted with the young males in the choir, pseudonyms were assigned to safeguard the anonymity of the choristers. The research procedures were thoroughly explained by both myself and the conductor. Prior to each interview, the boys were provided with consent forms, affording the male adolescents the option to either participate in the study or decline. The conclusions derived from this research are thus rooted in the observations and perspectives of male adolescents who engage in choral singing at Kearsney College. Therefore, it is important to avoid generalising these findings

to other comparable environments. The study's discoveries regarding the significance of involvement can offer valuable insights to music educators and choral conductors who engage with male adolescents in musical environments, particularly choral singing. These findings portray the experiences of young males in choir participation and can aid in the development of effective singing programmes and the wellbeing of male adolescents.

Another limitation of the study would be the duration and complications for the collection of data. When compiling the data for this research, rehearsals and performances of the Kearsney College Choir needed to be observed, and semi-structured and focus groups interviews needed to be conducted over a period of three months. The data collection could only commence during a specific time within the choir's calendar (when concerts and rehearsals were taking place), which was compounded by the challenges presented by the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic. Despite these hurdles posed by a limited timeframe for data collection, conflicting school schedules between Kearsney College and the researcher's workplace (Michaelhouse), and the substantial travel costs resulting from the considerable distance between the two schools, ample data was collected and resulting in a saturation of evidence pertaining to the research topic.

6.3 Recommendations for future research

To advance our understanding of male adolescent choral participation in South African male high schools, it is recommended to conduct investigations that extend beyond a single school and involve a longer duration of data collection. By exploring the experiences and expressions of male adolescents in other South African male high schools, we can obtain a more comprehensive picture of their involvement in choral singing.

Moreover, it would be valuable to explore the personal value attributed by male adolescents participating in a mixed high school choir in South Africa, in both independent and government funded schools. This investigation can outline the individual perspectives and motivations of male choristers, providing insights into the significance they ascribe to their choral involvement.

Additionally, researching the strategies employed by choral conductors of male adolescent choirs within South Africa to maintain their choristers' engagement in the

singing activity may offer practical insights into the continued participation and enthusiasm amongst male choristers.

Lastly, exploring the opinions and attitudes of male adolescents who choose not to participate in choral singing at South African high schools can provide a contrasting perspective. Understanding the reasons behind their disinterest or non-participation can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the motivations and preferences of male adolescents in relation to choral singing.

Conducting further research in these areas will not only contribute to the existing literature on male adolescent choral participation within South Africa, but also help fill the current gaps in knowledge and provide valuable insights for educators, conductors, and researchers in this field of study.

6.4 Conclusion

Existing literature supports the notion that choral singing has a positive impact on the lives of male adolescents, offering them a range of musical, social, personal, and external advantages that contribute to a sense of belonging within a group (Kennedy, 2002). Moreover, it has been found to play a role in strengthening and shaping their identity (Ellorriaga, 2011; Lucas, 2011). The present study adds to the discussion on male adolescent choral participation by highlighting the importance young males place on the concept of teamwork in achieving shared objectives, which fosters a deep sense of unity and creates a strong brotherhood among the singers. Furthermore, the findings of this study promote the numerous advantages of being part of a male adolescent choir within a South African context, highlighting both the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that drove these young male singers to join the choir and the factors that kept them engaged over time.

Sources

Acquah, E. O. (2016). Choral singing and wellbeing: Findings of the survey from the Mixed-Chorus experience of music students of the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, 27(2), 1-13.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ljh.v27i2.1>

Adams, K. A. (2020). *Adolescent self-theories of singing ability in the choral hierarchy* [Doctoral dissertation, University of North Texas]. OpenDissertations.

<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1703368/>

Adderly, C., Kennedy, M., & Berz, W. (2003). "A home away from home": The world of the high school music classroom. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(3), 190-205.

Amuah, J. A. (2013). Twenty-five years of choral music performance: Contribution of Winneba Youth Choir (WYC) in the socio-economic development of Ghana. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(19).

Bannerman, J. (2019). Singing in a school culture: Exploring access to participation in a rural choral program. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 222(1), 44-62.

Barrett, M. J. (2017). *Exploring choristers' perceptions of a university choir as potential for social capital and personal value* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria].

WorldCat. <https://UnivofPretoria.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1031702442>

Barrett, M. J. (2007). *The value of choral singing in a Multi-Cultural South Africa* [Master's dissertation, University of Pretoria]. WorldCat.

<https://UnivofPretoria.on.worldcat.org/oclc/956375506>

Barrett, M., & Vermeulen, D. (2019). Drop everything and sing the music: Choristers' perceptions of the value of participating in a multicultural South African university choir. *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, 16(1), 31–60.

Barrett, M., Page-Shipp, R., van Niekerk, C., & Ferreira, J. (2019). Learning music theory en passant: A study in an internationally recognised South African university student choir. *British Journal of Music Education*, 37, 1-14.

10.1017/S0265051719000238.

Bartolome, S.J. (2013). "It's like a whole bunch of me!": The perceived values and benefits of the Seattle Girls' Choir experience. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 60(4), 395-418.

Bartolome, S. J. (2018). "We sing to touch hearts": Choral musical culture in Pretoria East, South Africa. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 40(2), 265-285.

Bergman, M. M., & Coxon, A. P. M. (2005). The quality in qualitative methods. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6(2), 1-16.

Bjerkén, A. (2013). Choral singing on tour: Singing tours and trips. In *Den sjungande staden: En bok om körlivet i Lund* (pp. 80-85). Palkroms förlag.

Brand, M. C. (2019). *Male high school students' perceptions of choral singing* [Master's thesis, University of Illinois]. OpenDissertations.

<http://hdl.handle.net/uplib.idm.oclc.org/2142/104928>

Brinson, B. A. (1996). *Choral music methods and materials: Developing successful choral programs (Grades 5 to 12)*. New York: Schirmer Books.

Bullack, A., Gass, C., Nater, U. M., & Kreutz, G. (2018). Psychological effects of choral singing on affective state, social connectedness, and stress: Influences on singing activity and time course. *Frontiers on behavioural neuroscience*, 12(223), 1-10.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fnbeh.2018.00223>

Burak, S. (2014). Motivation for instrument education: A study with the perspective of expectancy-value and flow theories. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 55, 123-136. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2014.55.8>

Chorus America. (2009). *The chorus impact study: How children, adults, and communities benefit from choruses*. Washington, DC:

Author. <http://www.chorusamerica.org/publications/research-reports/chorus-impact-study>

Chow, A. R. (2017, August 16). American Boychoir School to close. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/16/arts/music/american-boychoir-school-to-close.html>

Clift, S., Hancox, G., Morrison, I., Hess, B., Kreutz, G., & Stewart, D. (2010). Choral singing and psychological wellbeing: Quantitative and qualitative findings from English choirs in a cross-national survey. *Journal of the Applied Arts and Health*, 1(1), 19-34.

Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Into Practice*, 39(3), 124-130.

https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Dabback, W. (2018). A community of singing: motivation, identity, and communitas in a Mennonite School choir programme. *Music Education Research*, 20(2), 242-251.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2016.1257593>

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(3), 182-185.

Dieckmann, S., & Davidson, J. W. (2018). Organised cultural encounters: Collaboration and intercultural contact in a lullaby choir. *The world of music*, 7(1/2), 155-177.

Durrant, C. (2005). Shaping identity through choral activity: Singers' and conductors' perceptions. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 24(1), 88–98.

Einarsdottir, S. L., & Gudmundsdottir, H. R. (2016). The role of choral singing in the lives of amateur choral singers in Iceland. *Music Education Research*, 18(1), 39-56.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2015.1049258>

Elorriaga, A. (2011). The construction of male gender identity through choir singing at a Spanish secondary school. *International Journal of Music Education*, 29(4), 318-332.

Elpus, K. (2015). National estimates of male and female enrolment in American high school choirs, bands and orchestras. *Music Education Research*, 17(1), 88-102.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2014.972923>

Elpus, K., & Abril, C. R. (2011). High school music ensemble students in the United States: A demographic profile. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 59(2), 128-145.
<https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1177%2F0022429411405207>

Fischer, R. A. (2014). The impacts of the voice change, grade level, and experience on the singing self-efficacy of emerging adolescent males. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 62(3), 277-290.
<https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0022429414544748>

Freeman, M., de Marrais, K., Preissle, J., Roulston, K., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2007). Standards of evidence in qualitative research: An incitement to discourse. *Educational Researcher*, 36(1), 25-32. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4621065>

Freer, P. K. (2007). Between research and practice: How choral music loses boys in the “middle”. *Music Educators Journal*, 94(2), 28-34.
<https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/002743210709400207>

Freer, P. K. (2010). Two decades of research on possible selves and the ‘missing males’ problem in choral music. *International Journal of Music Education*, 28(1), 17-30.

Freer, P. K. (2015). Perspectives of European boys about their voice change and school choral singing: Developing the possible selves of adolescent male singers. *British Journal of Music Education*, 32(1), 87-106.

Freer, P. K. (2016). The changing voices of male choristers: An enigma... to them. *Music Education Journal*, 18(1), 74-90.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2015.1014330>.

Friese, S. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis with Atlas.ti* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications, Ltd.

Halkier, B. (2010). Focus groups as social enactments: Integrating interaction and content in the analysis of focus group data. *Qualitative Research*, 10(1), 71-89.

Hammond, N. C. (2004). Singing South Africanness: The construction of identity among South African youth choirs. *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*, 1, 130-115.

<https://doi.org/10.2989/18121000409486691>

Hawkins, K. A. (2015). *A collaborative research inquiry into issues of male choral participation at the middle and high school level* [Doctorate thesis, Boston University]. Boston University theses & dissertations. <https://hdl.handle.net/2144/15994>

Hogg, M. A., & Abrahms, D. (1988). *Social identifications: A social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes*. Taylor & Frances/Routledge.

Holmes, P., & Holmes, C. (2012). The performer's experience: A case for using qualitative (phenomenological) methodologies in music performance research. *Music Scientiae*, 17(1), 72-85.

Hox, J. J., & Boeije, H. R. (2005). Data collection, primary vs. secondary. *Encyclopedia of Social Measurement*, 1, 593-599.

Jacob, C., Guptill, C., & Sumsion, T. (2009). Motivation for continuing involvement in a leisure-based choir: The lived experiences of university choir members. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 16(3), 187-193.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14427591.2009.9686661>.

Joseph, D., & Southcott, J. (2018). Music participation for older people: Five choirs in Victoria, Australia. *Research studies in Music Education*, 40(2), 176-190.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103X18773096>

Kawulich, B. B. (2005). Participant observation as a data collection method. *Qualitative Inquiry: Research, Archiving, and Reuse*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-6.2.466>

Kennedy, M. A. (2002). 'It's cool because we like to sing': Junior high school boys' experience of choral music as an elective. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 18, 26-37.

Kennedy, M. C. (2004). "It's a metamorphosis": Guiding the voice change at the American Boychoir School. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 52(3), 264-280.

<http://dx.doi.org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.2307/3345859>

Killian, J. N. (1997). Perceptions of the voice-change process: Male adult versus adolescent musicians and nonmusicians. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 45(4), 521-535.

Koza, J. E. (1993). The missing males and other gender related issues in music education: A critical analysis of evidence from the Music Supervisors' Journal. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 41, 212-232. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3345326>

Langston, T. W., & Barrett, M. S. (2008). Capitalizing on community music: A case study of the manifestation of social capital in a community choir. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 1, 118-138.

Lee, J., Davidson, J.W., & Krause, A.E. (2016). Older people's motivations for participating in community singing in Australia. *International Journal of Community Music*, 9(2), 191-206.

Leedy, P. D. & Omrod, J. E. (2016). *Practical research: Planning and design*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Levine, L. (2005). *The Drumcafe's traditional music of South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Louw, C. H. (2014). *Exploring the significance of choral singing within the context of the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod* [Masters dissertation, North-West University]. North-West University.

Lucas, M. (2007). *Adolescent males' motivations to enroll or not to enroll in choir* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma]. RILM Abstracts of Music Literature.

Lucas, M. (2011). Adolescent male attitudes about singing in choir. *National Association of Music Education*, 30(1), 46-53.

Lyons, E. (2007). Analysing qualitative data: Comparative reflections. In Lyons, E., & Coyle, A. (Eds.), *Analysing qualitative data in psychology* (pp. 158-174). Sage.
<https://www-doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.4135/9781446207536>

Major, M. L. (2017). Building identity in collegiate midlevel choral ensembles: The director's perspective. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 64(4), 435-453.

Major, M. L., & Dakon, J. M. (2016). Singer perceptions of collegiate mid-level choral experiences: A descriptive study. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 64(1), 108-127.

Margevičiūtė, R. (2012). The advantages and disadvantages of single case and group study design in neuropsychology. *Psichologia*, 46, 135-142.

McBride, N. R., & Palkki, J. (2020). Big boys don't cry (or sing) ... Still?: A modern exploration of gender, misogyny, and homophobia in college choral methods texts. *Music Education Research*, 22(4), 408-420.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2020.1784862>

McMillan, D. W. (1996). Sense of community. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24(4), 315-325. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1520-6629\(199610\)24:4%3C315::AID-JCOP2%3E3.0.CO;2-T](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1520-6629(199610)24:4%3C315::AID-JCOP2%3E3.0.CO;2-T)

McPherson, G. E., Osborne, M. S., Barrett, M. S., Davidson, J. W., & Faulkner, R. (2015). Motivation to study music in Australian schools: The impact of music learning, gender, and socio-economic status. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 37(2), 141-160. <https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/1321103X15600914>

Mizener, C. P. (1993). Attitudes of children toward singing and choir participation and assessed singing skill. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 41(3), 233-245. <http://dx.doi.org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.2307/3345327>

Nannen, B. E. (2017). *“Choir is for girls”*: Intersectional mixed methods perspectives on adolescent gender identity, singing interest, and choral music participation [Doctorate thesis, University of Nebraska]. ProQuest Information & Learning.

Newman, B. M., Lohman, B. J., & Newman, P. R. (2007). Peer group membership and a sense of belonging: Their relationship to adolescent behavior problems. *Adolescence*, 42(166), 241–263.

Noonan, D. O. (2013). Preparing and conducting interviews to collect data. *Nurse researcher*, 20(5), 28-32. <https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.7748/nr2013.05.20.5.28.e327>

Noor, K. B. M. (2008). Case study: A strategic research methodology. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 5(11), 1602-1604.

Opondo, P. A. (2004). Song-gesture dance: Redefined aesthetics in the performance continuum as South African women indigenous groups explore new frontiers. In *37th world conference of the International Council for Traditional Music: Conference contributions – Abstracts* (pp. 148-149). International Council for Traditional Music.

Paparo, S. A. (2021). Real voices, virtual ensemble 2.0: Perception and participation in Eric Whitacre's virtual choirs. *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing*, 9, 92-115.

Parker, E. A. C. (2009). Understanding the process of social identity development in adolescent high school choral singers: A grounded theory [ProQuest Information & Learning]. In *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences* (Vol. 70, Issue 3-A, p. 826).

Parker, E. C. (2018). A grounded theory of adolescent high school women's choir singers' process of social identity development. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 65(4), 439-460.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 52(2), 137-145.

Ponelis, S. R. (2015). Using interpretive qualitative case studies for exploratory research in doctoral studies: A case of Information Systems research in small and medium enterprises. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 10, 535-550.

<https://ijds.org/Volume10/IJDSv10p535-550Ponelis0624.pdf>

Powell, S. J. (2014). *Perceptions of success influencing male participation in choir* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Western Sydney]. University of Western Sydney Archive.

Powell, S. J. (2015). Masculinity and choral singing: An Australian perspective. *International Journal of Music Education*, 33(2), 233-243.

Ramsey, A. L. (2013). *Swagger, gentlemanliness, and brotherhood: Explorations of lived experiences in a high school men's chorus* [Doctorate dissertation, Michigan State University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Register, J. K. (2019). *Factors contributing to male participation in choir* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia]. University of Georgia Archive.

https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/register_jared_k_201905_dma.pdf

Roulston, K. (2006). Mapping the possibilities of qualitative research in music education: a primer. *Music Education Research*, 8(2), 153-173.

Sanal, A.M., & Gorsev, S. (2014). Psychological and physiological effects of singing in a choir. *Psychology of Music*, 42(3), 420-429.

Sharma, S., & Sharma, M. (2010). Self, social identity and psychological well-being. *Psychological studies*, 55(2), 118-136.

<https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s12646-010-0011-8>

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage.

Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63(3), 224-237.

Stewart, C. (1991). *Who takes music? Investigating access to high school music as a function of social and school factors* (Publication No. 9208660) [Doctorate dissertation, University of Michigan]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global. <https://www-proquest-com.uplib.idm.oclc.org/dissertations-theses/who-takes-music-investigating-access-high-school/docview/303981666/se-2?accountid=14717>

Stewart, D. W., Shamdasani, P. M., & Rook, D. W. (2007). Group dynamics and focus group research. In *Focus Groups* (pp. 19-36). Sage.

<https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781412991841>

Stewart, N. A., & Lonsdale, A. J. (2016). It's better together: The psychological benefits of singing in a choir. *Psychology of Music*, 44(6), 1240-1254. <https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0305735615624976>

<https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0305735615624976>

Sweet, B. (2010). A case study: Middle school boys' perceptions of singing and participation in choir. *The National Association for Music Education*, 28(2), 5-12.

Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human Groups and Social Categories—Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Theorell, T., Kowalski, J., Theorell, A. M. L., & Horwitz, E. B. (2023). Choir singers without rehearsals and concerts? A questionnaire study on perceived losses from restricting choral singing during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of Voice*, 37(1), 146.e19-146.e27.

Van As, A. J. (2014). Healing notes: Singing for well-being in an African bank. *The Journal for Transdisciplinary Research in Southern Africa*, 10(2), 221-235.

<https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC162129>

Varvarigou, M., Creech, A., Hallam, S., & McQueen, H. (2012). Benefits experienced by older people in group music-making activities. *Journal of Applied Arts and Health*, 3(2), 183-198.

Voices off. (2020). *Economist*, 436(9202), 69.

Warzecha, M. (2013). Boys' perceptions of singing: A review of the literature. *National Association of Music Education*, 32(1), 43-51.

Watson, P., Rubie-Davies, C. M., & Hattie, J. A. (2017). Stereotype threat, gender-role conformity, and New Zealand adolescent males in choirs. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 39(2), 226-246.

Werner, J., & DeJardin, K. (2009). Professional Concerns. *Pastoral Music*, 34(1), 61.

Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. S. (2000). Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 68-81. <https://doi-org.uplib.idm.oclc.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1015>

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Sage.

Youngblood, F. K., Bosse, J., & Whitley, C. T. (2021). How can I keep from singing? The effects of Covid-19 on the emotional wellbeing of community singers during early stage lockdown in the United States. *International Journal of Community Music*, 14 (2/3), 205-221.

Appendix A: Semi-structured interview schedule

The following interview schedule will be used during semi-structured discussions with individual choristers of the Kearsney College Choir.

1. Briefly tell me about your choral singing experience. Which choirs have you sung in and how long have you been a member in the Kearsney College Choir?
2. Explain your initial reasons for wanting to join the Kearsney College Choir.
3. What are some of the highlights (if any) of being a member of the Kearsney College Choir?
4. How does choral singing make you feel? Explain in detail.
5. Do you have friends in the choir? If so, how important are these friendships to you?
6. Do the members of the Kearsney College Choir share a unique bond (separate from the rest of the school)? Elaborate.
7. Could you explain what you value most of being a choir member of the Kearsney College Choir? Elaborate.
8. Have you ever experienced personal negativity as a consequence of singing in a choir (Kearsney or other)? Explain.
9. What are some of the benefits of singing in a choir for you?
10. What are some of the disadvantages of singing in a choir?
11. What motivates you to continuously participate in choral singing?

Appendix B: Focus group interview schedule

The following interview schedule will be used during focus group discussions with smaller groups of choristers from the Kearsney College Choir.

1. Explain your initial reasons for wanting to join the Kearsney College Choir.
2. Describe your most enjoyable experiences since joining the choir.
3. What are some of the benefits of singing in a choir for you?
4. What are some of the disadvantages of singing in a choir for you?
5. Could you explain what you value most of being a choir member of the Kearsney College Choir? Elaborate.
6. Do the members of the Kearsney College Choir share a unique bond (separate from the rest of the school)? Elaborate.
7. What motivates you to continuously participate in choral singing at Kearsney College?

Appendix C: Observation schedule for choral rehearsals

The following observation schedule was used during the three-month fieldwork period while attending choral rehearsals at Kearsney College.

Kearsney College rehearsal observation schedule

Observation schedule	Descriptive notes	Reflective notes
<i>Interactions of choristers before rehearsal. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.</i>		
<i>Rehearsal venue. Where is the rehearsal taking place?</i>		
<i>Start of rehearsal. What is being discussed/done prior to the start of rehearsal?</i>		
<i>Warm-up. Describe the discipline and responsiveness of the choristers. Is the warm-up effective?</i>		
<i>Rehearsal. What music is being rehearsed? Are the choristers disciplined and engaged? Is the conductor engaging effectively with the choir?</i>		
<i>Rehearsal. What music is being rehearsed? Are the choristers disciplined and engaged? Is the conductor engaging effectively with the choir?</i>		
<i>Leaders' address. How is the choir responding to the conductor or committee member? What is being mentioned/addressed?</i>		
<i>Interaction of choristers after rehearsal. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.</i>		
<i>Rehearsal venue. Is the venue neat and tidy at the end of rehearsal?</i>		
	Date and time:	Signature of researcher:

Appendix D: Observation schedule for choral performances

The following observation schedule was used during the three-month fieldwork period while attending choral performances of Kearsney College.

Kearsney College performance observation schedule

Observation schedule	Descriptive notes	Reflective notes
<i>Interaction of choristers before the performance. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.</i>		
<i>Performance venue/event. Describe the overall mood and size of the audience. What is the length of the performance? Further comments with regards to the venue.</i>		
<i>Warm-up. Describe the discipline and response of the choristers. Is the warm-up effective?</i>		
<i>Performance. What music is being performed? Comment on the overall success and approach of the pieces being performed. Do the choristers show relevant performance etiquette on and off stage? Are the choristers responding to the gestures of the conductor?</i>		
<i>Are there visiting choirs in the audience? How are they reacting to the performance?</i>		
<i>Are there boys outside of choir from Kearsney College attending the performance? How are they responding to the performance?</i>		
<i>Audience. How is the audience responding to the performance?</i>		
<i>Interaction of choristers after the performance. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.</i>		
<i>Post-performance address. How are the choristers responding to the comments/feedback from the conductor? What is being mentioned?</i>		
	Date and time:	Signature of researcher:

Appendix E: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for participants of individual interviews



Participation in research study: Personal value and continuous participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school

Dear Kearsney College chorister,

You are invited to participate in this research project which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music (Performing Arts) through the University of Pretoria. This research will be conducted by myself and supervised by Dr Michael Barrett-Berg.

The following information provides insight regarding your voluntary participation in this study:

Aims of the study

The study aims to explore the personal value that is attributed through choral participation as experienced and expressed by boys attending the Kearsney College Choir. In order to explore the personal value associated with choral participation, the need to understand the membership benefits related to choral singing within a male adolescent choir will be explored. The study also aims to investigate the reasons for young adolescent male singers joining choirs from the onset, and the reasons for them remaining.

Research procedures

You are invited to participate in an individual interview. Questions will be asked regarding your participation in choral singing, both at Kearsney College and any prior experiences you may have. The interviews will be guided by the researcher and will be audio-recorded for data collection purposes. A transcript, recorded verbatim, will be provided to you after the interview to ensure accuracy of your thoughts and views. It will be permissible for you to make changes to this transcript should you wish to clarify or explain any of the data provided. The duration of the interview will be approximately 30 minutes and will be scheduled in consultation with the school. Observations of rehearsals and performances will also be made during a three month long fieldwork period to gather further information pertaining to the research topic.

Confidentiality

All data received will be treated as strictly confidential. Only the researcher will know your identity, and a pseudonym will be assigned to you to ensure confidentiality. The data will be archived in an electronic format on a password protected device at the department of music at the University of Pretoria for a minimum of 15 years, after which it will be discarded. During this time the raw data may be used for further research.

Risks and benefits

There are no known risks or undue stress associated with this study. There will also be no reward, financial or other, for participating in this research project.

Participants' rights

Your choice to participate in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to decline in answering any question/s which make you feel uncomfortable and may decide to withdraw from the project at any time. In such a case, your data will be destroyed and not used in the study. There will be no prejudice from the University of Pretoria, Kearsney College or the researcher should you wish to withdraw from the project.

Contact details of the researcher:

Mr Jacques Hendrik Linde
Email: u21767221@tuks.co.za
Tel.: +27 73 554 7477

Contact details of the supervisor:

Dr Michael Joseph Barrett-Berg
Email: michael.barrett@up.ac.za
Tel: +27 12 420 4182

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT: REPLY SLIP FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

I hereby give my consent to participate in the aforementioned research project and acknowledge that the data may be used in current and future research. I acknowledge that the aims and procedures have been explained and understand that I will be interviewed and observed during the data collection period. It has been explained that a pseudonym will be assigned to me to protect my identity in the project, allowing me to freely and truthfully converse during the interview process. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time, should I wish to do so.

Please tick the appropriate box:

I hereby **give consent** to participate in the research project.

I hereby **decline** to participate in the research project.

Name and Surname (Participant) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Researcher) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Supervisor) Signature Date

Appendix F: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for participants of focus group interviews



Participation in research study: Personal value and continuous participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school

Dear Kearsney College chorister,

You are invited to participate in this research project which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music (Performing Arts) through the University of Pretoria. This research will be conducted by myself and supervised by Dr Michael Barrett-Berg.

The following information provides insight regarding your voluntary participation in this study:

Aims of the study

The study aims to explore the personal value that is attributed through choral participation as experienced and expressed by boys attending the Kearsney College Choir. In order to explore the personal value associated with choral participation, the need to understand the membership benefits related to choral singing within a male adolescent choir will be explored. The study also aims to investigate the reasons for young adolescent male singers joining choirs from the onset, and the reasons for them remaining.

Research procedures

You are invited to participate in a focus group discussion. Questions will be asked regarding your participation in choral singing, both at Kearsney College and any prior experiences you may have. These group interviews will be guided by the researcher and will be audio-recorded for data collection purposes. A transcript, recorded verbatim, will be provided to you after the interview to ensure accuracy of your thoughts and views. It will be permissible for you to make changes to this transcript should you wish to clarify or explain any of the data provided. The duration of the interview will be approximately 60 minutes and will be scheduled in consultation with the school. Observations of rehearsals and performances will also be made during a three month long fieldwork period to gather further information pertaining to the research topic.

Confidentiality

All data received will be treated as strictly confidential. Only the researcher will know your identity, and a pseudonym will be assigned to you to ensure confidentiality. The data will be archived in an electronic format on a password protected device at the department of music at the University of Pretoria for a minimum of 15 years, after which it will be discarded. During this time the raw data may be used for further research.

Risks and benefits

There are no known risks or undue stress associated with this study. There will also be no reward, financial or other, for participating in this research project.

Participants' rights

Your choice to participate in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to decline in answering any question/s which make you feel uncomfortable and may decide to withdraw from the project at any time. In such a case, your data will be destroyed and not used in the study. There will be no prejudice from the University of Pretoria, Kearsney College or the researcher should you wish to withdraw from the project.

Contact details of the researcher:

Mr Jacques Hendrik Linde
Email: u21767221@tuks.co.za
Tel.: +27 73 554 7477

Contact details of the supervisor:

Dr Michael Joseph Barrett-Berg
Email: michael.barrett@up.ac.za
Tel: +27 12 420 4182

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT: REPLY SLIP FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

I hereby give my consent to participate in the aforementioned research project and acknowledge that the data may be used in current and future research. I acknowledge that the aims and procedures have been explained and understand that I will be interviewed and observed during the data collection period. It has been explained that a pseudonym will be assigned to me to protect my identity in the project, allowing me to freely and truthfully converse during the interview process. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time, should I wish to do so.

Please tick the appropriate box:

I hereby **give consent** to participate in the research project.

I hereby **decline** to participate in the research project.

Name and Surname (Participant) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Researcher) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Supervisor) Signature Date

Appendix G: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for parents/guardians of participants under the age of 18



Participation in research study: Personal value and continuous participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school

Dear Kearsney College parent/guardian

You are invited to give consent on behalf of your child/dependent so that they may participate in this research project which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music (Performing Arts) through the University of Pretoria. This research will be conducted by myself and supervised by Dr Michael Barrett-Berg. The following information provides insight regarding the voluntary participation of members in the Kearsney College Choir:

Aims of the study

The study aims to explore the personal value that is attributed through choral participation as experienced and expressed by boys attending the Kearsney College Choir. In order to explore the personal value associated with choral participation, the need to understand the membership benefits related to choral singing within a male adolescent choir will be explored. The study also aims to investigate the reasons for young adolescent male singers joining choirs from the onset, and the reasons for them remaining.

Research procedures

Members in the Kearsney College Choir are invited to participate in either an individual or focus group discussion. Questions will be asked regarding their participation in choral singing, both at Kearsney College and any prior experiences they may have. These interviews will be guided by the researcher and will be audio-recorded for data collection purposes. A transcript, recorded verbatim, will be provided to them after the interview to ensure accuracy of their thoughts and views. It will be permissible for them to make changes to this transcript should they wish to clarify or explain any of the data provided. The length of the interview will be approximately 30-60 minutes and will be scheduled in consultation with the school to avoid and cause as little disruption to the students' academic and schooling responsibilities. Observations of rehearsals and performances will also be made during a three month long fieldwork period to gather further information pertaining to the research topic.

Confidentiality

All data received will be treated as strictly confidential. Only the researcher will know the identity of the participants, and pseudonyms will be assigned to them to ensure confidentiality. The data will be archived in an electronic format on a password

protected device at the department of music at the University of Pretoria for a minimum of 15 years, after which it will be discarded. During this time the raw data may be used for further research.

Risks and benefits

There are no known risks or undue stress associated with this study. There will also be no reward, financial or other, for participating in this research project.

Participants' rights

The choice to participate in this study is completely voluntary. Participants have the right to decline in answering any question/s which make them feel uncomfortable and may decide to withdraw from the project at any time. In such a case, their data will be destroyed and not used in the study. There will be no prejudice from the University of Pretoria, Kearsney College or the researcher should any member wish to withdraw from the project.

Contact details of the researcher:

Mr Jacques Hendrik Linde
Email: u21767221@tuks.co.za
Tel.: +27 73 554 7477

Contact details of the supervisor:

Dr Michael Joseph Barrett-Berg
Email: michael.barrett@up.ac.za
Tel: +27 12 420 4182

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT: PARENT/GUARDIAN

I/We hereby give consent for our child/dependent to participate in the aforementioned research project and acknowledge that the data may be used in current and future research. I/We acknowledge that the aims and procedures have been explained and understand that participants will be interviewed and observed during the data collection period. It has been explained that a pseudonym will be assigned to the participants to protect their identity in the project, allowing them to freely and truthfully converse during the interview process. I/We am/are aware that participants may withdraw from the study at any time, should they wish to do so.

Please tick the appropriate box:

I/We hereby **give consent** for our child/dependant to participate in the research project.

I/We hereby **decline** to provide consent for our child/dependant to participate in the research project.

Name and Surname (Participant) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Researcher) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Supervisor) Signature Date

Appendix H: Letter of informed consent and reply slip for the Principle of Kearsney College



Participation in research study: Personal value and continuous participation in choral singing at an independent South African male high school

Dear Principal

The participants of the Kearsney College Choir are invited to participate in this research project which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Music (Performing Arts) through the University of Pretoria. This research will be conducted by myself and supervised by Dr Michael Barrett-Berg.

The following information provides insight regarding the study as well as the voluntary participation of members in the choir:

Aims of the study

The study aims to explore the personal value that is attributed through choral participation as experienced and expressed by boys attending the Kearsney College Choir. In order to explore the personal value associated with choral participation, the need to understand the membership benefits related to choral singing within a male adolescent choir will be explored. The study also aims to investigate the reasons for young adolescent male singers joining choirs from the onset, and the reasons for them remaining. Kearsney College choir (the 'case') is internationally renowned and considered a high performing ensemble, and thus the need to investigate the motivations pertaining to attendance and the values associated to membership as experienced by the singers.

Research procedures

Choristers will be invited to participate in either individual or focus group interviews. Questions will be asked regarding their participation in choral singing, both at Kearsney College and any prior experiences they may have. These interviews will be guided by the researcher and will be audio-recorded for data collection purposes. A transcript, recorded verbatim, will be provided to them after the interviews to ensure accuracy of their thoughts and views. It will be permissible for them to make changes to the transcripts should they wish to clarify or explain any of the data provided. The duration of the interviews will be approximately 30-60 minutes and will be scheduled in consultation with the school and relevant departments. Observations of rehearsals and performances will also be made during a three month long fieldwork period to gather further information pertaining to the research topic.

Confidentiality

All data received will be treated as strictly confidential. Only the researcher will know the identity of the participants, and pseudonyms will be assigned to ensure confidentiality.

The data will be archived in an electronic format on a password protected device at the department of music at the University of Pretoria for a minimum of 15 years, after which it will be discarded. During this time the raw data may be used for further research.

Risks and benefits

There are no known risks or undue stress associated with this study. There will also be no reward, financial or other, for participating in this research project.

Participants' rights

To participate in this study is completely voluntary. They have the right to decline in answering any question/s which make them feel uncomfortable and may decide to withdraw from the project at any time. In such a case, their data will be destroyed and not used in the study. There will be no prejudice from the University of Pretoria, Kearsney College or the researcher should they wish to withdraw from the project.

Contact details of the researcher:

Mr Jacques Hendrik Linde
Email: u21767221@tuks.co.za
Tel.: +27 73 554 7477

Contact details of the supervisor:

Dr Michael Joseph Barrett-Berg
Email:michael.barrett@up.ac.za
Tel: +27 12 420 4182

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT: REPLY SLIP FOR THE PRINCIPAL OF KEARSNEY COLLEGE

I hereby give my consent for the Kearsney College Choir to participate in the aforementioned research project and acknowledge that the data may be used in current and future research. I also grant permission for the name of the school to be published in the research conducted as it forms an integral part as to the reason for using the choir as a case study. I acknowledge that the aims and procedures have been explained and understand that choristers within the Kearsney College Choir will be interviewed and observed during the data collection period, if they and their parents/guardians provide consent. It has been explained that a pseudonym will be assigned to participants to protect their identities in this project, allowing them to freely and truthfully converse during the relevant interview processes. I am aware that participants may withdraw from the study at any time, should they wish to do so.

Please tick the appropriate box:

I hereby **give consent** for choristers in the Kearsney College choir to participate in this research project.

I hereby **decline** to grant permission for Kearsney College to participate in this research project.

Name and Surname (Participant) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Researcher) Signature Date

Name and Surname (Supervisor) Signature Date