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Exploring choristers' perceptions of a university choir as potential for social capital and personal value

by

Michael Joseph Barrett

21056316

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Supervisor: Dr Dorette Vermeulen

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Cantate cordibus, cantate oribus, cantate moribus.

Sing with the heart, sing with the mouth, sing with life.

(Augustinus: University of Pretoria Camerata Creed)

Acknowledgements

- To Michael Berg, my soul mate and my best friend. We did it! This work is as much my success as it is yours. Thank you for sacrificing so much for me over the many years. You always put me first and supported me most when I felt like giving up. I would not be here today without your relentless love, guidance and kindness. You are my everything!

Soli Deo Gloria!

Abstract

Numerous studies emphasise the importance of music-making as an integral human experience, but only a handful focus on the perceived benefits of participating in a university choir as experienced by the singers themselves. An extensive literature search revealed that no research has been conducted that specifically focuses on this topic within a multicultural South African university choir. There is an increasing interest in the attributed values associated with membership in a collective music activity, especially with regard to choirs. The aim of this ethnographic case study was to explore the perceived benefits of choir participation for choristers who are members of a multicultural university choir in South Africa and to examine to what extent – if at all – social capital is generated as a by-product of their choir participation. A qualitative research approach was most suitable in order to gain an in-depth perspective of choristers' personal perceptions. Data collection included interviews, focus groups and observations of rehearsals and performances, involving 76 members of the University of Pretoria Camerata. The findings of this research highlight the personal, social and musical values attributed to membership within the choir as perceived by its members. The main findings revealed that the experience of singing in a choir is polygonal, and that such experiences are rewarding, plentiful, and even challenging at times. Choristers perceive their participation to be beneficial to their health and see the choir environment as safe and conducive to forming important relationships. Cultural integration takes place as an extension of being associated within a diverse group of people and a wealth of trust is generated amongst the singers, regardless of their cultural, religious or language differences. Findings indicated some negative perceptions as experienced by the singers, as cultural barriers still exist between members which were exacerbated by political tensions on campus at the time of data collection. Another stressful element of choir participation is the extensive time and commitment required due to the demanding and eventful choir calendar, as well as full academic programmes for which they are registered. The study provides empirical evidence of how two types of social capital, namely bridging- and bonding social capital, are generated within the choir. Bridging social capital exists amongst students from different ethnic backgrounds; while bonding social capital is evident between specific language-, racial- and cultural groups within the choir. As a result of choir participation, social norms and values are shared amongst the singers and networks and connections are established across all types of boundaries, creating an environment of reciprocity between singers. Results from this study highlight that the Camerata establishes a wealth of trust between its members, on a personal, professional and musical level.

Keywords

Choir participation

Value of choral singing

South African university choir

Multicultural music participation

Social capital

Choral participation and trust

Integrated choir

Notes to the reader

- Participants, choristers, singers, interviewees are used interchangeably throughout the thesis.
- All vignettes appear in italics to differentiate them from verbatim quotes.
- 'Old members' refers to choristers who were still Camerata members at the time of data collection and who have sung in the choir for longer than a year. It does not reflect the age of the singer.
- The term 'newby' refers to a singer in his/her first year in the Camerata choir.
- The word 'performance' implies singing in a concert for an audience and not simply rehearsing or 'performing' a piece during rehearsals.
- British English is used in this thesis, thus certain spellings are different to that used in the United States.
- Camerata, Tuks Camerata, The University of Pretoria Camerata, University choir, or simply 'choir' are all used interchangeably.
- The referencing style used in this thesis is based on the Harvard Method as adapted for the Music Department at the University of Pretoria.
- At times, Tables inserted into the thesis resulted in open spaces occurring, and alleviating this problem was not always possible. As a result, there are open spaces on pages 34 and 38.

The following changes were made to pseudonyms provided by participants to avoid confusion:
- Some choristers chose the same pseudonyms in which case the letter B is added to one of the names in order to distinguish the two different participants, e.g. Emma and Emma B; Alice and Alice B.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to the study

THE PRETORIA UNIVERSITY CHOIR
was founded on 19 March 1968 at 20:00 in this location
under the auspices of the University of Pretoria

A bronze plaque commemorating the founding of the university choir 47 years ago hangs in the Club-hall on the main campus of the University of Pretoria. The plaque – of which the inscription above has been translated into English – is in Afrikaans because the university, as well as the choir, was almost exclusively Afrikaans in 1968. This music community is an organisation that has been in existence for nearly half a century and surely poses great value to its members, both past and present. Since 1999 the choir has become known as the University of Pretoria Camerata.

Consider the following scene: It is a Tuesday evening and a large group of students is gathering outside the Musaion, the main concert hall at the University of Pretoria. They are chatting, laughing, sharing stories, networking and socialising amongst each other. These students are from all walks of life, studying a variety of disciplines and representing multiple backgrounds. There is a rich diversity amongst this group with conversations being held in several languages, yet they gather to partake in a joint venture. The mood is jovial and there is an atmosphere of trustworthiness and well-being amongst them. One of the students makes an announcement and they make their way into the venue for the start of choir rehearsal.

This ritual takes place twice a week with each rehearsal lasting over two hours at a time as students of the University of Pretoria come together to make music, to socialise and to belong. Their participation in this voluntary music community involves a variety of activities, which include rehearsals, performances and all aspects associated with the group, whether social, organisational or musical. Community music organisations – such as choirs and instrumental music ensembles – are important aspects that make up the cultural and social fabrics of societies (Veblen & Olsson 2002: 731). Across South Africa, choirs from schools, communities, churches, concert halls and townships are engaging in similar music-making activities on a daily basis. Choral music in South Africa – be it in a formal setting such as a school, church or community choir; or an informal environment such as singing in the townships, around a campfire, or while demonstrators 'toi-toi' in the streets – is important to many people (Barrett, M.J. 2007; Blacking 1982; Levine 2005; Van As 2009; Van Wyk 1998;

Warren 1970) and provide a means of expression to some who often do not have the opportunity to voice their opinions.

Although there are no studies up to date which indicate the number of South Africans who sing in choirs, musicologists are of the opinion that a significant number of South Africans take part in some collective singing experience on a regular basis (Louhivuori, Salminen & Lebaka 2005: 82; Van Wyk 1998: 23; Warren 1970: 3). I therefore investigated *The Value of Choral Singing in a Multi-Cultural South Africa* while doing research for my master's degree (Barrett, M.J. 2007). Seven choirs from across South Africa partook in this study in which choirs were grouped according to their main cultural identity. By establishing the value of singing in a choir for people of different cultures, I wanted to ascertain the commonalities that unite South Africans to sing, regardless of their ethnicity. Additionally, my former study considered the relationship of choir participation to social capital.

The inherent social nature of music – and especially of choirs – helps people generate social capital that assists in combatting isolation and builds crucial social networks (Coffman 2006; Jones 2010; Pitts 2005; Putnam 2000). The theory of social capital developed over several decades with continued research adding to the literature (Coleman 1988: Cox 1995; Helliwell & Putnam 2004; Jones 2010; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 1995, 2000 & 2001; Sander & Putnam 2010; Stone 2001). The multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary nature of social capital is based on the notion that civic engagement – or people interacting with one another socially – adds value and enhancement to the quality of such people's lives.

In Putnam's view, social capital is possibly the most important factor which contributes to a positive and favourable society, a factor which should be recognised, comprehended and nurtured (Putnam 1995). Putnam's extensive research leads to the conclusion that community involvement or social capital is deteriorating in most western societies (1995; 1996; 2000; 2001). One of the reasons for this decline in social capital, Putnam argues, is that electronic media and entertainment, such as television and the internet, have replaced face-to-face social interaction between people (1995: 9). In contradiction to this, Stolle and Hooghe are of the view that, in the current postmodernist society, there are new "participation mechanisms" or "grassroots associations [which] opt for co-operation in flexible and horizontal networks that are better adapted to the needs of information-driven societies" (2004: 160). They postulate that these new connections and interactions may provide adequate alternatives to face-to-face social engagement. However, making music collectively as a group is an activity which cannot be replaced by postmodernist technologies, and it is a strong generator of well-being (Johnson, Louhivuori, Stewart,

Tolvanen, Ross & Era 2013: 1061). This concurs with Helliwell and Putnam's research (2004: 1435) which indicates that well-being – as subjectively experienced by individuals – is closely related to social capital. Moreover, social capital implies "norms of reciprocity and trust to which [social] networks give rise" (Sander & Putnam 2010: 9). Norms and values that are customary within communities are vital to the underpinning of the social capital theory as they afford an informal social control (Coleman 1988; Cox 1995; Jones 2010; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Stone 2001). Therefore there needs to be "a degree of common understanding, acceptance, and sharing of common norms of action and values" (Langston & Barrett 2008: 122) in order for a community – such as the Camerata – to generate social capital.

Sander and Putnam's research revealed that, shortly after the 9/11 attacks on the USA on September 11 in 2001, a sudden surge of civic involvement from communities and individuals were experienced, illustrating the need for society "to depend on the kindness of strangers" in such difficult times (2010: 12). Similar political troubles were experienced in South Africa during 2016 when there were numerous riots caused on university campuses when disillusioned students demanded university fees to fall (Vilakazi & Swails 2016), and that Afrikaans as a medium of instruction should be abolished (Makhetha 2016; Roodt 2016; Rushwaya 2016). I therefore realised the importance to investigate the effect of social capital on the choir members during these turbulent times on campus.

The University of Pretoria Camerata is an active music-making community. The choir goes on tour annually, either nationally or internationally; has attended international choral symposia and choral competitions in recent years; often appears on national television and radio broadcasts; has produced several high quality CDs; and performs at prestigious events such as government functions or National Arts Festivals and shows. I was a member of this choir from 2001-2006 and as a chorister I experienced the benefits associated with social capital, although I was not aware of it at the time. I was appointed conductor in April 2013, a position which I currently hold and which places me in an ideal position to explore the perceptions of choristers regarding their participation in this choir. As a closely knit music community of the University of Pretoria, the Camerata provides the ideal context and setting in which to explore the possible generation of social capital and the ways in which it may contribute to the well-being of its participants. The theory of social capital, as well as the proximal indicators related to this theory as identified by Putnam (1995), will be described, motivated and discussed in detail in the literature review provided in chapter 2 of this thesis.

1.2   Rationale and problem statement

The Camerata is a multicultural choir reflecting the diversity of South African society. The choir falls into the description of a multicultural organisation as described by Rosado (1997: 2):

> Multiculturalism is a system of beliefs and behaviours that recognises and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organisation or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organisation or society.

The Camerata's 78 full-time students represent a wide variety of study fields and nine South African cultures, comprising – in alphabetical order – Afrikaans, Coloured, English, Northern Ndelebele, Swati, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu. Additionally the choir accommodates five international students from countries including Germany, Malawi, Portugal and Zimbabwe. Study fields of the choristers include medicine, teaching, engineering, accounting, tourism, economics, law and music.

All choristers understand English although it is the mother tongue of only fifteen singers. All choristers have sung in choirs prior to joining the Camerata – including school, church, or community choirs – while only nine of the total number of choristers plays a music instrument. Of the seventy-eight students in the choir, only eight study music. Choristers are selected through an audition process that assesses mainly their ability to hear, reproduce and memorise music. Sight singing is not a prerequisite to join the Camerata, although it does form part of the audition process. No candidate is turned away based on financial standing. Four choristers in the choir receive full financial aid to pay for their student fees whereas twenty-two others receive partial subsidy. Students are expected to pay choir fees annually, but the choir fund subsidises up to a hundred percent of all fees to students in need.

The choir's ability to remain relevant will largely depend on the strategies employed to include the needs of this diverse group of students as well as its ability to transform to accommodate these desires. The various aspects of personal value which choristers associate with choir participation – an activity which requires a great deal of time and effort but which is entirely voluntary – need to be investigated. Regardless of study field, cultural background or musical ability, the choir provides students with the opportunity to participate in meaningful choral experiences within a diverse social setting. This prompts two essential questions which have been asked by ethnomusicologists, sociologists and music educators across the globe. Firstly, what is the value of communal music participation? (Bartolome

2013; Clayton, Dueck & Leante 2013; Pitts 2005); and secondly, in which ways can music build social capital? (Eastis 1998; Langston & Barrett 2008; Procter 2011; Putnam 2001; Wright 2012). By investigating these topics within the boundary of a multicultural South African university choir, this research could extend knowledge to the already existing literature. Since choir participation is a voluntary activity, the reasons for choristers to be part of such an activity will be explored, since this implies that they attribute certain values to their participation. Furthermore, the expectations of choir members and their perceptions of potential social capital that is generated as a by-product of the choir, is a key issue of this research.

As a conductor and educator, I aim to inspire, empower and educate the choristers in the choir and therefore it is imperative that I understand the mechanisms of management within the choral setup that are able to contribute to these goals. If choir singing is purely a social activity where people are doing something together, they might as well do anything else. By juxtaposing my own experiences as a member of the Camerata against an understanding of social capital theory, it can lead to a better understanding of possible values reaching beyond the musical realm of choir participation.

This rationale leads to the main research question of the study:

> What is the perceived personal value which choristers attribute to participating in the University of Pretoria Camerata, and the resulting possibilities for social capital being generated as a by-product?

Sub-questions related to the main research question are:
- What are the personal values which choristers attribute to participation in the University of Pretoria Camerata?
- To what extent are Putnam's key proximal indicators generated amongst the members of the Camerata that could establish the existence of social capital?

1.3   Aim of the study

In this study I aimed to explore and understand the common values choristers of the University of Pretoria Camerata attribute to their participation in the choir. An in-depth understanding was required regarding the reasons why university students initially wanted to join the choir on a voluntary basis, even though this activity is highly demanding and time-consuming. Furthermore, I intended to discover the individual subjective perceptions of

choristers from a variety of cultures and study fields, with varying levels of musical ability, regarding personal value they derived through participation in the choir. Establishing the potential of the Camerata to cultivate social capital – and the extent to which this possibly benefits its members and the choir as a community – is essential to this research.

1.4   Research methodology

In Chapter Three the research methodology is discussed in detail. I had chosen a qualitative research approach, finding an ethnographic case study most suited for this specific research problem (Creswell 2013; Leedy & Ormrod 2010). A purposeful sampling strategy was utilised (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995) selecting members from the University of Pretoria Camerata. Individual interviews and focus groups were conducted, coupled with extensive observations, formed the basis of data collection. An independent interviewer assisted in leading the face-to-face interviews and focus groups. This aided in avoiding bias on my part and a conflicting power relationship between me as conductor and choristers who acted as participants. Detailed transcriptions of all interviews and observation data were done, allowing data analysis to take place (Creswell 2013; Mouton 2001; Roberts 2010).

The full details of the ethnographic case study, the data gathering techniques, as well as the methods for data analysis will be fully described and motivated in chapter 3 of this thesis.

1.5   Trustworthiness of the research

To ensure that data and the interpretations thereof are trustworthy, a prolonged period of engagement, triangulation, and member checking procedures will be applied. Triangulation is often used in qualitative research to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the information that has been gathered from a variety of sources (Altrichter, Feldman, Posch & Somekh 2008; Cohen & Manion 2000; Creswell 2013; Leedy & Ormrod 2010 and O'Donoghue & Punch 2003). Bogdan and Biklen support this method in qualitative research calling it a "powerful technique that facilitates the validation of data" by cross referencing a multitude of information (2006: 80). This is echoed by O'Donoghue and Punch who note that triangulation is a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data" (2003: 78). In order for the development of a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena, triangulation is required to sort multiple data sources and materials into useful themes (Leedy & Ormrod 2010: 99). By using triangulation, an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour" (Cohen & Manion 2000: 254) is made and at the same time it will assist in giving a more "detailed and balanced picture of the situation" (Altrichter et al. 2008: 147).

In this study, methodological triangulation involves several methods of gathering data including observations, interviews and focus groups. To ensure the soundness of the data collected from the interviews (Holloway & Wheeler 2010: 275), transcripts will be issued to respondents for checking in order for them to confirm that it is a true representation of their views (Creswell 2009: 190).

1.6   Ethical considerations

All data collection methods, including observations and interviews, were undertaken with full knowledge and voluntary consent of the participants. The nature of the research, as well as the level of participation expected from the participants, was discussed before commencement of the interviews and observations. A letter of informed consent (Appendix E) was issued and the confidentiality of all participants guaranteed. No person interviewed received remuneration. This was made clear in the informed consent issued to each member. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time. In such cases all data obtained from that respondent was discarded and not used in the research. The raw data will be stored safely at the University of Pretoria for a period of 15 years as required by university regulations.

1.7   Value of the study

By investigating and exposing the perceived values of participation in the Camerata as well as the generating of social capital as a by-product, this research should enhance the understanding of the perceptions of choir members in an ever-changing multicultural South African environment. Additionally, this research should spur further investigation into the intricate and multidimensional phenomenon that is contemporary community music participation, especially in South Africa. This could lead to a better understanding with regard to the importance of music making in the 21st century and the value that collective music engagement – specifically choir participation – has for the lives of participants.

1.8   Chapter headings

This study is divided into six chapters. The current chapter introduced the relevance and need for the study, providing the background and aim of the study. This led to the problem statement and research questions. Lastly, ethical issues, triangulation and the value of the study were explained.

The second chapter will be an in-depth review of existing literature regarding the research topic. The concept of social capital and its relevance to musical communities will be discussed. Studies conducted on the value of participation in music ensembles – be they

choral or other – will be investigated and presented. Commonalities and differences between studies found in the literature will be outlined in order to identify a gap to substantiate the necessity and value of this study.

The third chapter will focus on the research methodology. The approach to the study, the research design and the data collection strategies will all be discussed. Ethical considerations for this qualitative study will be delineated. Furthermore, the methods of data analysis will be explained and the chapter will conclude with a discussion of strategies used to increase the validity of the research.

Chapter four will present the data collected from interviews, focus groups and observations. The assembled data will be analysed and described in detail and emergent themes, sub-themes and subordinate themes presented. An in-depth discussion of the findings will be provided.

Chapter five will be devoted to a discussion of the research results in order to compare and contrast the current research with existing scholarly literature.

Finally, in chapter six, recommendations for further research will be provided, as well as concluding remarks regarding the research topic.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter provides a thorough understanding of the existing literature pertaining to the value of participation within a music ensemble, with specific focus on choral communities. Evidence is presented that sufficient research is lacking within the South African context and motivation is provided for further inquiry. The concept of social capital is explained and the five proximal indicators associated with it – as suggested by Putnam (1995) – are described. This forms the basis of the theory framing this study whereby a multicultural university choir will be investigated to ascertain the possible values of participation to its members.

2.1 The value of participation in a music community

Anthropological evidence suggests that communal music making is an inherent part of humanity (Blacking 1973; Mithen 2006). The value of music involvement is not a new topic of discussion. Wade (2004: 1) comments on how people "all over the world, […] make music meaningful and useful in their lives". Small describes the importance of being part of a music activity, remarking that to participate "in a music act is of central importance to our very humanness" (1998: 9). In this respect, Lindemann discusses the value of music participation, mentioning how "young people need to come face-to-face with a variety of musical experiences that will help them develop the musical understandings and knowledge necessary to extend the depth with which they think and feel" (1998: 6). Additionally the value of singing as a communal activity leads to increased musical knowledge and proficiency (Durrant & Himonides 1998: 67-68). "Choral singing is a multifactorial activity, and activities that involve a combination of social, affective, cognitive and physical aspects may confer additional health benefits over activities that involve primarily one element or are done alone" (Johnson et al. 2013: 1062). Musicologists across the globe have studied the significance of participation in music ensembles in a variety of contexts (Adderley, Kennedy & Berz 2003; Asmus & Harrison 1990; Corenblum & Marshall 1998; Gates 1991; Hughes 1978; Klinedinst 1991; Schmidt 2005), and specifically with regard to choirs (Bartolome 2010; Brown 2012; Demorest 2000; Durrant 2005; Hylton 1981; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2015; Kennedy 2002; Mizener 1993; Phillips 2004; Pitts 2005; Smith & Sataloff 2013; Sweet 2010).

A substantial number of studies have been conducted to ascertain the various reasons for singers of all ages participating in numerous types of choirs, including the following examples. Kennedy (2002) investigated the experiences of boys in a junior high school choir, finding that a love for singing as well as influences by teachers and peers were motivating factors for participation. Sweet (2010) researched the perceptions of boys

participation in a choir of eighth grade learners, in which four primary themes emerged namely singing, relationships with other people, aspirations to become a member of the school's auditioned choir – the Choralier Men–, and "silliness" by the conductor as a way to retain the learners' attention and enthusiasm in order to break the focused discipline required for this activity. The motivation to join a music ensemble, such as a choir, was investigated by Adderley, Kennedy and Berz in a high school environment. They found that "students are intellectually, psychologically, emotionally, socially and musically nurtured by membership in performing ensembles" (2003: 204). Parker (2011) focuses on the philosophical beliefs of adolescent choral singers, reflecting that social growth, expression of emotion, increased self-confidence, and the development of personal character are perceived as benefits of participation. Two further studies investigated the motivations and benefits of elderly people participating in music activities. In the United Kingdom, the *Music for Life Project* (Varvarigou, Creech, Hallam & McQueen 2012) was started in 2009 with the specific aim to explore the way in which music making enriches the lives of older people. The benefits identified by singers over the age of 50 include improved health, social interactions, emotional support and continued learning. In Australia, Joseph and Southcott (2014) found that elderly singers were motivated by a positive attitude towards singing as well as a desire to be socially connected to others to become members of a choir.

There has, however, been limited research that specifically focuses on the motivations of singers to join university choirs, irrespective of their study field (Brown 2012: 81). In the study conducted by Jacob, Guptill and Sumsion (2009: 189), 105 singers from a university choir noted that "previous musical experience" was a determining factor for their continued involvement in a choir, along with social bonding, a sense of community, group and personal achievements and their overall well-being. A comparative study between non-music university students and those majoring in music found that participation in collective music making –including choirs– had a positive social, musical and personal outcome across both groups (Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011). A limited number of studies investigated the motivations for university students participating in a choral ensemble (Brown 2012; Poulter 1997; Sichvitsa 2003).

Even fewer researchers have focused on the value that these choral communities have on the lives of the participants (Bartolome 2010; Clift & Hancox 2001; Pitts 2005, Sichvitsa 2003). Based on this gap in the research, Bartolome conducted an extensive study about the perceived benefits of participation in a choir by its choristers using ethnographic techniques. She explored the perceived values of choristers in the Seattle Girls' Choir (SGC) and in doing so, provides the music education community with evidence of the "rich and varied

values and benefits associated with participation in a community-based girls' choir" (2010: 414-15). Through her observations, interviews and direct participation with the choristers, she identified common themes about the value of participation within this community. Many of her findings support the already existing literature, although two of the perceived values of participation found in several other studies did not materialise during her inquiry of the SGC. According to Bartolome (2013: 413), research by both Pitts (2005) and Hylton (1981) found that individuals participating in a music activity – such as singing in a choir – have linked their music involvement to a source of spiritual meaning, but such benefits could not be verified from the findings of Bartolome's research. Additionally, the notion that being actively involved in performing music is essential to the enjoyment experienced by participants (Adderley, Kennedy & Berz 2003; Hylton 1981; Kennedy 2002; Pitts 2005) is not a central finding in Bartolome's study. The SCG choristers experienced "social, personal and educational benefits" (Bartolome 2013: 412) as determining factors for enjoyment in the choir rather than the actual performances. Since Bartolome's study was conducted with an all-girls children's choir, a recommendation of her study was that further investigation with different types of choirs is needed to extend the knowledge of this phenomenon.

The perceived benefits of singing as experienced by university choristers are reported by Clift and Hancox, but these authors admit that the study had "limitations" and that their main aim was to "provide a foundation for future larger scale surveys" (2001: 248). Their study primarily focuses on health benefits associated with choir membership, which includes spiritual, social, emotional and general well-being. Pitts (2005: 1) conducted four separate ethnographic case studies in England to investigate the contribution of music participation regarding social and personal fulfilment amongst university students and adults. Her findings indicate that the participants across the four case studies enjoy music making as it helps them to escape from their daily lives, contributes to building self-esteem, has great social benefits, and is a platform for enjoyment and spiritual gratification (Pitts 2005: 1). Concurring with this finding, Sichivitsa (2003: 339) found that social aspects play a substantial role in contributing to the value of music participation as perceived by choir members and advises that the "social components of choirs" needs further investigation and study. In Australia, a study with children found that the desire to participate in music making activities is motivated by a love of performance, individual growth and well-being, the desire for challenge and professionalism, and the quality of relationships, while spiritual or social benefits are of less importance (Barrett & Smigiel 2007: 39). A cross cultural study between Finland and South Africa established that singers from these two countries regarded social aspects within choirs very important and that participation in music was beneficial for both the individual and the community (Louhivuori, Salminen & Lebaka 2005: 62).

In the South African context, literature with regard to the value of music participation is limited, especially in connection to choirs. Louw (2014) has contributed to the literature by exploring the significance of choral singing at primary and high school level, within the context of the South African Schools Choral Eisteddfod. Her study highlights eight emergent themes, namely choir singing as a way of living, experiences related to music-making, learning, growth, bridging, bonding and belonging, wellbeing and finally spiritual experiences. Additionally, there is extensive research on the value of multicultural music (Dzorkpey 2000; Fredericks 2008; Grant & Portera 2010; Joseph 2012; Schoeman 1993; Smit 1996; Woodward 2007); choir as a tool for transformation (Akrofi, Smit & Thorsén 2007; Van As 2009 & 2012; Van Aswegen & Potgieter 2010); and the formation of identity through music (Hammond 2004; Muir 2014; Swart 2012). However, a study on the perceived benefits from choristers in a multicultural university choir in South Africa has not yet been conducted. Choral conductors and music educators may benefit from this research as it might assist in finding avenues to strengthen educational methodologies in a multicultural environment:

> The more music educators understand the values and benefits related to music participation and the function of such music activities in the lives of participants, the better they can tailor relevant and meaningful experiences for their students (Bartolome 2013: 415).

It is evident that the perceived values of participation within a music community vary from group to group. Culture, age, music ability, social environment, and the type of music ensemble – amongst several other factors – all contribute to the values which an individual attribute to being part of any given music community (Barrett, J.R. 2007; Creech, Hallam, McQueen & Varvarigou 2013; Major 2013). Investigating the values of participation as experienced by members of a university choir requires further investigation. This prompts the notion that in a culturally diverse and unique country such as South Africa, a multicultural choir such as the Camerata could provide a new perspective regarding the values of music participation as perceived by its members.

2.2   What is social capital?

> Just as a screwdriver (physical capital) or a college education (human capital) can increase productivity (both individual and collective), so too social contacts affect the productivity of individuals and groups.
>
> (Putnam 2000: 19)

Although there has not yet been an internationally accepted definition for the term 'social capital', the meaning of this term for the current study implies the interconnectedness between people who are collaborating and socialising as a group, which generates additional value or benefits to those individuals. Internationally over that past two decades,

social capital has become a focus of many academics and policy makers. Farr (2004: 6) calls it "one of our trendiest terms" and Eastis (1998: 66) comments that social scientists and pundits have "unleashed a flood" of research and debate in recent years. Social capital has been linked to the following benefits or added value:

- improved overall health and wellbeing (Fatima & Shafique 2015; Ferguson 2006; Harpham, Grant & Rodriguez 2004; Putnam 2000; Yamaguchi 2013; Yu, Session, Fu & Wall 2015);

- economic growth and stability (Ibarguen-Tinsley 2015; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] 2001; Peiro-Palomino & Tortosa-Ausina 2015; Putnam 1993; Woolcock 1998);

- better education and training (Brimhall 2014; Carbonaro 1998; Israel, Beaulieu & Hartless 2001; Jones 2010; Lauglo 2000; Sun 1999);

- the importance of community development (Onyx & Bullen 2000; Rothon, Goodwin & Stansfeld 2012; Shan, Muhajarine, Lopston & Jeffrey 2012; Welty Peachey, Borland, Lobpries & Cohen 2015); and

- the arts as a necessity in society (Baggetta 2009; Carr 2006; Chorus America 2003; Hampshire & Matthijsse 2010; Jones 2010; Langston 2011; Langston & Barrett 2008; Putnam 2000; Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement 2000; Stern & Seifert 2002).

Due to this increased interest in social capital in recent years, a wealth of research has been provided, and as can be expected it has been accompanied with wide-spread critique (Bebbington 2004; Campbell & Gillies 2001; Inaba 2013; Stephens 2007; Szreter & Woolcock 2004; Tlili & Obsiye 2014). Moore, Haines, Hawe and Shiell (2006: 729) believe that the concept of social capital has been "lost in translation", while Farr (2004: 7) comments respectively on the views of Mondak (1998: 433) and Woolcock (1998: 155), stating that the term is becoming "muddled" and obtaining a "variety of meanings". Fine (2010: 207) goes as far as arguing that the term social capital should be completely "discarded" and several authors agree that clarity and consensus of the term is required (Baum 1999; Macinko & Starfield 2001; Muntaner & Lynch 1999; Woolcock 1998). It is indeed necessary to explain social capital in order to establish a theoretical framework on which the current research can be based.

The term 'capital' often refers to money and wealth, and this is easily measured by the assets people own or the size of their bank balances (Procter 2011: 243). A lack of such capital or resource is often a consequence of people being deprived of basic needs such as adequate healthcare and education, and have fewer options in life that support personal

wellbeing and achievement (Baggetta 2009). The axiom, "it's not what you know, it's who you know" (Woolcock & Narayan 2000: 225), sums up the understanding associated with 'social capital'. People who are better connected have an increased advantage to improve their health, wealth and happiness by "constructing rich social capital" allowing them to tap into the "hidden resources in their business, professional, and personal networks" (Barrett, M.J. 2007: 22). Woolcock explains that the basic idea of social capital is that our connections with friends, colleagues and family members "constitute[s] an important asset, one that can be called on in a crisis, enjoyed for its own sake, and leveraged for material gain" (2001: 67). A more formal explanation of the concept of social capital can be defined as "an instantiated set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permits them to cooperate with one another" (Harrison & Huntington 2000: 98). Bourdieu (1993), Putnam (1993) and Coleman (1988) all agree that collective action is a resource of social capital, resulting in the wellbeing of individuals and an increase in trust within communities. According to Putnam (2000: 19), the term "social capital" has been invented independently "at least six times over the twentieth century" and was first coined by Lyda Hanifan, a supervisor of rural schools in Charleston, West Virgina in the USA:

> I [refer to the term] *social capital* [as the] tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of a people, namely, goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse among a group of individuals and families who make up a social unit

> Hanifan (1916: 130)

In her view, we as individuals are socially helpless if left completely in isolation. Hanifan (1916: 130-131) continues:

> If he [the individual] may come into contact with his neighbor, and they with our neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in the whole community. The community as a whole will benefit by the cooperation of all its parts, while the individual will find in his associations the advantages of the help, the sympathy, and the fellowship of his neighbors.

The most important connection between the current study and Hanifan's views is that through community gatherings people become acquainted with one another, resulting in more collaboration between these "neighbors" [sic], which leads to the generation of social capital. This activity may "easily then be directed towards the general improvement of the community" (Hanifan 1916: 131).

Social capital is the "connections among individuals; social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Putnam 2000: 19). Communities with rich social capital have been linked to higher educational achievement, better health, lower

crime and improved economic development (Wright 2012: 12). Baker (2000: 16) found that people with good networks have a better opportunity of being both "mentally and physically" healthy, a sentiment that is echoed across numerous studies (Cohen & Prusak 2001; Harris, Brown & Robinson 1999; Procter 2011). A recent study by Comer in New Haven, Connecticut, indicates that the promotion of social capital in two weak performing schools lead to an improvement in the school's educational approach as well as possible life successes for the members of these school communities (Comer 2015: 229). Similarly, Rothon, Goodwin and Stansfeld found that an increase in social capital within a community – such as a school – was associated with "mental health and educational achievement in adolescents" (2012: 706-7). Several other studies have been connected to social capital and health (Harpham, Grant & Rodriguez 2004; Klineberg, Clark, Bhui, Haines, Viner, Head, Woodley-Jones & Stansfeld 2006; Ziersch, Baum, MacDougall & Putland 2005), social capital and education (Carbonaro 1998; Israel, Beaulieu & Hartless 2001; Lauglo 2000; Sun 1999), and social capital linked to trust and wellbeing (Barrett 2007; Coleman 1988; OECD 2001; Putnam 2000; Wright 2012).

The University of Pretoria is a diverse community, and the Camerata can be seen as a community gathering consisting of students – or neighbours as referred to by Hanifan – from different social backgrounds. Hanifan (1916) refers to the people of a Charleston rural community all emanating from the same social backgrounds. This is similar to the prominent research of Putnam conducted respectively in Italy (1993) and in America (1995, 1996, 2000); Rose in Russia (1998); and Fatima and Shafique in Pakistan (2015) to mention a few. Although social capital has been researched in the South African context, it has been conducted within specific cultural groups. Jordaan and Grové (2013) explored the generating of social capital from emerging farmers in the Eksteenskuil community, a coloured community in the North West Province, whereas Chipps and Jarvis (2015) explored the wellbeing of older, predominantly white English speaking residents in a care facility in Durban.

2.3   Social capital as a theoretical framework

Unlike other forms of capital – economic, physical, human, and cultural – social capital cannot be quantified, calculated and compared (Procter 2011: 244). As a result, "there is a gulf between theoretical understandings of social capital and the ways social capital has been measured in much empirical work" (Stone 2001: 1). This sentiment is echoed by Paxton (1999: 89-90) noting the "large gap between the concept of social capital and its measurement". Fukuyama states that the "greatest weaknesses of the social capital concept is the absence of consensus on how to measure it" (2001: 12), which resulted in an

extensive debate on whether social capital is actually present in a community (Jones 2010; Langston & Barrett 2008; Narayan & Cassidy 2001; Procter 2011; Stolle & Rochon 1998; Stone 2001; Woolcock & Narayan 2000). There is much deliberation on whether social capital can be valid as a single conceptual entity because of the numerous ways in which it has been utilised in research (Schuller, Baron, Field 2000: 2; Rothon, Goodwin & Stansfeld 2011: 698). There are many indicators that might constitute the presence of social capital, although the central aspects thereof seem to be trust, social norms and values, reciprocity (Langston & Barrett 2008: 123), community participation, as well as networks and connections (Putnam 1993, 2000).

The theory of social capital has been extensively developed – especially by Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam – and their research provides a firm theoretical framework for further such investigation (Gauntlett 2012; Langston & Barrett 2008; Narayan & Cassidy 2001; Procter 2011; Stolle & Rochon 1998; Woolcock & Narayan 2000). Bourdieu, one of the most influential sociologists of the 20th century (Gauntlett 2012: 131; Rostom 2012: 7; Vorhaus 2014: 29) describes social capital as the sum of resources that are acquired by individuals or a group within a specific network allowing such entities to maintain influence within society while restricting others to such privilege (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 119). Gauntlett explains that Bourdieu's views on social capital are "limited and deterministic" (2012: 132) as social networks are not only restricted to the wealthy. In contrast to most researchers and social scientists, Bourdieu does not see social capital as a positive concept, but rather a means to describe the social inequalities that plague every nation. In divergence to Bourdieu's beliefs, Coleman sees social capital being generated unintentionally and to the benefit of all within a group or community and not by elitists with an agenda to maintain positions of privilege (Procter 2011: 244). In contrast to Coleman's view that social capital is produced between institutions that are formalised, such as families and churches, Putnam states that there is more value in social capital emanating from voluntary associations, such as choirs and bowling teams. These voluntary associations have a better opportunity at fostering trust and participation (Procter 2011: 245). Putnam is of the opinion that the "core idea of social theory is that social networks have value" (2000: 19).

Researchers have made distinctions between three types of social capital namely 'bridging' social capital (Coleman 1988; NCVER 2004; Putnam 2000; Stolle, Soroka & Johnston 2008; Woolcock 2001; Woolcock & Narayan 2000); 'bonding' social capital (Coleman 1988; Giorgas 2000; Lesser & Storck 2001; NCVER 2004; Putnam 2000; Woolcock 2001; Woolcock & Narayan 2000); and 'linking' social capital (Stone 2003; Woolcock 2001). 'Bridging' social capital refers to the connections between people who are different along

some important dimension, such as race, gender, or socioeconomic class. Relationships that fall into this category are "likely to be more fragile, but more likely also to foster social inclusion" (Schuller, Baron & Field 2000: 5). On the other hand, 'bonding' social capital refers to the alliances created between people who are more alike than they are different (Putnam 2000: 22), such as members in a family or even ethnic groups (Van As 2014: 225). 'Linking' social capital is the degree to which individuals build relationships with organisations and individuals who have authority or influence over them (Stone 2003; Wollcock 2001). Bridging and bonding social capital have been linked to improved health, better education, and greater personal wellbeing (OECD 2001: 4), Putnam (2000: 23) believes that 'bridging' social capital requires greater attention as populations across the world become more diverse. By joining an organisation such as the Camerata, individuals are potentially exposed to a wealth of social capital, including 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital. Although Putnam's concepts of social capital have been extensively critiqued (McLean, Schultz & Steger 2002; Stolle & Hooghe 2005), his work has been, and remains, politically influential.

In more recent years, the value of social capital within the arts has been given increased interest. During the late 1990's, "The Arts and Social Capital" was a key topic at a series of seminars on Civic Engagement hosted by the Harvard University in the USA (Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement 2000). Over 30 diverse scholars and practitioners from across the United States – including at the time the civil rights lawyer Barak Obama – participated in developing strategies to increase civic engagement and emerging social capital. The "Better Together" report (Saguaro Seminar on Civic Engagement 2000) was a result of this seminar and its findings support the need of investing in arts within communities across a nation as a way of strengthening social capital.

Music can be regarded as the most sociable of the arts (Alvin & Downey 1973: 22). In this sense, music is closely related to communities where social capital can be developed, such as through music therapy (Procter 2011); music education (Brimhall 2014; Jones 2010; Wright 2012); and most recently choirs (Barrett 2007; Eastis 1998; Einarsdottir 2012; Langston & Barrett 2008; Langston 2011; Van As 2014). In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the importance of communal activities, such as choirs, and how they positively contribute to the strengthening of social capital within the communities they serve (Eastis 1998; Putnam 2001; Rose 1998; Wright 2012). Putnam (2000:114) identifies people making music together – especially choirs – as a significant factor contributing to the generation of social capital within a specific group, labelling such "communities" as a necessity in an ever-changing world (2000: 23). "The concept of social capital expresses the sociological essence of communal vitality" (Siisiainen 2000: 4). Trust, social norms and

values, as well as reciprocity within voluntary communities are the fundamental moral resources that express the generating of social capital. As a result, cooperation between two or more individuals is made possible and a relationship is then established on values and interpersonal skills that foster "honesty, honour, empathy and trustworthiness" (Jones 2010: 294). Putnam (1995) identified five proximal indicators to show that social capital is being generated. These include voluntary participation; networking and forming connections; reciprocity; trust; and shared social norms and values. In the following sub-sections, each of these will be explained.

2.3.1   Voluntary community participation

A large majority of choristers perceive the experience of singing to be a positive and beneficial one. In itself, this is not too surprising given that choral singing is a voluntary activity people undertake through a love of music and the pleasure they derive from it (Clift, Hancox, Morrison, Hess, Kreutz & Stewart 2010: 31).

According to Putnam (2000), voluntary participation in a community activity is a key indicator of social capital, a notion that is well supported in literature (Langston 2011; Langston & Barrett 2008; Tocqueville 2001; Veblen & Olsson 2002). Researchers Langston and Barrett (2008: 120) add that social capital enables voluntary participation which in turn produces even more social capital. Putnam uses the participation of choristers in a choir as an example, explaining that singers join a choir because they enjoy singing, and that they are not driven to strengthen the organisation's social capital (1993: 3). The result, however, is that social capital is indeed generated and this voluntary participation provides the platform in which networks may be developed. The individual reasons of students wanting to join a university choir on a voluntarily basis will be investigated in this study.

2.3.2   Networks and connections

The core idea of social capital theory is that "social networks have value" (Putnam 2000: 19). Social networks and connections are important components of social capital (Coleman 1988; Fukuyama 1999; Jones 2010; Langston & Barrett 2008; Langston 2011; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan 2000; Wright 2012). Networks allow individuals to share resources and information, creating an environment conducive to the cultivation of mutual benefit. Although an individual may benefit from social capital within a network, it remains a collective phenomenon which requires interaction (Langston & Barrett 2008). The individual value attributed to participation within a choral society is a key interest of this study.

2.3.3   Reciprocity

Another indicator of social capital is reciprocity and it is this aspect that leads societies to being more reliant on each other. Putnam calls this phenomenon "norms of generalized reciprocity" (1993: 3).

> Your corn is ripe today; mine will be so tomorrow. 'Tis profitable for us both, that I should labour with you today, and that you should aid me tomorrow. I have no kindness for you, and know you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains upon your account; and should I labour with you upon my own account, in expectation of a return, I know I should be disappointed, and that I should in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labour alone; You treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security.
>
> (David Hume 1747)

In the quote above, as illustrated by Putnam in *Bowling Alone* (2000: 134), David Hume (1711–1776), a Scottish Philosopher of the Enlightenment, exemplifies the problem of trust between two farmers. In order for both parties to maximise their profits from their crops, cooperation and reciprocation is needed between the farmers. The risk, however, is that one farmer may end up working for the other and receive no help in return. If the farmers are to trust each other, then profits gained from the harvest will be beneficial for both. A more simplified example would be if a family takes a vacation and their next door neighbour keeps an eye on their house while they are away, it is expected – without it being said – that the favour will be reciprocated in the future. A society or community rich in social capital is indicated by the wealth of reciprocity amongst its members (Coleman 1988; Fukuyama 1999; Jones 2010; Langston & Barrett 2008; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Stone 2001; Wright 2012). Determining whether norms of generalised reciprocity are being cultivated amongst the members of the Camerata is a significant interest of this study.

2.3.4   Trust

Trust is a precondition of social capital, regardless of the specific organisation, and without it, communities cannot function efficiently. Cohen and Prusak explain trust as an "essential lubricant" that is a necessity in all societies, allowing people to "work and live together without generating a constant, wasteful flurry of conflict and negotiations" (2001: 28). Langston and Barrett state that it is a "central component of most descriptions and definitions of social capital" (2008: 121) and this is supported throughout the literature (Coleman 1988; Fukuyama 1999; Jones 2010; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Wright 2012). The benefits of trust within communities and between individuals are numerous. If people trust each other and share common values, then they will be in a position to achieve the same goals and will have a common purpose (Wehlage 2000: 3). It is clear that without trust there can be no social capital. "Trust has to be a norm – the product

of, and a precondition for, social capital" (Langston & Barrett 2008: 122). In this study, the aspect of trust within a choral community (namely the Camerata) will be explored.

2.3.5   Social norms and values

Norms and values that are customary within communities are imperious to the underpinning of the social capital theory as they afford an informal social control (Coleman 1988: Cox 1995; Jones 2010; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Stone 2001). In order for a community – such as the Camerata – to generate social capital, there needs to be "a degree of common understanding, acceptance, and sharing of common norms of action and values" (Langston & Barrett 2008: 122). According to Paldam and Svendsen, there is a feeling of safety in communities that are rich in social capital because self-enforcement of norms grows from trusting one another (1999: 7-8). A sense of belonging is a by-product of the acceptance of common norms of action and values by the members within a community or organisation and this in turn facilitates the development of a common understanding (Langston & Barrett 2008: 122). This study will investigate the common values and beliefs shared amongst the members of the University of Pretoria Camerata.

Figure 1 below illustrates the five proximal indicators that are required to ascertain the existence of social capital within an organisation or community.

Figure 1: Five proximal indicators of social capital

The abovementioned proximal indicators are largely regarded as the necessities for determining that social capital is developing in a community or organisation. All of these indicators are found in the works of Robert Putnam (1993, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001) and because he specifically refers to the role of music communities in the generating of social capital (Baggetta 2009: 181; Procter 2011: 246; Langston & Barrett 2008: 119), his conceptions form the basis of the theoretical framework for this study. It is evident from the literature that there is not a consensus about what social capital truly is. Although there are many definitions and frameworks for the measurement of this capital, what seems clear is that an abundance of social wealth results in a more trusting environment; one in which a community may thrive, both for individuals as well as for the community as a whole. Despite all this knowledge, more evidence is required to support these claims, especially in a discipline such as music.

2.4   Summary

Music educators and musicians have a responsibility to develop pedagogical approaches that promote skill development and music knowledge within their learners and community participants, but that such group music making activities also foster social skills and civic responsibilities within these music ensembles and classes. In order to successfully achieve this outcome within an ensemble such as a choir, it is firstly necessary to understand the motivations and benefits associated with membership of a community music ensemble as experienced by the individual. This chapter provided an extensive review of the literature pertaining to the importance of collective music participation, and its link to the generation of social capital. Additionally, the various proximal indicators associated with social capital within such a community were outlined, indicating the gap in the literature which needs investigation namely the perceived values as experienced by university singers in a multicultural South African choir, and the possibility of nurturing social capital as a result of their choir participation. The research approach and methods of data collection will be explained and motivated in the chapter that follows.

Chapter 3: Research methodology

This chapter outlines the approach, design and procedures of the research, as well as the methods to analyse and interpret the data.

3.1   Research approach

Creswell states that case study research "begins with the identification of a specific *case"* (2013: 98) which in this research is the Camerata choir. This study adopted a qualitative approach using standard ethnographic techniques to determine the value of participation in a voluntary community choir, namely the University of Pretoria Camerata. Creswell (2013: 44) states that "qualitative research begins with […] philosophical assumptions". As conductor and alumnus of the Camerata I had several assumptions regarding the value which this choir offers the singers, and I wanted to explore this phenomenon in order to gain an in-depth understanding of such values. Qualitative research provides an understanding of the meaning of cultural phenomena, through interpretation, whilst taking place in its natural environment (Mouton 2001). Leedy and Ormrod (2010: 135) expand on this view, pointing out that qualitative research focuses on "phenomena" which are studied in all "their complexities". The diverse nature of the Camerata makes the choir not only complex, but unique. A qualitative approach provides an appropriate paradigm in order to determine the value of participation in choral activities, and to ascertain the extent to which social capital is being generated in a choral context such as the Camerata. The use of qualitative methods as a means to ascertain the existence of social capital within a community is well supported in the literature (Fritch 1999; Morrow 2001; Narayan & Cassidy 2001; Langston 2011; Procter 2011; Putnam 2000; Stanton-Salazar 2001; Stone 2001; Woolcock & Narayan 2000; Wright 2012).

3.2   Research design

Ethnographies are appropriate when the research being conducted involves direct interaction with and observation of a group of people in their natural setting in order to gain insight into the shared beliefs, behaviours and motivations of the group (Creswell 2013; Leedy & Ormrod 2010; Tedlock 2000). Being directly involved with the choir and interacting intimately with the choristers on a regular basis, an ethnographic case study was therefore a suitable qualitative research design for this study. Kennedy (2002), Pitts (2005), and Bartolome (2013), are researchers who all conducted ethnographic studies to ascertain the perceived value of individuals involved in a communal music activity, whereas Langston and Barrett (2008), and Langston (2011), used qualitative case studies to determine the value of social capital within community choirs.

A second aspect of the research design involved the specific context being explored; therefore a case study deemed the most appropriate. A case study involves the investigation of a bounded system – a case – within a real-life setting (Yin 2009) and is useful when an "in-depth understanding of a single case" (Creswell 2013: 97) is required; both aspects which fit closely to the investigation conducted for this research. Creswell (2013: 97), Leedy and Ormrod (2010: 137), as well as Stake (2008: 120) all concur with Yin (2009), adding that such a case takes place over a period of time and requires the collection of information from multiple sources. The current research therefore followed an ethnographic case study design because the focus of the research was on a unique case – the Camerata choir – which required direct interaction and involvement from me as the researcher (Creswell 2013; Gallant 2008; Stake 1995).

3.3   Sampling strategy

I employed a purposeful sampling strategy, which is advocated by Creswell (2013: 156) and Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: 67), as appropriate within a qualitative study. Leedy and Ormrod (2010: 212) recommend that a purposive- or criteria-based sampling strategy should be utilised when participants are chosen who best characterise a group and who might represent "diverse perspectives on an issue". According to Creswell (2013: 155), purposeful sampling can only occur when three considerations are kept in mind: the decision on how to select participants for a study; the specific type of sampling strategy that will be utilised; and the size of the sample that will be investigated.

Since the choir was the specific case study for the investigation, all choristers of the current Camerata choir were invited to take part on a voluntary basis to be observed as well as to be interviewed, either individually or in a focus group. The aim, purpose and procedures of the study were explained to all members in the Camerata. Each chorister was issued with a brief written description of the planned research and what the involvement of participants would entail in both the individual interviews as well as in the focus groups. Ethical considerations were clearly outlined and it was explained to all participants that the interviews were to be led and transcribed by an independent interviewer and not by me as the researcher – who happens to be their conductor. All Camerata members signed the letters of informed consent, since they were all observed by me during rehearsals and performances. In order to gather enough interview data that would represent a broad perspective of the participants' experiences, purposive sampling was utilised to select 20 choristers. These individuals were specifically selected to represent a wide perspective of opinions. This was achieved by selecting members based on their sex, study field, cultural and language group, as well as the number of years they have been members within the choir as in Table 1. Individuals

were also selected based on their ability to speak well so that meaningful interviews could be conducted.

Table 1: Participants of the semi-structured individual interviews

	Participant (chosen pseudonym)	Sex	Language group	Current year in the choir	Interview duration
1	Alice	Female	English (Coloured)	4th year	25 minutes
2	Aria	Female	English	4th year	27 minutes
3	Azania	Female	isiXhosa	2nd year	18 minutes
4	Beukes	Male	Afrikaans	4th year	22 minutes
5	Blommie	Male	Afrikaans	5th year	22 minutes
6	Breyten	Male	Afrikaans	4th year	26 minutes
7	Brillianto	Male	Afrikaans	4th year	39 minutes
8	Catherine	Female	Afrikaans	3rd year	28 minutes
9	Emma	Female	English	2nd year	19 minutes
10	Fred	Male	Setswana	2nd year	17 minutes
11	Jeremy	Male	Sesotho	3rd year	18 minutes
12	John Fleck	Male	Afrikaans	2nd year	20 minutes
13	M2	Female	Afrikaans (Coloured)	4th year	29 minutes
14	Nkululeko	Male	isiZulu	3rd year	25 minutes
15	Nozipho	Female	isiSwati	3rd year	17 minutes
16	Regina	Female	Afrikaans	4th year	29 minutes
17	Shepard	Male	English	3rd year	23 minutes
18	Troy	Male	Setswana	4th year	24 minutes
19	Zack	Male	English	3rd year	18 minutes
20	Ziggy	Female	isiZulu	2nd year	25 minutes

Of the twenty individual participants that agreed to be individually interviewed during the main data collection period, nine were female and eleven were male. There was a wealth of diversity amongst the chosen participants. Seven came from an Afrikaans background and a further seven belonged to traditional African language groups (two isiZulu, two Setswana, one isiXhosa, one siSwati, and one Sesotho). Four were English speaking and two participants came from the Coloured community. Only participants that had sung in the choir for longer than a year were asked to participate in the individual interviews. Collectively the twenty participants had 45 years of singing experience in the Camerata, averaging 2.25 years of participation per interviewee, with one chorister entering his fifth consecutive year in the choir.

The rest of the choristers who volunteered to be interviewed took part in focus-group discussions, illustrated in Table 2. Focus groups consisted of between three to eight participants and these groups were especially chosen through purposeful sampling to represent a variety of groups that would potentially elicit a wealth of diverse opinions. These groups included Afrikaans students; English students; indigenous African language speaking students; international students; new members; members serving on the choir committee; male singers; female singers; and a group of openly gay singers.

Table 2: Participants of the focus group interviews

	Groups	Participants (chosen pseudonyms)	Sex	Language group	Current year in the choir	Interview duration
1	Afrikaans Speakers	Emma B Gerhard Gert Henry Ilse Jane Jone Katya	Female Male Male Male Female Female Female Female	Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans	1st year 1st year 2nd year 3rd year 1st year 2nd year 1st year 2nd year	52 minutes
2	Committee Members	Ella Jan Nancy	Female Male Female	Afrikaans Afrikaans English	3rd year 5th year 2nd year	26 minutes
3	English Speakers	Alice Friday Jess May Tango	Female Female Female Female Male	English English English English English	1st year 1st year 2nd year 2nd year 1st year	42 minutes
4	Female Singers	Alice B Ana Ariel Aurora Belle Elsa Merida	Female Female Female Female Female Female Female	Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans	1st year 2nd year 3rd year 1st year 1st year 2nd year 1st year	58 minutes
5	Foreigners	Amare Frikkie Jasmine Lowkey Pink Tiger	Female Male Female Male Female Male	German German Indian isiNdebele isiNdebele isiNdebele	1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 2nd year	37 minutes
6	Male Singers	Hardus Johnny Ricardo Tergum Willem	Male Male Male Male Male	Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans English Afrikaans	1st year 1st year 3rd year 1st year 1st year	42 minutes
7	New Members	Andy Betsie Elani Elizabeth Lara Maria Melissa Ria	Female Female Female Female Female Female Female Female	Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans	1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year	50 minutes
8	Openly Gay Students	Fanie George Jannie John Koos Nataniel	Male Male Male Male Male Male	Afrikaans English English Afrikaans Afrikaans Afrikaans	2nd year 1st year 2nd year 4th year 2nd year 1st year	56 minutes
9	Indigenous African Language Speakers	Ashley Jane John Tucker Qaqamba Wilson	Female Female Male Male Female	Northern Ndebele Shona Setswana Shona isiXhosa	1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year 1st year	36 minutes

As part of the data collection, all participants were required to complete a form, prior to the interviews, providing information pertaining to their sex, cultural background, age and

number of years they had participated in the Camerata. Each interviewee was requested to choose a pseudonym so that their responses would remain confidential.

3.4   Data collection methods

The collection of data from a variety of sources is imperative to an ethnographic case study. For this research, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, as well as observations of rehearsals and performances formed part of the strategies for the collection of such data, which are described in detail in the following sections below. All data was collected over a four month period of fieldwork.

3.4.1   Semi-structured face-to-face interviews

Data collected from individual interviews is particularly important as it is the most effective way to determine if social capital is being generated within a community (Stone 2001: 3). Semi-structured interviews were conducted and based on an open-ended interview schedule (Appendix A). The questions for the interview schedule were informed by the literature and were designed to probe the value of participation within the choir which may specifically lead to the generation of social capital. At the request and advice from the Faculty Ethics Committee, I involved an independent choral conductor – who has no direct connection with the Camerata but who has an in-depth understanding of choirs – to act as the interviewer. By obtaining the assistance of an independent interviewer, participants were allowed to speak more freely and honestly without the fear of prejudice, which eliminated the potential for a conflicting power-relationship between myself as conductor and them being choristers. The interview process followed a protocol suggested by Creswell (2009, 2013), Rubin and Rubin (2012), and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). The following steps guided the interviews:

- Open-ended questions were planned beforehand and discussed in depth with the interviewer before interviews commenced.
- The interviewer was issued with an interview guide which included space where the details of each interviewee could be filled in, as well as the interview questions and space provided for comments.
- The interviewer was asked to conduct the interviews in a professional manner and to treat all participants with respect.
- All participants interviewed were asked to complete a consent form before the interview commenced.
- All interviews took place on the main campus of the University of Pretoria.
- The environment was conducive for the participants to converse honestly and freely (see the section where this is explained in detail).

- Interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes each.
- The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder.

3.4.1.1 Training the independent interviewer and conducting a pilot study

In order to ensure that the data collected from the interviews were relevant to the study, the independent interviewer was extensively trained by me as researcher to conduct the semi-structured interviews and focus-group sessions prior to the commencement of data collection. A pilot study was conducted (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport 2005: 300) to refine the interviewing skills of the independent interviewer, as well as to test the validity of the research instruments. Before doing the pilot study, I explained the procedure and method for conducting effective interviews thoroughly to the interviewer.

Twenty five alumni choir members were invited to take part in the pilot study, for which twenty agreed to be individually interviewed while the remaining five alumni members requested to be interviewed as part of a focus group. Interviews were individually arranged with these participants so as not to interfere with their schedules, and the focus group was organised when all five participants had time available in their day.

The procedure for this pilot study was explained to the volunteers in detail prior to their acceptance and they were provided with written information pertaining to the purpose of the study. The semi-structured interview guide formed the basis of the questions to be asked, and ample space was provided for notes to be made by the interviewer. All the interviews for the pilot study were recorded to simulate the techniques involved for the final data collection, but were discarded after the exercise was complete. I was present for the entire duration of the pilot study and personally trained the independent interviewer. The purpose of the pilot study was to train the interviewer so that the interviews could be conducted successfully. The data needed to be discarded from the study as I was present at all times, and as a result, the reliability of answers provided by interviewees could not be guaranteed.

3.4.1.2 Selecting an appropriate venue for the interviews

All interviews took place in a boardroom in the Humanities building at the University of Pretoria. On recommendation of the Ethics Committee, the interviews needed to be conducted in a venue not associated with the choir or its conductor. The University of Pretoria Camerata falls under the auspices of the Faculty of Humanities, therefore the most appropriate venue fitting the requirements was to use the Faculty boardroom. According to De Vos et al. it is imperative to "select a setting that provides privacy, is comfortable, non-threatening and easily accessible", but that additionally provides "seating arrangements that encourage involvement and interaction" (2005: 300). The venue was both quiet and private,

had good lighting and adequate ventilation, comfortable seating, and was centrally located for students on the main campus. The interviewer was instructed to offer the participants water, coffee, or tea to create a friendly environment, and to let participants introduce themselves at the start of the interview to make them feel at ease. They were assured of the confidentiality of the interviews and were asked if they required anything else before the interviews were to proceed.

3.4.1.3 Conducting the semi-structured interviews

The interviews were recorded using a Philips Digital Recorder, module DVT6000, which is specifically designed for the conducting of interviews. On two occasions the scheduled interviews needed to be postponed due to protest action taking place at the University. All twenty individual interviews were, however, conducted successfully. Interviews lasted between 17 and 39 minutes each and were conducted in either Afrikaans or English as preferred by individual respondents. The date, time, place and pseudonym of each participant was recorded and each interviewee was requested to give verbal consent, over and above the written consent form that was already provided.

3.4.1.4 Transcription and member-checking of the interviews

Each interview was transcribed verbatim by the independent interviewer and those conducted in Afrikaans were translated into English. In such cases, both the Afrikaans and English transcripts were shared with me. This was an ideal way for me to become immersed in the raw data as well as to ensure the accuracy of the translations as I am fluent in both Afrikaans and English and could easily rectify mistakes in the translations. Specific details provided during the interviews, such as the name of a high school attended, were omitted from the transcripts to ensure that participants remained unidentified to me as researcher. In such instances, the name of the school for example would be replaced by a general description of the type of school, such as 'high school', and this would appear in brackets in the transcripts. Upon receiving the transcripts, I read through all the interviews and made notes for follow up questions which I typed into the interview transcripts. Space was provided in these transcripts in order for the participants to answer follow-up questions in writing and to explain aspects that might have been ambiguous or confusing. These modified transcripts – in the language preferred by each interviewee – were independently handed back to the choristers at a choir rehearsal in the absence of me as the conductor. Each transcript was accompanied by a covering page giving clear instructions as to how the member checking process was to be completed. The interviewees had the opportunity to check the answers provided by them during the interviews and could make changes to their statements. Choristers were also encouraged to fill in details regarding unclear aspects regarding the

interviews, which were added to the transcripts. Once the member checking was complete, participants needed to sign the transcripts upon which they were anonymously returned to me as the researcher.

3.4.2   Focus group interviews

Leedy and Ormrod (2010: 148) advise using focus groups when time is limited and for participants who would feel more comfortable being interviewed in a group. Focus groups are important as they provide material and understanding into specific topics which would be less accessible without the communication between the members in that group. By listening to others verbalising experiences may help to stimulate memories, familiarities and notions in fellow participants (Lindlof & Taylor 2002: 182). Furthermore, a different dynamic is achieved during focus group interviews; research has indicated that "people may be more, rather than less, likely to self-disclose or share personal experiences in groups rather than in dyadic settings", feeling "relatively empowered and supported in a group situation where they are surrounded by others […] whom they perceive to be like themselves in some way" (De Vos et al. 2005:307). All choristers not selected for individual interviews were invited to participate in focus group interviews on an entirely voluntary basis. For the sake of consistency, these group discussions were led by the same interviewer conducting the individual interviews. As recommended by Leedy and Ormrod (2010: 148) these focus groups had between five and eight participants; grouping took place with the use of a purposive sampling strategy; the same procedure was followed as the one used for the semi-structured interviews; and each focus-group interview took up approximately 45-60 minutes which allowed ample time for all participants to offer their opinions. A separate semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix B) – containing similar questions to the individual interviews –was designed for focus groups discussions; fewer questions were asked, based on broader topics for discussion to elicit responses from group members.

Similar to the individual interviews, focus group participants had to provide a pseudonym as well as information pertaining to their sex, cultural background, age, and number of years sung in the choir. Before interviews commenced, each was asked to speak into the recorder from where they were seated, to ensure that their answers would be audible when the interviews were transcribed. All members of a focus group had to give verbal consent and complete a consent form as was the case with the individual interviews. During the interviews, participants had to say their pseudonym each time before answering a question as to ensure that the transcription could be done correctly. Member checking of the focus-group transcripts were administered in similar fashion to the individual interview transcripts to ensure that the participants' views were accurately represented.

3.4.3   Observations

According to Creswell, "observation is one of the key tools for collecting data in qualitative research (2013: 166)". As conductor of the Camerata, I acted as a participant observer, taking note of specific aspects related to the research questions (Angrosino 2007: 54; Creswell 2013: 166).

Observations for the current study involved the weekly rehearsals of the Camerata choir, which happened twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, as well as several concerts which took place in the four month period. All rehearsals and performances – both on and off of campus – were observed during this allotted time, and extensive notes made during the period of data collection. I was entirely engaged with the choir during functions and rehearsals. I therefore played a dual role during a four month observation period as both conductor as well as researcher. I made focused observations during each choir performance and rehearsal, additionally compiling reflections after such involvements, allowing me to form a comprehensive perspective regarding the experiences of choir participants. The observation period was guided by two focused observation protocols, one for rehearsals and one for performances (Appendix C and D respectively). These research tools allowed me to record field notes that are both descriptive and reflective. I paid special attention to aspects pertaining to the research questions, and included personal reflections, insights and initial interpretations of observations made. The date, time and place of each observation were also recorded. All procedures regarding observations are according to the guidelines provided by Creswell (2013: 167).

3.4.3.1 Observations during rehearsals

Between the 25th of January and the 26th May 2016, the following rehearsals where observed:

- Twenty seven 'normal' rehearsals taking place on either a Tuesday or Thursday evening. These rehearsals were from 17:45 – 20:00 and collectively total over 60 hours of observations.
- Three rehearsal weekends which total over 37 hours of rehearsal observations.
- Rehearsals for two additional events, namely the annual Fiesta Awards Ceremony, as well as a rehearsal for the recording with the South African pop icon, Joshua na die Reën's latest album, which equates to 15 additional hours of rehearsal observation.

- Additionally, a planning weekend, which involves only choir committee members, was observed which added eight hours to the raw data. Although this planning session was not a rehearsal, it involved choristers fulfilling important tasks for the benefit of the choir, and thus observations during this event were integral to the research focus.

Over 120 hours of rehearsals were observed, recorded and reflected upon over a period of four months.

3.4.3.2 Observations during performances

During the same four month period of data collection, the following performances were observed:

- Fiesta Award Ceremony (four hours)
- Recording for Joshua na die Reën (six hours)
- Performing at an International Choir Conductors Workshop held at the University of Pretoria (three hours)
- Joint performance with the Akustika Chamber Singers directed by American guest conductor, Prof Brady Allred (four hours)
- Performance at the launch of Joshua na die Reën's latest album (four hours)
- High School Choir Festival hosted by the Camerata (three hours)
- Performance at a University hostel (one hour)
- Mzanzi a Cappella festival held at Gold Reef City Theatre (six hours)
- University of Pretoria Lunch Hour Concert (one hour)
- The Annual Cantatuks Youth choir Festival hosted by the University of Pretoria Camerata (eight hours)
- Local church performance as part of a community outreach initiative (one hour)
- Performance with the Missouri State University Chorale (USA) and the Emory and Henry College Choir (USA) hosted at the University of Pretoria (three hours)
- Guest choir at the National ATKV Choir Competition (one hour)

The performance observations totalled 45 hours and include all activities that are associated with a performance including warm-ups, sound checks, massed choir activities and the odd occasion when the Camerata choristers became audience members to enjoy the performances of other choirs at a festival.

3.4.3.3 Procedure for observations of rehearsals and performances

The procedure for observing the rehearsals and performances were the same. I arrived at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each event and always left after the last chorister had gone home. The rehearsal and performance protocols accompanied me to all events and observations were diligently made and kept in a file. The venue and setting for each rehearsal and performance were recorded and the interactions between the choristers before and after events were observed and documented. Committee notices, absent choristers, the opening at each rehearsal, the warm-up, music being rehearsed, the rehearsal procedure, discipline of the choir, the environment, the success and challenges of each piece rehearsed, questions asked and comments made by the choristers, and the mood of the choir at the start and end of each rehearsal was carefully observed and documented.

At performances, I observed and documented the interactions of Camerata members with visiting choirs and audience members; the responsibilities and tasks carried out by choristers; the mood of the choristers directly before and after the performance; the response of the audience; and the comments and reactions of audience members and choristers alike.

Directly after each rehearsal and performance, I reviewed all the descriptive information that I had observed and made reflective notes. All information was organised into categories with two columns labelled descriptive and reflective for both rehearsals (Appendix C) and performances (Appendix D). During the process of collecting observation data, themes started to emerge and in such cases, I highlighted aspects that proved valuable for the study.

3.4.3.4 Using a video recorder to document

Camerata rehearsals and performances are often recorded for my personal use and thus the choristers were accustomed to being recorded. Choristers' permission was obtained to be video recorded prior to data collection for the current study. A total of 20 hours of rehearsals were recorded with a video camera in order for me to verify my observations afterwards. A camera was placed on stage before such rehearsals and recorded the duration of the event. Rehearsals were strategically chosen to be recorded to illustrate the interactions of choristers at the beginning, middle and end of the observation period. Additionally, video recordings were made of performances that were hosted by the choir and that took place on campus by placing a camera in the audience. Lastly, parts of the choir camps were recorded to document interactions between choristers.

3.5   Analysis of data

In order to understand and interpret the data, an inductive and interpretive data analysis approach (Srivastava & Hopwood 2009: 77; Thorne, Kirkham & O'Flynn-Magee 2004: 3) was used, leading to additional sub-themes emerging within each theme. This iterative process of qualitative data analysis is explained as follows by Thorne et al. (2004: 5):

> As with all interpretive research processes, data collection and analysis inform one another iteratively, and thus the shape and direction of the inquiry evolve as new possibilities arise and are considered. The analyst must always remain sceptical of the immediately apparent, and must create data collection pathways that challenge, rather than reinforce, the earliest conceptualizations. Therefore the researcher's questions search out alternative linkages, exceptional instances, and contrary cases as a mechanism for broadening rather than narrowing conceptual linkages.

All themes and sub-themes – as described in Chapter 4 – are substantiated and verified by verbatim quotes from the participants. Apart from such verbatim quotes, vignettes are included to portray certain events and incidents in a narrative style. Finch (1987) advocates the use of vignettes in social science as they assist in the understanding of attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and norms of individuals. "Vignettes are simulations of real events depicting hypothetical situations" (Wilks 2004: 80) and "it is common in reports of ethnography to include" them (Bartolome 2010: 27). Vignettes are generally used as narrative tools, found in both qualitative and quantitative research, which contributes to the construction of what Geertz (1973) termed a "thick description". In qualitative research, vignettes are used to explain and provide an understanding of the norms, attitudes and perceptions within social science (Finch 1987: 105). I have included vignettes in providing evidence of the research findings in this study for they have the potential to supply a "greater focus and uniformity in data" and are widely used in numerous studies (Barter & Renold 2000; Bartolome 2010; Campbell 1998; Finch 1987; Huges & Huby 2002; MacAuley 1996; Nettl 1995; Rahman 1996). Since the choir represents a "social" community (Wilks 2004: 82-86), such vignettes can assist in the understanding of complexities regarding the experiences of choristers within this social setting. Vignettes are therefore added to give brief and evocative accounts of the participants' experiences, and in some instances, my own observations of the actions and interactions of choristers during data collection. In order to distinguish vignettes from verbatim quotes, all vignettes are placed in italics.

Data analysis was based on two primary foci: Firstly, the values which choir members attribute to participation in a university choir; and secondly, the possible existence of social capital within such a choral community. These two principal categories were divided into several themes and sub-themes, which will be outlined in the following sections. An

important aspect that arcs over both themes is the voluntary membership by choristers whom, more often than not, have no connection to other singers prior to joining. I therefore interrogated the data extensively in order to understand the underlying reasons for students to join the choir. As mentioned in this chapter, each participant chose a pseudonym so that their comments and views could remain confidential.

Several authors writing about qualitative research methods agree that data analysis takes place while evidence is being gathered, prepared and organised, and then reduced into more manageable categories of information called codes (Creswell 2013; Hay 2005; Lewins, Taylor & Gibbs 2010; Roberts 2010, Strauss & Corbin 1990). This was indeed the case during the current study, since themes started to emerge during data collection and I organised and collated the transcribed data on a continuous basis. I sought to find codes providing an indication of the level of distribution of social capital within the Camerata as well as the value which choir participation adds to the lives of the choristers. Once these codes were successfully identified, they could be sorted according to broader themes and this assisted greatly in understanding the phenomena being researched (Creswell 2013; Mouton 2001; Roberts 2010). All the evidence collected from the interviews, focus groups and observations was coded – i.e. classified into categories – and then interpreted accordingly (Creswell 2013). The process of finding themes while coding all the data was both extensive and thorough. The data from interviews, focus groups and observations totalled a massive 482 typed pages, and took over six months to categorise. As a starting point, each interview – individual or focus group – was coded by circling recurring ideas, comments and opinions on the transcripts. Once I completed a single interview, I wrote all the codes individually onto sticky notes and arranged it on a wall in my office. The pseudonym of the participant was on each sticky note and each code was numbered, both on the sticky note and in the transcript, for easy reference. Additionally I used pink labels to highlight pertinent codes, as indicated in Figure 2.
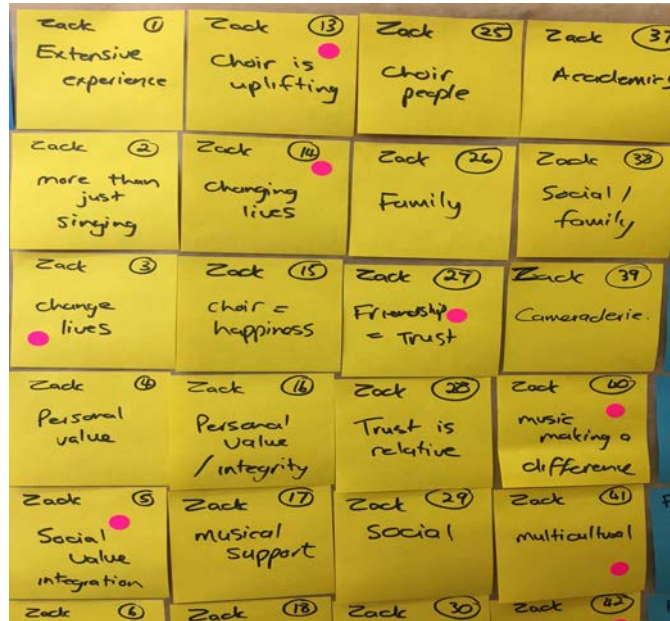
Figure 2: Coding of a single interview transcript

Each transcript from the different data collection strategies – focus groups, semi-structured interviews and observations from rehearsal and performance protocols – followed the same procedure. Each individual interview and observation was coloured coded, which visually assisted me in seeing patterns and emergent themes in the data, illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Transcripts coded and organised by colour

With the extensive help of my supervisor, the interviewer and a research colleague at the University of Pretoria, the data was collated into broad themes. The sticky notes were moved onto different walls in my office, each containing a specific theme. The themes that emerged

were social value, personal value, musical value and social capital. Once I successfully transferred the sticky notes to the appropriate themes, I had the information validated and checked by my supervisor. It was at this stage that sub-themes started to emerge and the entire process of moving sticky notes into small categories began. My system of labelling each transcript and sticky note proved integral at this stage. Once all codes were classified into themes and sub-themes, the verbatim quotes from interviews, as well as the observation data, were cut and paste into an Excel document according to the themes and sub themes they were placed into. There were four separate Excel documents, one for each theme. Within each document, several sheets were used to organise the data into various sub-themes. At this point, my supervisor and I were satisfied that the themes and sub themes were organised logically and that the data was reliable.

3.6   Trustworthiness of the research

To ensure that data analysis and the interpretation thereof are trustworthy, a prolonged period of engagement, triangulation, and member checking procedures were applied. Triangulation is often used in research to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the information that has been gathered from a variety of sources (Altrichter et al. 2008; Cohen & Manion 2000; Creswell 2013; Leedy & Ormrod 2010 and O'Donoghue & Punch 2003). Bogdan and Biklen (2006: 80) support this method in qualitative research calling it a "powerful technique that facilitates the validation of data" by cross referencing a multitude of information. This is echoed by O'Donoghue and Punch (2003: 78) who note that triangulation is a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data". In order for the development of a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena, triangulation is required to sort multiple data sources and materials into useful themes (Leedy & Ormrod 2010: 99). By using triangulation, an "attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour" (Cohen & Manion 2000: 254) is made and at the same time it will assist in giving a more "detailed and balanced picture of the situation" (Altrichter et al. 2008: 147). Although research is leaning towards crystallisation and immersion as postmodern methods of scrutinising the reliability and trustworthiness of data in qualitative research (Borkan 1999; Ellingson 2009), triangulation is still favoured and supported throughout literature (Altrichter et al. 2008; Cohen & Manion 2000; Creswell 2013; Leedy & Ormrod 2010 and O'Donoghue & Punch 2003).

In this study, methodological triangulation involves several methods of gathering data including observations, interviews and focus groups. To ensure the soundness of the data collected from the interviews (Holloway & Wheeler 2010: 275), transcripts were issued to

respondents for checking in order for them to confirm that it is a true representation of their views (Creswell 2009: 190). The independent interviewer observed the recordings and verified my interpretations of the activities that commenced by consulting my observation protocols for both the rehearsals (Appendix C) and performances (Appendix D). This practice assisted in minimising subjectivity and bias on my part as endorsed by De Vos et al. (2005: 289).

3.7 Summary

This chapter outlines the approach, design and procedures of this study, as well as the methods that will be used to analyse and interpret the data which is presented in Chapter Four.

Chapter 4: Findings

> If only you could understand how much peace it gives me to sing in Camerata. In the beginning of the year all my friends left the choir and I was not sure why I wanted to continue singing. But I realised that I have sung my entire life, not for friends. I have friends outside of choir. I sang for how I feel when I make music. It's hard to describe but it touches your soul and it feels like I am physically and spiritually moved by the music - it is indescribable.
>
> (Catherine)

The findings of the study are presented in this chapter and are based on the transcribed interview and observation data. The above response is an example of this rich empirical data emanating from the face-to-face and focus group interviews conducted with choir members. The opinions of choristers were collected by means of in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions, complimented and substantiated with focused observations of choristers' actions within the choir setup.

4.1 Values attributed to participation in the University of Pretoria Camerata

By scrutinising the raw data, I organised all the information related to 'values attributed to choir participation' into three major categories or codes by using a process of "open coding" as advised by Creswell (2013: 86). After extensive perusal by reading and re-reading the text, reviewing and making notes, the three themes that emerged were personal, social, and musical aspects, all which attribute to the perceived values of participation in the Camerata by the choristers. Table 3 outlines in detail these themes and their sub-themes which emerged from the data and pertain to the values attributed to choir participation by the research participants.

Table 3: Values attributed to choir participation and its themes

THEME 1 PERSONAL VALUE	THEME 2 SOCIAL VALUE	THEME 3 MUSICAL VALUE

Sub-themes
• Passion & enjoyment
• Achievement & excellence
    o Challenges of excellence
• Self-confidence & leadership
• Accountability & ownership
    o Rehearsals
    o Performances
    o Administration
• Discipline & time management
• Commitment & sacrifice
• Health & well-being
    o An escape
    o Emotional outlet
    o Stress relief
    o Cause of stress
    o Support structure
    o Physical/mental benefit
• Spiritual experiences
• Friendships & sense of belonging
    o Place to make friends
    o Substantial friendships
    o Exclusive friendships
    o Sense of belonging
• Holistic experiences
	Sub-themes
	• Family & camaraderie
	    o Family metaphor
	    o Camaraderie
	• Integrating people
	    o A diverse environment
	    o Cross-cultural communication
	    o Social integration
	    o Cultural barriers
	• Extrinsic value
	• Safe & reliable environment
	• More than "just" music
	• Socialising
		Sub-themes
		• Communication through music
		• Intrinsic value
		    o A necessary activity
		    o Develops appreciation
		    o Develops skills
		    o Educational connection

4.1.1 Personal value

Inferences made to the perceived personal benefits that choristers experience by being members of the Camerata was significant. The ten sub-themes resorting under personal value – as listed in Table 3– include passion and enjoyment; achievement and excellence; self-confidence and leadership; accountability and ownership; discipline and time management; commitment and sacrifice; health and well-being; spiritual experiences; friendships and a sense of belonging; and finally, holistic experiences.

4.1.1.1 Passion and enjoyment

Many of the comments shared by interviewees in both the individual and focus groups related to their passion for and enjoyment of choral singing, which is clear from the following verbatim quotes:

> The choir contributes to our happiness and we would not be here if we did not enjoy it. If you love what you do […] it makes you happy. (Alice)

> I think we are all here because we want to be and the music makes us happy, and we need this when we study […] meeting twice a week to sing is our 'moment of Zen'; a place where we just drop everything and sing the music. (Emma)

Several choristers commented on choir being an integral part of their lives.

> I have been in choirs all my life so it is basically my life. So I can't imagine my life without choir singing. (M2)

> I could not live without choir. (John Fleck)

> I could not imagine a life without choir. (Alice)

During observations made before, during, and after choir rehearsals, I could detect a joyous atmosphere. Choristers meeting, conversing, laughing and being spontaneous are the norm at choir rehearsals, with physical evidence of affection displayed, such as choristers hugging one another. Many jokes are made during the rehearsals and choristers enjoy the company of their peers. Even though rehearsals take place in the evenings after a long day of lectures and lasts for over two hours, the participants view these times as being beneficial to them, contributing to their happiness. The following quotes from choristers describe the individual benefits they experience due to their choir participation:

> There are plenty of days when I come to [choir] practises and I was just really irritated or angry or just not wanting to be there. And the change usually always happens during the warm-ups or like a song or two afterwards. As much as you may try to fight it, you will eventually have a smile on your face because it just makes me happy. The music [and] the energy of the conductor. I love choir in that regard. (Jeremy)

> I had the longest day; woke up early, came to campus, did studying, had five hours of lectures, continued studying, and by the time I got to choir I was just 'bushed', tired, and I felt like I was grumpy, although people say I wasn't. But I think, after choir, no matter how I'm feeling before, I always walk out feeling over the moon, or just happy, excited. I have a new perspective on life, I have a new perspective on the challenges that I face and I just feel fresh and ready to cope with anything that comes my way. I feel refreshed to live my life. (Zack)

> Singing in Camerata brings a lot of joy to my life. I can come to rehearsals every Tuesday and Thursday in a bad mood and go home feeling lighter and feel like I can take on the world again. (Friday)

> I'm a person that loves [choir] rehearsals, I really love rehearsals. For instance, if I had a test, [the rehearsal] would [uplift] my day and if I had a bad test, [the rehearsal] would [uplift] my day immensely. (John Fleck)

> After [choir] rehearsals, everyone is kind of in a big, happy mood. You really feel good about yourself. It makes you really happy to sing. (Beukes)

> I feel like I can conquer the world. Honestly, after choir my mood is immediately uplifted and I am happier. Well, happier than when I came in. (Ziggy)

Data derived from observations and interviews revealed that the mood and atmosphere amongst choir members just before concert performances are very different to that of weekly rehearsals. During warm-ups prior to performances, there is a higher level and intensity of focus and concentration. During interviews, choristers expressed positive attitudes and enthusiasm about stage performances, which is verified by the following statements:

> I love to perform. You walk onto stage with pride and you are a team that is trusted and this 'family' is ready to sing. (Catherine)

> I sing 'cause I love to sing. After a performance I feel great 'cause I am doing something I love; not because someone is forcing me to do it, but because I really enjoy doing it. (Azania)

> I get such an incredible feeling during and after the performances and I feel so much closer to the people that I have just sung with. You share this euphoria and positive energy and we experience this unbelievable sense of elation. (Shepard)

> Choir is good for your heart because it makes your heart happy. (Elsa)

Eighteen additional choristers commented about their "love and passion" for choir singing as a great personal motivation for singing in the Camerata.

4.1.1.2 Achievement and excellence

Several choristers mentioned that participation in the Camerata gave them a sense of pride and achievement, motivating them to strive for excellence.

A lot of us forget it is a huge privilege to be in this choir. It really is. Something we all have in the choir is a sense of pride for the choir and we want to uphold this and that motivates us to keep working harder and improving. (Frikkie)

It may take a lot of time and energy but when we are at choir and we listen to those singing around us, it makes us feel so proud to sing so well and we have contributed to a higher thing. (Jasmine)

One participant recalled how proud he was when the choir won first place at the World Choir Games held in Riga, Latvia, during 2014:

I remember you would chat to anyone after the win because we were so proud with each other…together we achieved something great. (John)

The participants remarked about their sense of achievement when mastering a difficult song for the first time, mentioning how elated they felt when reaching this goal during rehearsals.

Every now and then, especially between songs, you get that feeling of accomplishment and "wow – I just did that. In rehearsals two days ago I was struggling but [now] I just did that". So every single thing that we do is a sense of accomplishment for myself. (Fred)

The first time we sang through *Spokewals* [a challenging Afrikaans composition] in my second year – ah, there is no feeling like that. Singing through it for the first time is even better than singing through it in a performance. It's like 'we did this'. So you have this feeling of completion and it is so amazing. (Breyten)

It gives you a sense of accomplishment when you have learnt songs and achieved a lot. The difficult songs, once you get them right, you feel like you have accomplished something. (Aria)

It gives you self-satisfaction when you have to learn your music and rehearse all the work, putting in hours of hard work and then you get to experience the end product at a performance or something. Then it is very satisfying having achieved this. (Emma)

From the time I started singing choir, I have realised that people have to learn their music and struggle with it. Then the first time you perform a piece and the collective shares this success, and when you actually perform it on stage and not just for an empty auditorium, this gives you a further feeling of achieving success. (Gert)

Participating in the Camerata demands a great deal of time and effort from the choristers. The participants had opposing views concerning the required commitment that is expected from them. However, for some participants, the demanding schedule of the choir is an aspect that allows them to thrive:

Experiencing the work ethic [in the choir] is amazing, it's insane. The work ethic inspires me every single day. It's like an international level and you just work, work, work and I love the fact that mediocrity is not accepted – only perfectionism. (John Fleck)

It takes a lot of work and commitment to build yourself up as a choral singer and to be in a choir of this calibre. So, if there is one thing I have learnt, it looks easy when we perform on stage, but it takes a tremendous amount of work. (Troy)

I feel that the rules are a direct result of why the choir is such a success…without them our standards would drop. [The rules] leads us to brilliance. (Elsa)

- Challenges of striving for excellence

Not all participants were positive about the amount of effort that was required from them as members of the Camerata, commenting that the schedule was taxing and challenging:

I feel the amount of effort we put in to achieve the excellence that we want, our health deteriorates while we are busy. (Merida)

It is very stressful because there are all these people that are amazingly good and then there is you. If you make a mistake you disappoint the entire choir. (Alice)

Sometimes the rules are a bit too much. It feels as if there are just too many rules, but there is surely a reason for it. (Ariel)

Two participants mentioned that the amount of time and effort required from them is worthwhile because of how they feel during performances:

I sing because of that real sense of unity that we are performing on the stage and at the end of a performance, when we take a bow, I always feel as if it's something we have done together and therefore we should all get the appreciation. […] When we have a great concert, everyone is 'pumped up' and excited and you feel this closeness to one another. We came together and everyone knew what to do, and it's a great feeling. (Alice)

To stand in front of that audience and give back all that you put in during the practices, and [to] see the reaction of the audience is one of the best feelings I have ever experienced. (Blommie)

4.1.1.3 Self-confidence and leadership

Vignette 1

It is a Tuesday evening and the choristers are making their way to their seats for the start of the rehearsal. An Afrikaans member in the choir is waiting patiently to open the rehearsal, a custom in the choir. Once everybody has settled down, he opens with a bible reading, a message and a prayer: all of these delivered in English. He joined the Camerata in 2013 at a time when he could not speak a word of English. He grew up in a very conservative Afrikaans family and attended schools in his mother tongue. He struggled to converse with other choristers as the choir has an all-English policy. Four years later, this chorister is on the choir committee. Choir participation has given him the self-confidence to stand in front of his peers and lead them. Having a conversation in English was once a barrier for this choir member, but no longer.

Vignette 1 above illustrates the growth of an individual's self-confidence, which ultimately landed him at the 'top' of the choir's hierarchy. The data provides evidence that participation in the University of Pretoria Camerata assists in building the self-confidence of individuals as portrayed in Vignette 1. One example of this was observed during a choir camp on campus; a rehearsal weekend that takes place at the University. Singers were encouraged to audition for a solo part in one of the repertoire pieces. More than half of the choir members auditioned for these solos, regardless of whether they were experienced or novice choristers. It is a challenge for most people to perform music or to sing in front of others. However, it was evident that choristers gained self-confidence, giving them courage and self-assurance to display their skills. Several comments made by participants link to this theme, for example Troy remarks that the choir had helped him "come out of his comfort zone" whereas Jeremy comments that choir helped him to be "less of an introvert" as a result of his participation. Ella noted that one of the main reasons she joined the Camerata was because it "allowed her to let go and be [herself]".

The following statements all relate to the development of self-confidence through choir participation:

[Choir] gives you confidence in a group setting but also you have to have faith in yourself to sing in a choir. I think it shows in our everyday lives and I think the value of growing in confidence brings value to the choir. (Alice)

People really grow in such an environment where they can experience camaraderie. People who are really shy get the opportunity to open up after a year or so and that is for me very special. (Ana)

> Being able to perform in front of people build[s] up your character. If you come here and are scared of being in front of a crowd, by the time you leave Camerata you will be so confident in yourself. (Wilson)

> [The choir] helped me come out of my shell. I'm quite reserved and quiet and tend to be on my own. But the people here have helped me grow and realise my true potential and what I'm capable of. (Ziggy).

During the observation period, it became evident that the choir presents opportunities for choristers to build on their leadership and self-confidence. The three examples below illustrate three sets of choir members: firstly new members; secondly members that are entrusted with specific responsibilities; and thirdly elected committee officials. In each paragraph, data examples are taken to describe them in situations that assist in building their self-confidence and leadership skills.

Example 1: During the first choir camp of the year during which I did data collection, all the new choristers had to present a play as part of their initiation into the choir. All these members had to assume speaking roles on stage, making them actively involved. This is quite a challenge, especially for non-English first language speakers. However, these novice choristers worked together as a team and presented the plays successfully. By observing the groups as they rehearsed for the show, it was evident that certain individuals lead the group, while others simply participated.

Example 2: During rehearsals at the beginning of the year, voice group leaders are responsible for taking sectionals – this is when the choir divides into eight different voice parts, namely SATB divisi allowing the sectional leaders to teach the music to smaller clusters within their own specific voice group. This requires a great deal of self-confidence of the voice group leaders. These individuals have sung for several years in the choir and are accustomed to the work ethic and precision required of an effective rehearsal. I observed how these leaders took it upon themselves to organise additional rehearsals with their respective voice groups when needed.

Example 3: Committee members need to speak to choristers on a continual basis on the camp, either to convey the arrangements for the day, or to reprimand students for not behaving according to the required schedule or camp rules. I observed how they did this with great confidence and respect. Committee members are assigned portfolios and one such responsibility is the social activities of the choir. On the camp, several such activities were

well organised, and the leadership displayed by the committee in carrying out the various events was evident in my observations.

Collectively, these three examples illustrate that there is a hierarchy within the choir. There are new members, members that have sung for several years and assigned important tasks, and committee members that guide and lead the choristers. From entering the choir, new members learn to adapt and find their rightful place within the structure of the group. As the years pass by, new members fill the roles of those that are 'above' them in the choir hierarchy and committee members are replaced with suitable successors.

4.1.1.4 Accountability and ownership

The findings highlight that there is a strong sense of accountability towards the choir by its members as expressed in the interviews. Choristers, especially those on the choir committee, display a sense of ownership towards the choir, something that is closely linked to the hierarchy as discussed in the former section regarding self-confidence and leadership (4.1.1.3). Participants conveyed their accountability and ownership towards the choir during rehearsals, performances, and with regard to general administration aspects of the choir.

- Accountability during weekly rehearsals

Choristers are responsible for studying the music issued to them before each rehearsal. They are issued with sheet music and rehearsal tracks – sound recordings of each individual voice part – of all the songs as the majority of singers are unable to read music notation. I observed on several occasions during the observation period how voice group leaders organised additional rehearsals to assist choristers in becoming familiar with the music and to memorise their parts. On one such occasion I witnessed and documented a particular voice group leader discussing extra sessions with her group, because during the rehearsal her voice group struggled with their part. The initiative to arrange for extra support to the voice group was done by this particular choir member without any demands or requests from me as conductor or from the choir management team. An inference can be made that choristers feel it is their responsibility to know their music. Several participants substantiated this interpretation during interviews, for example, Alice mentioned that she ensures that she goes "through [her] music very carefully" and "on [her] own as it is required of all choristers". Similarly, Zack commented that everyone should be "prepared to sing [their] music at any given time". The following verbatim quotes link to this finding:

> In rehearsals we are expected to know our notes and there is a huge amount of music and very little time to learn it. It can be very overwhelming. (Jess)

[Choir] teaches me to be more responsible in the things that I do. I do not want to disappoint anyone and I feel we all depend upon one another. If we do not give a hundred percent all the time, then we let ourselves down. Choir is such a big part of our university lives because it's the one thing here that makes us feel like university students. (Koos)

The [music] needs to be memorised and you have to learn it [during] the holidays. If [we] are not tuned into knowing that this learning is an on-going [process], and [that it's] the only means to better [ourselves] for the sake of the entire group, then [we forget] what makes the choir so special and it will not be 'great' anymore. (Elizabeth)

There is accountability towards each other and we get together a lot to help each other. We improve the music and the experience for everybody. I aim to be the best that I can be in every rehearsal and this comes with experience. The more experience [one has], the more effort [you] need to put into the choir. (Nkululeko)

Nkululeko further contributed that older members, such as himself, play the role of 'older sibling' and take great pride in "helping new members who struggle with their music", reminding them of the "purpose" and "bigger picture" of being a member in the Camerata. M2 felt that there are "more than enough resources" for choristers to ensure that they studied the music correctly and independently. Beukes cautioned that he is "very dependent on the rehearsal CDs" and expressed his gratitude to be able to "go to the voice group leaders" when he needs assistance.

- Accountability of performances

Data analysis indicated that Camerata choristers feel highly accountable and responsible for the success and standard of choir performances. On two occasions during the observation period, a general choir meeting was arranged by choir members directly after a performance where the positive and negative aspects of the concert were discussed. The more senior choristers pointed out several mistakes made in sections of the music, making everyone aware of what needed to be improved. Other choristers openly expressed how they felt during the performance. For some it was a positive experience while others mentioned that they were disappointed by the performance. Before concluding the discussion, I witnessed the choristers arguing about a suitable percentage allocated as assessment for the performance so that it may be recorded and used as a comparison for future concerts. Choir members are encouraged by committee members to make suggestions on how to take each performance to the next level. In the interviews, choristers mentioned how they take it personally if a concert is unsatisfactory:

> [Sometimes] we come out of a performance feeling like that was bad and we could have definitely done better. We had a few short comings here and there and as long as we work on fixing that for the next performance it will become good again. (Jeremy)

> I have learnt that everything is on [us]. It's not a matter of the heavy schedule or the difficult music, it's a matter of how much [we] are going to apply ourselves. In so doing, the onus for [our] performances and for how great [we] are as a choir falls on every single individual. (Fred)

Breyten shared his belief that all choristers "take it very personally [when a] performance does not go amazingly [well]" which was echoed by John Fleck who said that "if [we] had a bad performance" then we all feel that "it could have [gone] better". Emma asserted that she has never walked away from a performance feeling "absolutely horrible" but at times "disappointed" and knows that everyone "could have done better". Azania echoed that the choristers hold each other "accountable for the music that [they] produce". Nkululeko noted that he "personally wishes to improve [himself] every day" so that when he "steps foot onto stage" he knows that he "will not accept anything less than being phenomenal".

- Accountability with regard to the administration of the choir

Data revealed that choristers believe it is their responsibility to contribute to the administrative side of the choir with regard to aspects such as advertising concerts, protecting the professional image of the Camerata, and raising funds to pay their own fees. As part of data collection, I made a point of observing and documenting all communications made by choristers on social media platforms where the choir is actively involved. Camerata has both a private Facebook page – for members only – and a public one – open to all supporters and friends of the choir – and use these podiums to communicate and advertise respectively. Additionally, the choir makes use of its own website, Instagram account, email and WhatsApp groups to connect to one another and the public. During the observation period, the participants actively engaged in promoting the concerts to their friends through these media channels. Committee members often reminded their peers to study the music and used social media to encourage the choristers to endorse the performances. During the interviews, choristers substantiated these findings of members being accountable in promoting the choir for the purpose of concerts, auditions or to market the choir. Brillianto voiced his opinion that giving up his free time to promote the choir for an upcoming event is his way of "giving back" to the Camerata. He continued that he would "be the one to motivate others", assisting in marketing the choir. He insisted that the choristers want to be seen as "a professional group" and thus these extra activities are to "be expected" from all. Azania

concurred, mentioning that these "optional" events are something all choristers should do to "promote the choir and [its] performances". The data gathered from the interviews illustrate chorister's accountability in assisting to promote the choir:

> I would definitely [assist in advertising the Camerata] as it is no effort for me. It is another opportunity to contribute to the outside success of the choir. (Catherine)

> The choir plays such an important role in my life that I would do anything to help promote the choir. By getting people to the concerts, it helps to generate money for [needy] choristers so we should all be doing it. (Blommie)

Data analysis indicated that choristers not only feel accountable to advertising the concerts and assisting in marketing the choir, but also to portray the choir positively. During a particular rehearsal I observed as the chairperson of the choir reminded the singers to bring spare clothes to the upcoming performance if they wish to attend the social gathering afterwards. To support this arrangement, the chairperson explains that it is not permissible to drink alcohol or smoke while wearing the official choir uniform. Several other committee members add comments, reminding the singers to remove their blazers, ties, and choir accessories before attending the social as alcohol will be available.

Unfortunately it is inevitable that singing in the Camerata involves a financial obligation, and although the choir has a fund to assist needy students, the onus of paying for all fees is the responsibility of the individual chorister. During interviews, Aria admitted that she "has a part time job to help pay off the tours". Alice remarked that she "worked full time during [her] holidays" so that she could afford the choir fees. John Fleck commented that he has observed how other choristers "take on extra jobs just to be [able to afford being] in the Camerata".

4.1.1.5 Discipline and time management

The number of findings retrieved from coding the data with regard to choir as a place where a high level of group and self-discipline is required, is significant. Choristers almost unanimously mentioned the impact that the nurturing of their self-discipline during choir participation has had on their daily lives, be it in a personal capacity or linked to their studies. When Shepard was asked what value the choir added to his life, he promptly answered "discipline and musicality".

In the interviews, participants commented on the affect that the discipline, as instilled by the choir regime, has had on their academic and personal lives:

[Choir] helps a great deal with discipline and I feel that my own discipline gets better in my studies because I have choir. (Nataniel)

Choir brings a lot to my life. You keep hearing how choir improves discipline and how it helps you become a more rounded person and more social and all these things. I use to be an introvert and I was not always disciplined nor was I a hard worker. Camerata has taught me discipline, integrity and to be all that I can be. (Jeremy)

Choir can be directly linked to our studies as it motivates us to be better. We can manage life better because we are taught discipline, integrity and always reaching for excellence. (Merida)

Discipline is the one thing I have learnt and you have to be disciplined in your studies as well in order to accommodate the Camerata. (Nozipho)

Camerata teaches me discipline and helps me to get into a routine, especially with the university as it sets a routine for me and allows me to get into things. You need to plan accordingly. (John)

I have learnt a great deal about discipline and [other] values in the choir. Camerata focuses a great deal on integrity, being true to yourself and true to the choir. It has built my values, which I believe in, and has made me to be happier and more joyful in life. (Zack)

I think you learn great discipline and integrity in the choir… and this fosters in my life – to be on time, to look after myself, to be well mannered and to study the music by myself. (Ilse)

Time management is a form of self-discipline, an aspect discussed by a large majority of the participants during the interviews. Choristers commented on time management as a skill that is necessary in order to handle the pressures of academic, social and their extracurricular programmes which in this case includes the choir. Many attribute the strict rules of the Camerata forcing them to acquire the ability to plan their lives and schedules. In her focus group, Aurora explains that "choir teaches [her] very good time management skills" and Elizabeth notes that during examinations it encourages her to "make sure that everything is done in a reasonable time frame" so that she can go and enjoy choir. In her interview, Ilse added that choristers in Camerata are "more often the people that are the busiest most of the time" and need to juggle choir with their academic and social lives. Henry points out that, although he is "busier with all this extra work"; it allows him to function better as choir provides him with "new energy" that contributes positively to his studying.

Although the majority of the choristers alluded to time management, several gave examples as to how it improves their lives. Choir provides a routine and consistency for some, and for others it is an important skill that benefits their everyday lives. Katya, for example, noted that she plans her entire life "around those choir times as they are fixed". She admitted that she "nearly resigned from the choir" due to the busy schedule but planned her academic and social responsibilities with choir as a constant and achieved this by "taking a step back [to] look at everything holistically". Emma claimed that choir participation has instilled a "hard working notion" that spills into her life outside of the choir rehearsal, something she did not have before. Elani was of the opinion that choir helps her "plan [her] life" and George contended that time management skills are "convey[ed] in all that [he does] in [his] everyday life", thanks to the Camerata.

Several students believe that, because of the time management skills they have adopted due to their choir participation, their planning for their studies has benefitted. During a focus group interview, a lively discussion ensued on this topic. Aria referred to this newly developed skill as a reason why she has "learnt to be more diligent in [her] studies". Jess agreed, saying that choir is beneficial to her academics as it has taught her to be "strict about learning things" and it helps her to "put things into order so that [she] can be the best person possible". Gert shared his belief that it is imperative to have time management skills that filter into one's work life. He argued that "people tend to resign [from the choir] when academics gets in the way" as a result of "bad planning". Jan said that choir takes up an "unbelievable amount of time" and agreed with Gert by stating that people will need to "give up choir" if they do not "manage [their] time" efficiently. Nancy asserted that, unlike herself and fellow Camerati, her study peers "struggle to time manage" and advocates that choir gives her "more than just practices and performances".

4.1.1.6 Commitment and sacrifice

Vignette 2

It's early on a Monday morning, and the choir committee receives a request from a chorister asking permission to attend the wedding of his good friend. The choir has a concert on the evening that the wedding would take place. The committee members consult the constitution of the choir, which does not allow a singer to miss a concert to attend the wedding of a non-family member. The chorister's request is denied and he is reminded of the commitment he promised to the choir and the sacrifices it entails. The committee emails their decision back to him on the very same day.

Participating in the University of Pretoria Camerata requires a great deal of commitment and sacrifice from the participants, as can be interpreted from the description in Vignette 2. The words "commitment" and "sacrifice" are synonymous to many of the choristers in the Camerata. When prospective choristers were asked what they believed would be expected from them before they joined Camerata, many referred to the concept of 'commitment':

> I thought it was going to be a very strict type of choir, on a very high and professional level. A place where commitment is required in order to make good music. (Beukes)

> I thought it would be less structured and would be more of an activity, an extramural. One that did not require as much commitment and hard work as it does. My experience has been completely different. (Troy)

> Being in my first year and coming from a youth choir to Camerata [has been] more demanding and excellence is expected from us and rightfully so. (Jess)

> I expected something honestly difficult. It looked like the kind of people that put a lot of work in and my expectations have been met. (Fred)

In the interviews, choristers acknowledged that membership in the Camerata required a great deal of commitment. Breyten stated that he has "never worked this hard at anything in [his] entire life, not even in [his] studies", and Shepard suggested that "dedication and commitment" are the most important skills he has developed by being a member. Alice shared her feelings namely that she works so hard in choir that it "completely drains" her, while Aria added that choir is very "busy".

Participants mentioned during the interviews that being a member in the choir requires sacrifice on their part. Nkululeko noted that one's "attitude towards others" as well as "the ability to sacrifice" for the greater good is an "important part of the experience". Jane reported that "giving something up" because of choir activities "teaches you something about your ego" and that is part of the "reality of the world we live in". For her, choir is an activity which reminds the singers that they are "part of something bigger" and that being a member is "something of a self-sacrifice". Tango added that you often "sacrifice your free time" to accommodate the many concerts and choir activities that take place over weekends.

Several participants stated that not all students would be able to commit and sacrifice on the level as expected of a Camerata member.

> Some people are just not cut out to sing in the Camerata and to handle the workload of both choir and studies. I think it takes a certain type of person that can sing in a choir…and it's not for everybody. Just like rugby is not for everybody. (Lara)

> There is a specific mentality [required] to be able to sing in a serious choir like the Camerata because it remains a hobby. You really have to work very hard and sacrifice holiday time to study your music. (Elizabeth)

> People that don't have the commitment to be in a choir and [the ability] to balance their lives between studies, social, family and the choir itself are not cut out to be in the Camerata. It's about a certain approach to life. (Johnny)

One participant commented that his own brother does not understand why he sacrifices so much time for the choir.

> My brother always asks; 'why are you going to do it again when it takes up so much time?' I often end up studying my music more than my own study work. But I feel it fills me inside in a good way and I feel [saturated], there is more to life and more to strive towards. For me it is so emotional and spiritual. (Koos)

The data indicates that some participants are negative towards the amount of sacrifice required to be a choir member. In the interviews, choristers stated that people tend to resign from the choir when the schedule is too busy.

> At the beginning of the year we had a massive "walk out" as a result of a very busy schedule. People are always a little bit scared of the year that lies ahead and if the official [choir] calendar is too busy then people get worried and they resign. (Henry)
> I know I am one that almost resigned last year as I was uncertain with everything that lay ahead. I was not sure of my academic year that lay ahead and there were numerous factors that made me doubt if I should sing or not. (Katya)

> People only realise after they have received their music and [once] classes have already begun that they will not have the time to commit and make the necessary sacrifices to sing in Camerata. And that is bad planning from their side. (Gert)

Betsie maintained that choristers need to make "that" choice to "focus more on their studies". In her view, this is especially true when the singers advance towards the "end of their degrees" and the academic pressure and studying becomes more intense. May attested that it is increasingly difficult to sacrifice one's time when "going into final year of study". George felt that choir is "demanding and taxing" and that making sacrifices over weekends for concerts leads to not being able to "socialise with friends". Such sacrifices may result in a

chorister wanting to leave the choir. Alice B commented that her mother is "worried that [she] misses out on [her] social life" due to the demands and sacrifices needed from choristers.

> The choir gets too much prevalence in many aspects and this is fine because we knew this when we first joined. As a drama student, I was only home once this year to rest and my classes go until six, seven o' clock in the evenings and then we have rehearsals and performances on weekends while others get to rest. A lot of us are exhausted because it gets too much. (Koos)

In contrast to the negative comments offered by several participants, some choristers offered positive views, regardless of the sacrifices that were required of them:

> I would rather come to choir and sacrifice two hours of study time and then get back and have more energy afterwards to continue studying. And you have more "want" to get back to the books. (Jan)

> Sometimes we don't have much [spare] time and then we have to go to choir which takes time. But I feel that the time there is much better spent and I feel you get so much out of it. It is a "de-stresser" and I feel more relaxed after choir events and being with these choir people make me feel better about myself. (Amare)

> For me personally I like to do more and be more and can't imagine only studying. [Sacrificing your time] is a small price to pay for what it gives you and teaches you. People who you study with struggle to manage their time and they don't have any extra murals or responsibilities. Choir gives you much more than just practices and performances. (Nancy)

> [We] pitch up at choir rehearsals and feel that there is a lot going on in our lives. It is the most difficult week ever and then at choir you hear that others are experiencing the same challenges…and you realise that your [own] life is not always as bad and [we] realise how blessed we actually are. In the long run the sacrifice is worth it and when you look back after a year or so, it was so worth it and you do not regret it. (Emma B)

Henry commented that the "extra work allows [him] to rest in a way". He explained that substituting his free or "rest" time for going to a Camerata rehearsal "allows [him] to gain new energy to go back to the studies".

4.1.1.7 Health and well-being

The data collected provides substantial evidence that participants see their affiliation with the choir as beneficial to their health and well-being. Themes relating to health and well-being include choir as an escape mechanism; choir as an emotional outlet; choir as an activity that

relieves stress; choir as a support structure and contributor to emotional health; and choir as an activity that nurtures physical and mental health. Each of these subordinate themes will be discussed in the following sections.

- Choir as an escape mechanism
  Vignette 3

  She nervously waits for her turn to audition for the choir. Her sister is already a member, and she wants nothing more than to be part of the Camerata. She recalls watching her sister on stage at the choirs' annual Gala Concert only a few weeks ago. It was a significant day. During that performance, she made peace with all that had happened during the past year. Her father and grandfather had both passed away, causing her family severe loss as well as emotional and financial stress. Nevertheless, she remembers the beautiful choir music and how it made her feel. She recalls what she wore that night; what the stage looked like and how beautiful the lighting was. She has a smile on her face as she reminisces about the warmth and joy surging through her body as it flowed from the music on that particular evening. She believes that the music healed her emotionally and ultimately, that is the reason why she is standing outside the Camerata choir room waiting to be auditioned…

Vignette 3 above is based on a very personal and deeply emotional experience of one of the choristers which was shared during an interview. Correspondingly, several participants commented on choir participation as a type of escape mechanism to lift them from their troubling real-life situation. They see their choir participation as an activity that can improve their mood.

> A rehearsal is like a vacation because it is especially in the difficult times that we need to break away and forget about the busy and difficult things that can suffocate [us]. When you get to choir you forget about all these troubles...and it builds [us] up again and gives [us] hope to continue. (Emma B)

> Even if I have had a 'crappy' day, I can come to choir and it very quickly doesn't matter anymore, especially because of the type of music that we do. It demands your concentration in such a way that you don't have time to worry about other stuff. (Shepard)

> If it was not for the choir I would probably have a nervous breakdown. To have rehearsals on Tuesdays and Thursdays and to be able to break away from everything, from an exceptionally difficult day, and to come to choir and sing, has really 'saved' me on numerous occasions. (Katya)

Nataniel suggested that choristers use choir as a means to bring "balance [to their] lives" and see it as an "escape and a relaxing" activity.

- Choir as an emotional outlet

Participants not only mentioned their choir participation as an escape mechanism, but a place where they have the opportunity to express themselves and regard singing in the Camerata as an emotional release.

> Choir is an emotional outlet and often we are very tired before choir and feel much better afterwards. (Ana)

> It was really a rough time for me and when I came to choir, I was in tears. My best friend was sitting next to me and asked if I was ok and I said "no". And I dealt with it during rehearsal and [fixed] my emotional [state] in that way. (Breyten)

> The repertoire makes a big difference to how I feel. The music evokes certain emotions and demands certain feelings. So emotionally one is usually deeply moved or excited. (Brillianto)

> Choir moves you emotionally. I can feel when I have not been to choir for a few weeks and I get irritated and I just need a release…that what you get out of choir makes you feel better as a person emotionally. (Elizabeth)

> I couldn't function properly without [choir] and I need a place to vent. I think all the baggage that you carry in the day you just let go during a rehearsal 'cause you realise that there is more to life than just worrying about stuff. (John Fleck)

John Fleck claimed that he "can conquer the world" because his mood "is immediately uplifted" which makes him "happier than before" he arrived at the rehearsal.

During the interviews, several respondents specifically commented on performance as a means for them to express themselves.

> I get such an incredible feeling during and after performances and I feel so much closer to the people that I have just sung with. You get this unbelievable sense of elation afterwards. You feel euphoric with other choir members and share this euphoria and positive energy with each other. (Shepard)

> The songs take you on a different journey and I feel all the emotion. I just want to communicate that [feeling] with the audience and hope to change their lives emotionally. (Aria)

> During performances we experience a wide array of emotions that are present, and thereafter, we can be very tired and sweaty. But there is a feeling of satisfaction, a sense of achievement and humility that you were an instrument that really moved people. This experience itself is hard to describe and not found anywhere else. (Brillianto)

John Tucker expressed his opinion that the music improves his "mood" and "emotional health" whereas Johnny commented that choir participation offers "peace for [his] soul" and that he "cannot imagine emotions" without singing in the Camerata. Merida felt that "she would not otherwise" have a place for her "creative outlet" and Belle offered that "engineering really restricts [her] creativity so [choir] it a great outlet".

- Choir relieves stress

The majority of choristers commented on choir participation being a stress reliever during their interviews or focus groups. Nozipho said she specifically joined the choir as she wanted to do an activity that could "de-stress" her, while Blommie's view was that participating in the choir is a "way to deal with stress". Jone added that during examinations coming to choir helps relieve some of the pressure and Friday agreed that the choir "removes [his] daily stress". Several choristers linked stress relief to benefitting their health:

> I stress a great deal about my academics and I feel that if I sing choir, even if it's just a normal rehearsal, that it relaxes me a lot. (John)

> [It is] very simple: the less stress you have the healthier you will be. (Tango)

> [Choir] is definitely a "de-stresser" and having less stress should improve your health. (Jasmine)

> [Choir] relieves stress, calms you, helps you cope with things and the music motivates you. And all this lifts your mood. (Johnny)

- Choir creates stress

During data analysis, however, the counterpart of the former finding was identified. During the interviews, some participants mentioned that the choir adds stress to their lives. Koos argued that the choir can cause "unnecessary stress" and that the singers are often "exhausted because [choir] gets too much [emphasis]". Aurora commented that the added pressure and stress of Camerata can "be bad for [her] health". In her focus group, consisting only of female choristers, Ana agreed with Aurora. She felt that when the choir is too busy then their lives are "out of balance". She observed that in the "past term" it was so busy that

"people got sick and they infected others" all due to stress. Merida agreed, stating that the amount of "effort [the choristers] put into achieving excellence" by always giving their best, results in a deterioration of health. Alice B reported that choir is a stressful place for her; because she is surrounded by excellent singers, she feels inadequate. She mentioned that if an individual makes a mistake, that person "disappoints the entire choir" and this causes stress which "is never a good thing for your health".

In their interviews, two participants acknowledged that choir may cause stress, but they see it as a positive type of stress:

> There is stress that comes with being a member of choir, like knowing your music, but I feel that it is a type of stress that we need to make us better. I see it as a positive type of stress and think it is advantageous to my health. (John)

> The pressure of learning the music in a certain time frame can be a little bit stressful, but a little stress is not always a bad thing. (May)

- Choir as a support structure and contributor to emotional health
  Vignette 4

> *He sits quietly in the third row of the choir. His face is visibly swollen from the operation and he looks tired and weak. He had his wisdom teeth removed only the day before, but there he is, ready for the rehearsal to commence. Fellow choristers notice and go out of their way to see how he is doing, giving him hugs and offering their sympathies. They are not aware of it, but inside, he is smiling.*

Vignette 4 illustrates an observation that was made of a chorister who chose to come to a rehearsal although he had a valid reason to be absent. His attendance was not through concern of missing out on the work, nor due to fear of being reprimanded. He simply wanted to be around people that care about him. Several participants regard the Camerata as a support structure and believe the choir contributes positively to their emotional health.

> In my first year there was a time that I was really depressed and my studies were not going so well and I was about to give up. But then I joined Camerata, and being part of [this] choir and having to get up to go to that rehearsal or performance kept me going. (Jeremy)

> Last week before rehearsal I found out that my grandmother [was] terminally ill. It was very rough and I was completely emotional. But choir is like my psychology session – it's my therapy. (Breyten)

I wanted to sing because I enjoy singing and love music and it's also a therapeutic [activity] when [I] sing. (Aria)

Choir moves you emotionally. You can sing in place of going to a physiologist. (Elizabeth)

[Choir] is very much a support structure for me. The people that I have met are all amazing and just give [me] the support I need. (Friday)

For me choir is stress lifting and I feel restful in choir. With 70 people around me I feel safe – everyone loves and supports you here. (Aria)

In Camerata you always find someone to speak to and you can express your feelings. If you have problems you don't have to be afraid to open up to anybody because everybody is so welcoming and there is no judgement. (Qaqamba)

In Camerata you are free and you always find someone to speak to and express yourself to. So if you have problems you don't have to be afraid to open up to anybody. (Qaqamba)

You know that these people are there for you during the tough times and you can rely on them. They are there to listen to my problems and this is an aspect in the choir so important to me. (Amare)

When you come to choir the people here are impartial and they will not bite [my] head off like [my] dad would if I failed a test. They will cry with [me] and laugh at [me] while [I] am crying. (Andrew)

There is always someone in the choir that would be willing to help in the time of need. The choir is a sort of safety net. I know I can phone people if I get stuck by the side of the road and they will be there to help. (Alice B)

Everybody is there for everybody, and everybody has everyone's back. When you go somewhere with the choir, you feel that these people are part of your gang. We are there for each other and we know each other. (Merida)

John Fleck shared his opinion that Camerata members "support each other during the tough times", and Aria mimicked this by adding that "we support and care a great deal for each other". She commented that if a member is upset, everyone in the choir would be willing to "comfort them". Emma B felt that choir is her support and that "during the difficult times" when she is "easily suffocated", it is the choir that "builds [her] up again and gives [her] hope to continue". Jone commented on the "support structure of people that understand" what she

might be going through during the tough times and proposed that Camerata members are there to offer "support and sympathy" or simply just "to listen".

In a focus group discussion, Maria concluded that choir singing is good for her "emotionally but not physically". However, in the same focus group discussion, her view was contested by Ria who argued that "emotional health is connected to physical health" which could result in a boosted immune system. This corresponds with the following view shared during an interview:

> There are currently people in the choir that are sick and still come to choir. I am dead sure that the moral support of the choir actually makes them better – it helps with their recovery. If I am sick I will definitely not stay at home. I will come to choir because the choir supports each other on a much deeper level and you get better and feel better quicker. (Jan)

Ilse is a first year student and during her interview, she mentioned that she has already experienced the choir's "support structure". She contended that she has someone in the choir to lean on when times are "really tough" and when she might feel "isolated and overwhelmed".

- Choir as an activity that nurtures physical and mental health

The impact that choir has on a singer's physical and mental health was discussed by numerous participants during the interviews. Several choristers mentioned aspects of breathing, posture and singing technique that contribute to their physical health, while concentration benefits them mentally:

> Every time we warm-up, do a physical exercise or play a singing game, we are constantly reminded of what good posture entails, good breathing, to activate certain muscles in the body and to constantly relax all tension. It helps a great deal if someone has good posture when they have neck or back problems. If we sing a fast, rhythmical and challenging piece and still add movements, it takes a great deal from us both mentally and physically. (Gert)

> One can be physically tired and exhausted as we concentrate and focus for such a long period of time. You focus so much on posture and breathing…you sing with your entire body and being and although you might not be physically running, it definitely feels like it. (Brillianto)

> It's good for you physically. Your stomach works very hard during choir and when you come, you switch off and that keeps you mentally healthy. (Tergum)

> The warm-up exercises that we do, I am sure that we burn some calories there. (Jasmine)

> I can come to choir exhausted and ready to quit life and by the time choir is over I have an energy that I just want to do everything. I can go home [after choir] and work for another three hours before bed. The energy we share and the music and atmosphere improves my mental health and well-being. (Nancy)

A participant studying medicine in the choir offered his opinion from an academic viewpoint:

> [In medical class] we have studied that mental health has a lot to do with your physical health. Due to choir, our mental state of mind is rejuvenated from all the stress; we go on tours and have rehearsals and we forget about everything. This can, to an extent, have a [positive] effect on our health. They tested our lung capacity in class and they could tell those that sang in choirs or played [wind or brass] instruments because of the increased lung capacity that leads to longevity and good health. (Nataniel)

Data from the interviews show that some choristers believe that singing in a choir assists in advocating healthy habits:

> There are a hundred other people that rely on you to sing, so you don't go out the entire time and hurt your voice and get sick. The choir relies on you to be health so from that viewpoint choir leads to [better] health. (Ilse)

In a focus group comprised of only Afrikaans singers, Henry expressed his view that the choir advocates healthy habits. He reminded choristers to "look after their voices" which he believes results in choristers "eating healthier". In a separate focus group, Ella mentioned that choristers need to look after themselves so that they "can reach the high notes" and Jan argued that choir forces the singers too "look after [themselves] better". Only one participant remarked about the health hazards related to singing in a choir:

> There is a negative affect with regard to our health. There are a lot of people in a small space doing a lot of breathing; when one person gets sick and has a respiratory disease – like coughing – it can spread and that's not great. (Tango)

4.1.1.8 Spiritual experiences

The data collected show a substantial number of participants who see choir participation as a spiritual experience. Brillianto is a final year theology student and states that singing in the Camerata is a "spiritual [and] Godly experience" which he describes as "unbelievable". Betsie also stated that singing in Camerata is "spiritual and actually Godly" and it is the

"place where [she has] gotten the closest to God". Catherine mentioned in her interview that her "talents are from God" and that singing in Camerata "fulfils [her] obligation to [her] faith". The data is substantiated by the views offered by several other participants:

> Singing in the Camerata is to me, personally, a spiritual thing. It's about connecting to God and reaching with God out to other people. (Ricardo)

> I just feel that singing with other people transcends the need for language and it connects us on a spiritual level. (George)

> Music that is so beautiful is for me spiritual. (Koos)

Nkululeko outlines that being a member of Camerata "emphasises [his] belief and faith" and reminds him that there is a "higher purpose" to his life. In his interview he added that, when he serves this "higher power through [his] talent", it makes his life more "bearable and understandable", and that choir has improved his "commitment to [his] faith".

The Camerata has a Christian ethos and every rehearsal and performance opens with a prayer, a spiritual or moral message, or a moment of silence. Azania commented on the choir's "Christian way of looking at things" and stated that – regardless of an individual's spiritual belief – the choir promotes the "true meaning of love". In her view, that in itself is "spiritual". Breyten mentioned that the choir's tradition of singing a prayer at the end of every performance is "a really holy moment" for him, and Blommie explained that he actually joined the choir because he felt how the choir brought "the message of God" across to the audience.

4.1.1.9 Friendships and a sense of belonging

The majority of choristers mentioned friendship as an integral part of being in the University of Pretoria Camerata. In this section, the focus is on individual friendships within the choir, since the idea of camaraderie amongst the group is a separate theme described under the social value of choir participation (section 4.1.2.1). The data for this section was saturated early on in the data collection process and only the most significant comments have been listed below. There are several facets to this theme and thus the data have been divided into further sub-themes. Choristers see the choir as a place to make friends; choir friendships are substantial and lasting; choir friendships are exclusive; and choir creates a sense of belonging for the participants.

- Choir is a place to make friends

In his interview, Troy stated that he joined the Camerata because he was hoping to "find friends". He commented that, during his first year of studying, he "struggled to make friends" and believed choir would be "an ideal place" to rectify this. Zack had a similar purpose stating that he wanted to "meet new people" by joining the choir. Jeremy said that the "friendships [he] makes" is an important reason for him to sing in the choir and he can always rely on his "friends" when he needs to just "talk about stuff". Beukes claimed that the friendship "bonds between members" is an important "aspect of singing in the choir" for him and others. Wilson added that he joined Camerata having "no friends" and now he has "made new friends". Several other participants mentioned the importance of making friends in the choir:

> I have been singing my entire life and am now in my fourth year in this choir. I continue to sing because I have had some of the best times in my life in this choir, all thanks to my friends. (John)

> I believe that people remain in Camerata because of the friends they make and the bonds they share. (Nancy)

> It is easier to become friends with choristers than people you study with and I feel more comfortable around the members in the Camerata. (Blommie)

> I don't really have friends in my [study] program and I only have friends in Camerata. (John Tucker)

- Choir friendships are substantial and lasting

During the interviews, participants explained that the friendships they form with other choristers are substantial and on a different level than most friendships with fellow students on campus.

> [We] start making friends on another level and [we] start reaching out to people. I reach out to people going through a tough time and this strengthens the relationship. [We] start talking daily and become close. (John Fleck)

Nkululeko, Alice and Fanie all mentioned that their "best friends" are members within the Camerata, and Aria commented that her "closest friends" within the choir "get together and go hiking in the holidays". Tiger described his choir friendships as "unconditional" while Beukes noted that he does not mind spending so much time at choir because the choir comprises "basically [all my] friends". Nozipho pointed out that the choristers have "become

[her] close friends" and that she gets to know them better "outside of Camerata" activities. Elizabeth said that it is easier to make friends in the choir because of the "common interest" that is shared amongst the choristers. The participants interviewed regarded their friendships in the Camerata as not only substantial, but lasting.

> It is definitely friendships for the long haul. During the holidays, I looked at our choir dinner photo from the previous year and there are already three couples that are engaged in that group. My parents met in the choir and got married and still visit every Sunday with people that they met in the choir over 30 years ago. (Henry)

Henry's comments about his parents and their Camerata friends are a prime example of friendships that are both lasting and substantial as a result of the choir. During the observation period, there were five couples in the choir, all who met in the Camerata. One of these couples had been together for over a year. In her interview, Emma said the choir means the world to her as she "met [her] boyfriend through choir". Ariel commented on the "romantic partnerships" in the choir, referring to these as "loving relationships".

According to Troy, the "friendships and relationships" that form as a result of the choir will "last even beyond [their] time" in the choir. Zack expressed that choir has provided him with "lifelong friendships" and Willem supported this view namely that these "friendships […] will last a lifetime". He shared his belief that it is a "bond that is not easily broken". Brillianto has sung in the choir for four years and comments that it "actually hurts" when members leave the choir at the end of a year because strong "friendships had been formed". In his interview, he added that he "stays in contact with members" that are no longer in the choir as they are "really good friends". Gert mentioned that the Camerata friendships "surpass the choir" and that members "remain friends" long after they have left. Lara stated that the people in choir will "remain [her] friends" and hopes that these will be "friendships for life".

During the observation period, I established that the Camerata currently has six "choir babies". As in Henry's case above, five other members have parents that met in the choir, got married and now have children that are also a part of the Camerata.

- Choir friendships can be exclusive

During the interviews, a few participants mentioned that some friendships in the choir were not always positive. The data shows that this is largely due to members feeling excluded from certain friendship groups. Two new members in the choir gave negative accounts of what they have experienced in the Camerata:

> I have not made long term friends in the choir. It is difficult for me to become part of the friendships because old members are more comfortable with their circle of friends. (Ilse)

> I believe that the friendship bonds between the old members is stronger as opposed to those that have just joined and that these bonds are exclusive. (Friday)

One participant, another new member in the choir, did not share the sentiment about choir being exclusive:

> Everyone is friendly and accepting and it's nice because as a new member you are sometimes a little bit nervous. It's nice to know that people make an effort to get to know you, even if they just walk across the room to greet you. (Alice B)

Some participants acknowledged that there are exclusive bonds between members, but did not necessarily see it as a negative aspect of the choir:

> One thing that I had noticed straight off the bat when I joined the Camerata is the old members' sense of friendship. They would run and scream from the corners of the room to greet each other. It is such a lovely thing and there is so much noise. (May)

> They [the old members] have been singing together for a long time and it's nice to know that someday we will have [such a strong bond with other choristers]. (Alice)

In their interviews, three participants gave pragmatic reasons for friendships not always being positive. Nancy said that "friendships sometimes get a bit mucky and sour and then choir becomes less pleasant". Fanie mentioned that when it comes to people within the choir "you like some and don't like others". Koos substantiated Fanie's opinion and continued "that there is still a boundary of 'civil-ness' even though there are people that you don't get along with".

- Choir creates a sense of belonging for the singers

In the interviews, a few participants mentioned that choir is a place where they felt needed and special. Alice, for example, highlights that "Camerata is a place where [she] can go to" and a place where she feels she can "belong". For Jasmine, "choir is an experience and a place where [she feels she] belongs" and Merida stated that at choir, "everybody feels as if they belong". Lowkey mentioned that the Camerata is "important to the majority" because they feel as if they "belong to something important". He added that choristers can't just "pack up and leave" because this aspect of being worth something is "integral". During her interview, Elsa remarked that the "sense of belonging" allows the singers to "feel that they

have a place" which results in them remaining in the choir. Two other participants commented on this strong sense of belonging:

> For me, [Camerata] is a sense of belonging. At university you are just a student and here you are special and part of something. You are important. Here you are somebody. (Amare)

> When I came back to choir, I was welcomed with open arms. Everybody was glad to see me and said that they missed me. It made me feel wanted and I knew that this is where I belonged. (Ariel)

4.1.1.10 Holistic experience

Several participants mentioned that the Camerata teaches them holistic life lessons. Discipline and time management can fall under this theme but have been excluded in this section as they have already been discussed in section 4.1.1.5 above. Data analysis indicates that the participants regard the environment in which the choir operates as a place where they are taught valuable life skills, which benefit them outside the realm of the choir.

> I feel that Camerata is not just about the music, or excellence, or the feelings that they generate. It gives us a place to learn, it teaches us integrity and how to better ourselves. It teaches us to strive for high goals and this can be directly linked to our studies as it motivates us there. We can manage life better because we are taught life lessons and always reaching for excellence. (Merida)

> Camerata is definitely more than just singing because it is like a life school. It teaches you [amongst other] persistence and never to give up. (Lara)

Tergum underlined that choir is not merely "about the music" but that it teaches him "life lessons as well". Jane mentioned that she is "more responsible" as a result of choir and that these "life lessons" that are taught "improve [the choristers]" and that the "potential of the individual is built upon". Elani substantiated this by agreeing that Camerata is a "learning school for [herself]" and Qaqamba felt that the "life lessons [she is taught] in choir" are not imparted "anywhere else". George implied that these "life lessons" helped him "grow as a person" and that it filters into his "everyday life", and Koos commented that these values are "deep rooted and carry into [his] future self", something which he regards as "important".

In her interview, Catherine identified that the choir represents a "holistic environment" for her as it has "taught [her] many things which contribute to [her] work ethic" and includes "punctuality" and "neatness" as examples. Azania observed that the choir forced her to "look at life completely differently" as she has become more "philosophical" and "artistic" and

"appreciates the arts" completely now as a result of her choir participation. Emma shared her feelings that choir has made her an "all-rounded person" and Gert mentioned that "choir brings a certain sense of reality", allowing him to apply adopted principles – learnt through choir participation – to his "daily life".

Data analysis revealed that some negative aspects related to the theme of choir as a holistic experience contribute to participants learning valuable life lessons. John referred to some Camerata singers as "people in life that [we] don't always get along with", adding that it is important to "learn to be an adult" in such circumstances and that such situations "prepares [him] for life after university". Ricardo discussed choir being a great sacrifice, but mentions that it teaches him the "ability to adapt to an amount of work" which he believes will give him a more "powerful edge mentally" over his fellow "students" and "colleagues" in the future. In her interview, Jane pointed out that some performances are a "waste of her time" as she could be "preparing for a test or studying". However, she agreed that this is part of life and that "there are times that [we] need to do things that [we] might not really like". In her interview, Katya said she was prepared to "resign from the choir" due to a tough "academic programme". She commented that the choir was "too busy" but decided to stay because it "teaches [us] to look at everything holistically" and when one "takes a step back to look at the bigger picture" that it does not "seem that bad".

4.1.2   Social value of participating in the choir

Choir is a collective activity and data analysis revealed that the perceived benefits of choir participation as expressed by the choristers are largely of a social nature. As with the first theme in this chapter sub-themes have been identified to help organise the data and these include choir as a 'family' metaphor and camaraderie; integrating people; extrinsic value; a safe and reliable environment; more than 'just' music; socialising; and teamwork.

4.1.2.1 The 'family' metaphor and camaraderie

The members in the Camerata almost unanimously referred to the choir as an extension of their own families. The data for this sub-theme was saturated early on during data analysis and only a handful of comments are provided here to substantiate the findings. Participants regard the choir as a support structure which promotes camaraderie amongst the members.

- Choir as a 'family'

In their interviews, Shepard, Beukes, Nozipho and Qaqamba all referred to Camerata as their "big family". Shepard regards his fellow choristers as "brothers and sisters"; Beukes felt that there are "strong bonds" between the members; Nozipho insisted that the environment

is "comfortable and loving"; and Qaqamba experienced choir as "welcoming" and "non-judgmental". Ziggy mentioned that the "closeness" between the choristers makes the choir feel "like a family" especially because the choristers spend great deal together "outside of choir" activities. Several additional participants commented on the choir being a "family", as indicated in the following verbatim quotes:

> People join Camerata because this is where we get together as a family. We really grow close and we stand up for each other. We fight for one another and we fight with one another, just like a real family. I use the word 'family' because it is the only word that encompasses the feeling we get. (Breyten)

> As much as we disagree we still care about each other. That sense of family is never lost and we pass down this philosophy to new members. (Nkululeko)

> You like some [members] and you don't like others. The relationships between Camerata members are different and unusual. It is [just like] a family. (Fanie)

> Obviously I don't like everyone in the choir and there are some members I seriously dislike. But if I saw them in a mall, I would run to them and greet them because we are part of the same family. (Breyten)

> They call it a family and I'm not going to lie, at first I struggled to accept and feel [this] but the more time [I] spend with these people, the more I understand where they are coming from. (Jeremy)

Data analysis shows that some participants experience the 'family' metaphor as a negative aspect, because some choristers are not easily accepted and can be ostracised from the group:

> It's difficult and challenging to become part of this 'family'. There is a notion that you need to find your place in the choir through a hierarchy. But people within the Camerata stick to their groups and it excludes others. (Ilse)

> I think the Camerata family – to an extent – is very conservative. [Singers in the Camerata] are very liberal people and I have seen a few instances where people fell out of the choir because they felt like they were ostracised or misunderstood. (Azania)

> I also believe there are some people that can get left out because they don't see that the family bond that we have is an open bond. We can be very close with each other and this can sometimes be very intimidating to people outside of the group. (Alice)

The choir has a certain spirit, a family that works together. If you don't want to be part of the family and live up to the expectations of this family, then the singer is usually worked out. Not forced out, but excluded on their own accord because they work against the system. (Brillianto)

Jane was the only participant in the choir that shared strong feelings against the choir being her 'family'. Her belief is that she is an "individual" and is in the Camerata simply to "do [her] thing". Furthermore, she believes she is not a "herd animal" and will not "fight for this group of people" as it is not "her style".

- Choir promotes camaraderie

Data analysis revealed that participants believe there is strong camaraderie amongst the members in the choir. In his interview, Troy said that "if there is anything the choir has its camaraderie". He reflected that the sense of "community" and being "part of something greater than [himself]" is all a result of the camaraderie shared and created amongst the members. Alice mentioned the "great camaraderie" in the choir and Emma observed that her friends with whom she studies always question how she knows "so many people on campus". She ascribed this to the camaraderie she experiences "because of the choir". Gert noted that "camaraderie" is an important reason why he sings in the choir, a statement echoed by Friday in his interview. Jess mentioned that camaraderie is to be expected as "a big emphasis is placed on it in the choir" and that it is "encouraged" amongst the members. She underlined that the "friendships and trust" amongst the members is a direct consequence of the "huge camaraderie" within the choir. Nancy elaborated that, apart from the music, it is "camaraderie and companionship" that inspire her to continue with choir and Jan endorsed that the "strength of the camaraderie in the choir" is a direct result of "the leadership".

4.1.2.2 Integrating people

Vignette 5

As they sit down for dinner at the choir camp, there is a visible divide between the black and white students. The black students eat together while the white students group together at separate tables. Although the choir is far from the political unrest which is unfolding at the main university campus, there is still tension in the air. One white student walks into the dinner hall and sees this division. Jokingly, he curses the situation so that he is heard by all. There is a deafening silence before rapturous laughter. He joins the table of black students for dinner, and many follow suit. The air has immediately been lifted.

Cultural diversity within the choir was discussed at length during the interviews and focus groups. During the observation period, the University of Pretoria found itself in a precarious position with students protesting against the fee structure of the university as well as the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. This caused a great deal of tension between the different cultural and racial groups at the university and as depicted in Vignette 5, the choir was also affected. "Fees Must Fall" and "Afrikaans Must Fall" are the two campaigns that are mentioned numerous times within the interviews. It is imperative to this research that this politically inspired situation on campus at the time of data collection is mentioned as it is reflected in the responses of the participants. Data analysis led to several sub-themes being identified. These sub-themes include that choristers acknowledge the choir as a diverse environment; see the choir as a tool to establish communication across cultures; regard the choir as a platform for social integration; and lastly that they realise the barriers existing between different cultural groups within the choir.

- Choir as a diverse environment

Data analysis revealed that the participants acknowledge that the choir is a diverse environment, including students from all socio-economic backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, races, languages, and study fields.

> Camerata is so diverse. We have so many cultures in the choir and people of different backgrounds, colours, religions, and beliefs. (Shepard)

> I have learnt to interact with all sorts of people from different walks of life, whether it be a different cultural background or language, a different sexual orientation or just people that are completely different. (Alice)

> I have met the most amazing people from different cultures, study fields, backgrounds and nationalities. We also have different social values and speak several different languages. (Zack)

> The choir is inclusive of all languages, all races and all cultural groups. There are people from completely different backgrounds and people who are almost on the opposite side of the spectrum. People from very conservative backgrounds and others who are more liberal. (Azania)

John Fleck, Nozipho, Emma, Blommie, Katya, Jess and Ricardo all refer to Camerata as a "diverse" environment, made up with people that are "different" from themselves in several ways.

In separate interviews, four Afrikaans students mentioned that this diverse environment is something that they were unaccustomed to before joining Camerata.

> Schools are determined by the area that you live in and if you live in an area where there is not much diversity, then your schools will not be so diverse. (Shepard)

> Not all students are from schools and backgrounds that are mixed in cultures. Initially it is for everyone a different experience, largely dependent on which school they come from. (Brillianto)

> Being exposed and working with people that are culturally different was an adaption for me in the beginning. Because at school we did not have this [diversity] and [I] would not normally go and meet people of a different culture on campus. (Catherine)

> Varsity is different to what [I] experienced at school. It is a different world to what I am use to with many new challenges. (Hardus)

Three participants commented on the 'forced' environment that they found themselves in when attending Camerata activities:

> Unlike in our studies, in Camerata we are forced, in a good way, to interact with people that are different from ourselves. (Blommie)

> You are forced to be in a space with people of different cultures, whether you like it or not. You have to work together and rely on each other for a good outcome. (Nancy)

> Choir forces us to see the good in someone else and can actually cement relationships between people that are not like ourselves. (Nataniel)

Participants mentioned that the diversity they experience within the Camerata, which allows them to interact with people that are different to themselves, is outside of the norm. Catherine's view was that being "exposed to different cultures" in the Camerata is "unlike the hostel environment which is mainly Afrikaans". She added that her hostel friends are always "curious to understand" how she knows so many "people of different cultural backgrounds". Similarly, Emma mentioned that her study peers often comment on "how many diverse people she knows", prompting her response to them as "simply because of choir". George responded that the "people [I] meet [at choir] are people that I don't meet in my degree" and Nkululeko noted that choir "provides the opportunity to get to know and mix with people that are different", adding that this is not the case in an "academic setting". Blommie shared his belief that people in his study field "tend to keep to themselves" and explained that he feels

"more comfortable" interacting with people in choir than in class. Andy professed that, unlike in his academic classes; the choir creates an environment where people "from different cultures" can meet, while Ella suggested that she learns more about people's diversity at choir "than [she] would learn in class". Ricardo shared his discovery that the friends he studies with "are a lot similar" to himself while those in the choir are "completely different". Zack said that he "wanted to meet people" who come from "different worlds" and knew that "Camerata [would] introduce" him to such people.

Interview and focus group data provide evidence that participants see Camerata as a unique environment which allows the singers to interact within a multicultural setting. Some choristers indicated that their involvement with such a diverse group of people would be unlikely if they did not sing in Camerata.

> These are people that I would not normally have spoken to if I had walked passed them on campus or at the shops. But because I have been concentrated in this group, I get to know people on a different level, people that I would not necessarily have gotten to know before this. (Azania)

From Aria's response, it emanated that she has met "wonderful people in Camerata" whom are different to her and that she "would not have ordinarily met" them had it not been "for the Camerata". Blommie mentioned that in choir he has made "more friends with people from other cultural groups" and that this would not be so "if [he] did not sing in Camerata". Lara offered that "she would never have interacted with so many people that are different" and built "friendships that are unique" if it had "not been for the choir". Andy explained that choir participation allowed her to "interact" and "build friendships" across "cultural lines" and that "this would not have been the case if it was not for choir". Alice predicted that,if it was not for the Camerata, she most probably would not have met so many different people in her lifetime, while Nancy said that she never interacted with such a "diverse group of people prior to joining Camerata".

- Choir as a tool for cross-cultural communication

Participants provided evidence in their interviews that meaningful conversations and communication are taking place between Camerata members that are of different cultural backgrounds and opinions. Choristers shared their belief that the diverse repertoire performed by the choir allows them to learn and engage in cultures other than their own.

> Music is a universal language, so whether you are a Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans or English student, music speaks to people the same way, regardless of the cultural

background you come from. I believe that we learn from different cultural backgrounds by singing different kinds of music, be it African, Afrikaans or Latin. (Ziggy)

Every song that we sing, regardless of the numerous languages, has a meaning and through this we learn a little bit about that culture through the music. We realise that it is not only our own culture or language that is important, but that there is so much more to take into consideration. (Katya)

We sing a lot of songs in different languages and from different cultures. [As a result] we then learn a little bit more from [these] different cultures and what values they have. We learn to respect and understand different cultures which is very important. (Alice)

The fact that we do multicultural music, such as Afrikaans, English, Zulu and Xhosa songs, gives us insight into each other's cultures. I, for example, learn traditional dances and see a part of their culture through the music and would not have necessarily done so if it was not for the Camerata. (Andrew)

When we perform music from a cultural group [that is represented] in the choir, then we learn from those choristers as they explain the cultural background of the music, the pronunciations and the musical nuance. So we are given an understanding from them and we learn from them. (Jasmine)

Additionally, participants indicated that meaningful conversations between diverse groups of singers take place outside of the rehearsal space. Such conversations are usually not associated with the music and open up communication channels on a different level. Several participants mention the on-going protests as examples of communication:

I believe that [the protests] have had an effect on the choir because there are so many different people in the choir. We are all in one space and have our own opinions. We are basically 'forced' to speak about it to each other and learn from each other. I believe that, if a lot of people had not been in Tuks Camerata, that they would not understand why people are protesting. (Azania)

Once [the protest action] was addressed in the choir there was a bit of peace. It turned out to be such a positive thing and the singers actually spoke about promoting the choir's diversity to the world. (John Fleck)

I had such a beautiful experience on the choir camp when I walked around and saw how groups of people from different cultures were chatting about [the protests], debating it, but not fighting because there is no animosity [between choir members]. They were chatting about the way forward and future possibilities for South Africans and this was beautiful to see. Me as an Afrikaans white male, an Afrikaans coloured

girl and a black Xhosa girl were sitting at a table having dinner, chatting and debating [the protests] and although we had three completely opposing opinions, we respected each other's opinions and views and most importantly, we could speak about this. (Breyten)

There is no such thing, as we can't talk about black people or white people. We have open discussions and we learn from each other's differences. There is no racial [issue in the choir] and we make jokes about each other's cultures but always in good faith. We are not scared to talk about the things that make us unique and different from one another. (Alice B)

Koos suggested that the Camerata provides a "platform where [choristers of all backgrounds] can communicate" and Merida feels that the "open discussions on diversity" is a result of the "leadership of the choir".

In contrast to the evidence provided in the above verbatim quotes, two participants commented that their experiences regarding the protests on campus were not as openly discussed within the choir context. Jeremy said that, due to the protests, the choir went through a "difficult time" as choristers did not "really want to discuss [the protests] because of their different perspectives". Troy commented that "everybody has their own opinions" with regard to the protests, but expanded that choristers "did not like talking to each other, especially about such sensitive issues".

- Choir as a platform for social integration

In the interviews, participants mentioned that the Camerata is a place where integration between the different cultures takes place. Several students gave testament to how pivotal the diversity in Camerata has been regarding their way of thinking:

I grew up with a specific background and in a certain way. I have certain social norms and beliefs and belong to a specific community. And although in my faculty and hostel I was in an environment that I was accustomed too, the choir pushed me into a diverse environment, one which was different and to which I had to adapt. Just being exposed to this diversity made me change a great deal in how I think and approach things, and it made my feelings regarding certain cultures, different. (Brillianto)

People generalise a great deal and have an idea about a certain cultural group and then you come to choir and you meet people of different cultural groups and it is a contradiction to what you have been exposed too. I have learnt to accept people and I learn a great deal about other cultures and the people themselves. (Elani)

One of the things that is most important to me is that you get placed into a choir next to people that you might not have worked with before. People that did not grow up in the same situation as yourself, nor do you speak the same language. No matter how open you are to accept new ideas and beliefs from different cultures, you will not really absorb this if you are not confronted with it in such a small space. Later on you learn that someone that is so different to yourself, that you would not have ordinarily trusted, now becomes someone that you are dependent on. (Fanie)

I have learnt to just love people and that you can't judge them because you do not agree to what they believe or think about life. I want to know more about people, their cultures and beliefs. (John Fleck)

Camerata provides the opportunity to get to know the choristers outside of the choir and by getting to know each other, we do not generalise that all people and cultures are the same. We take away stigma that might be created in our country about certain races and cultures. (Nkululeko)

It is a place where [different] cultures get to know each other, especially for people who do not necessarily move outside of their own cultural circles. (Elizabeth)

Jess shared her view that Camerata teaches her "to interact with different people", especially those "outside of [her] cultural, and language group". Jan mentioned that choir has taught him to "respect other cultural [groups], their backgrounds and traditions" adding that it is important "not to think one culture is right or better than the other". Ricardo noted that the choir environment is "so different that [we] learn more about other people even if [we] don't want to". He compared the choir to his studies saying that the latter is "one-dimensional" because he only gets to interact in his classes with people "that are the same" as himself. In contrast, he learnt a great deal from the choir because people are "completely different" in their "beliefs, race, culture and language" and this for him is truly "powerful" as it "crosses all boundaries". Tiger underlined that choir has taught him that, regardless of one's background, "people are people", and Ana mentioned that choir has taught her, a white Afrikaans chorister, to really get to know "the black students" in the choir. She attested that if it were not for the Camerata she would "definitely not have had the opportunity to" interact and communicate with black people.

In the interviews, participants mentioned how diverse their friendships are as a result of their membership in the Camerata:

There is a variety of different cultural groups within my friendship circle. English, Afrikaans, Shona and Xhosa speaking. (Ziggy)

> I have an Afrikaans cohort and they do not really see me as a Tshwana speaker, or 'black enough', and I have a group of friends that I sang with in school that are now in the Camerata. There is a great deal of cultural difference between myself and these groups. I must say that I would not be the person I am today if it was not for the amount of people I have met through choral singing. (Fred)

> I have met the most amazing people from different cultures, backgrounds and nationalities and the choir somehow has a way to unify each one of those and looks past race or gender. It has a way to help us have a love for other people whom you would not think you could have a love for or know that you have a love for. (Zack)

> Most of the people that I socialise with in the choir are not from my background and not from my culture. (Nozipho)

During the interviews, choristers mentioned that the proximity of people within the choir, whether it is the people they are placed next to in choir formation, or voice groups that are specifically chosen due to the nature of the repertoire, plays a role in integrating the choristers.

> We tend to get to know the people around us better. These are friends from different cultural groups and languages. (Blommie)

> You get to make better friends with the people that sit next to you and [as a result] you get to know people from all different cultures. (Belle)

Catherine shared her thoughts regarding the people "sitting next to [her]" in the Camerata which are the people she gets to "know better", regardless of the fact that their "background [or culture] is not the same as [hers]". Fanie guessed that choristers become "dependant on those that are so close to [us]" as a result of the "choir formation" that is set up by the conductor. He added that there is a "ninety percent possibility" that the people sitting next to each other in choir formation are from "completely different backgrounds". Nataniel mentioned that this close proximity can "cement relations between people that might [have been] enemies". He insisted that he sees the "good in someone else" referring to "those people that are placed right next to [him]" in the choir. Brillianto informed the interviewer that each chorister has a "primary group of friends" within the choir, but that his "extended friendship group" is largely factored by those he "stands next to in the choir".

Data analysis reveals the belief of many participants that integration within the choir is linked to the music. Only a few comments are listed below as example of the extensive evidence provided through interview data.

Music has the ability to cross over borders, racial and cultural, and [this] is really something so unique to Camerata. It's amazing how music has the power to join us together. (M2)

Singing is the one thing that unites people. It's the one thing where there is actually no discrimination between [you and] your fellow choristers. (John Fleck)

We all have a love for the same music and I believe that [it] bridges the gap between the cultural difference[s] within the choir. (Zack)

We are all brought [together] by the same love of music and we all come from different places. The music doesn't choose between black and white [singers] because the love for [the] music is just there. (Nozipho)

There is something that music does that brings all people together. It is the one thing that unifies each and every one of us. (Azania)

Choir and music [in general] has the power to connect people across their differences. We don't always see the differences in other people because we see everyone as choir people. It's a unifying environment. (Emma)

Regardless of our differences, language, cultural or race, we remain a family bound together through music. (Gert)

There is no colour in music and being part of it helps to create a unity amongst the singers that crosses all boundaries. (Henry)

Music is universal. It is not confined to a certain language or culture. We become friends through music regardless of our cultural groups. (Frikkie)

Troy expressed his view that the "beauty of choral music is [that it] transcends a lot of barriers to bring people together", and Nkululeko added that in a multicultural choir such as Camerata, music is "all that matters" because people will find "their own revelations in the music they are singing".

Participants mentioned that more collaboration and intervention was needed for integration to take place fully within the Camerata, and that there is still a degree of segregation and exclusivity within certain groups. Troy suggested that the integration between members of the Camerata is "not perfect" and commented that "people have their own cliques and enclaves". He believes that this "causes tension" as some do not want to "integrate beyond the formal choir space". However, he added that the "majority is connected" beyond this space and that it is "a working progress". Jeremy contended that cultural integration is one of

the "largest challenges" and that the inclusion of a certain cultural group "will always lead to the exclusion of another". On the other hand, he agreed that Camerata "practices what they preach" as they do a great deal to "include [especially] the minority groups". Fred commented that there are "sub cultures within the choir" simply because "every single group will identify with a group similar to themselves", but added that, collectively, these groups form a strong and "unified bond" as a result of the choir and that these cultures are "able to unite" because of this "bond". Nozipho stressed that there is still a "long way to go" in integrating the choristers but argued that the choir does "try to integrate the cultures". In contradiction, she later suggested in the same focus group discussion that it is "actually funny" that "most of the people [she] socialises with" are indeed "not from [her own] background or culture". Blommie shared his discovery that groups are segregated when "members are new in the choir" as people "tend to be drawn to their own cultural groups". He has been in the choir for five years and added that, by him being in the choir, he has made "more friends with people from other cultural groups". Some participants tried to justify the segregation of groups, stating that it is understandable and natural:

> I feel there is still segregation between the different cultural groups within our choir. It is probably because the people mix with those they understand better. I chat to people from different cultures and its great but I feel that they still keep more to themselves and we do the same. (Betsie)

> There is segregation but it is not forced and it's not angry. People have a nature about them so they gravitate towards people that are the same as themselves and have shared the same experiences. (Elizabeth)

> I think people gravitate towards those they have more common ground with. I personally mix with a lot of different people but I see that people tend to stay with their own cultures than mix with other groups. (Alice)

In the focus group consisting of only Committee members, Jan, Nancy and Ella all agreed that integration is taking place but at a "slow pace". Jan expanded that it is evident that there are "divided groups" in the choir, stating that during rehearsal breaks it is seldom that the "whites and blacks" or even "Afrikaans and English [choristers] mingle equally". In his view, integration "happens on tours and camps when [the choristers] spend a great deal of time together" but that it is "not the norm". Nancy highlighted that this integration is slow because the choir is not "equally balanced" in terms of different cultures. According to her, the choir contains a "couple of people that mix with everyone". Ella's opinion was that some choristers are "bothered that the [choir] does not integrate more" but that others "are fine with the

[status quo]". She insisted that the reason for this situation is that everyone in the choir is "different" and that the choristers are "not forced to be the same".

Ashley and John Tucker were part of a focus group comprising black students from a traditional South African culture. Ashley endorsed that "friendships are based on race" stating that "most of the black people hang out together". Her opinion was that this segregation is "natural" and she does not "see it as a problem". John Tucker disagreed with Ashley, as illustrated in the following quote:

> I was brought up in a neighbourhood where race wasn't really a factor. [Ashley] said it comes naturally to affiliate yourself with people of colour but it is not really a factor. I have made friends with Afrikaans, English and Zulu people when I came to [Camerata]. I do not chill with black, white or Indian people because I don't see race. Camerata is integrated. Not that much, but it is.

- Cultural barriers within the choir

Camerata members openly discussed barriers within the choir that make it difficult for integration and unity between choristers to take place. I have added this as a subordinate theme on its own as I believe that there is great value in knowing what these barriers might be. The singers implicitly expressed two notions; firstly language as a barrier, and secondly the different racial groups. Data analysis revealed that participants see language as a significant barrier in the choir.

> I think language is a barrier for many in the choir. If there is a group of Afrikaans speakers it is uncomfortable for this group to switch to English for the sake of others. There is a lack of integration, more because of the language [than any other factor]. I make better friends with people that speak my own language, namely Afrikaans. (Beukes)

Brillianto admitted that "language is a rather big obstacle" for him and as a result he befriends those in the choir that are "mainly Afrikaans". Similarly, Catherine's opinion was that her group of friends are mainly Afrikaans – her mother tongue – because "language is a huge barrier" for her. Elsa noticed groups forming in the choir as a result of the different languages spoken by choristers. She admitted that she has friends that speak other languages but enjoys the "company of the Afrikaans people more" simply because it is "easier" for her. Ariel commented that she "only speaks Afrikaans" – her mother tongue – as it is "difficult for [her] to speak English the entire time". Aurora agreed that the "language barrier is big in the choir", Elizabeth commented that people mingle with their own "language

groups" and Breyten noted that there are "cliques that form" due to the languages spoken by the choristers.

The University of Pretoria Camerata encourages all singers to speak English during choir activities, since English is taught at all schools and is the common denominator from a language perspective in South Africa. During the interviews, some participants mentioned that this arrangement causes a divide between the different language groups in the choir.

> The Camerata encourages speaking only in English to one another so that there is never this language barrier. At times people forget that they need to speak English and this creates a divide. (May)

> I would not go up to a huge Afrikaans group because although I would understand what they are saying, I would not necessarily be able to participate. (Jess)

> You need to have a common language, but at the end of the day, even though it is advantageous, there are many bad points. We all now adopt an English culture, forgetting about the others. We supress our own cultures in order to create a unity amongst the choristers. (Fanie)

Aria is an English speaking chorister and noticed that the "Afrikaans people find it a bit difficult" to integrate because of the language barrier. She is certain that the English speakers are "more inclined to speak to other cultures" as they do not have a barrier to overcome. Jeremy is a Sotho speaker and the only black student to comment on language as a dividing factor between the singers. He simply agreed that his group of friends are the people he "shares a language with".

The data analysis shows that some participants feel there is a racial divide within the choir, while some argue that it is not a noteworthy problem.

> During our rehearsal breaks, there is still a lot of segregation between the racial groups. The Afrikaans people make a group and the blacks make their own groups. (Belle)

> There are racial clicks in the choir. You would see a group of black girls or Afrikaans students that get close and stuff but I don't think there is anything wrong with it because there is no exclusivity coupled to it. (Breyten)

> Most of the black people hang out together, as do the white people, and this is almost natural. I don't see this as a problem. (Ashley)

> The people we come close with are generally people that share the same understanding. It is different for a black family as to an Afrikaans family. This is human nature. (Nkululeko)

Fanie cautioned that, when the choir is on campus, the division between the racial groups is evident, as "Afrikaans students, white students and Sotho students" will group separately from one another. Qaqamba mentioned choristers from conservative backgrounds in Camerata which prevent them from "opening and accepting other people's race", while Wilson cautioned that, when his group of black friends "hang out with the white people", it is often difficult "to chill with them" because they speak Afrikaans. John Tucker voiced his opinion that some people leave Camerata due to "racial disputes", and Azania mentioned that "Afrikaans" students – who represent "the majority cultural group" within the choir – display "ignorance" regarding racial and cultural identities of choristers from different cultures. Nozipho claimed that her friends outside of the choir notice and comment on Camerata being "such a white choir with so many white people", wondering why she – as a black singer – joined. Azania disputed that this is the very reason why she "socialises with people of [her] own race, [namely] black people" because they are the "minority in the choir and feel the need to embrace [themselves]".

Two participants referred to the "Afrikaans Must Fall" protest at the University which resulted in tensions mounting between the racial groups within the choir at rehearsals:

> One can't ignore that Camerata was previously an Afrikaans choir and inviting racial groups to enter the choir is always difficult because people need to adapt. It needs to be understood that at times heads will butt and people will be unhappy. The "Afrikaans Must Fall" protest has a huge influence between the different racial groups within the Camerata. (M2)

> You could definitely pick up some tension the day after the protest [on campus] between black and white people in the choir. (John Fleck)

4.1.2.3 Extrinsic value

Data analysis revealed that participants are motivated by extrinsic factors to join and remain members of the Camerata. The most significant finding from the data was the extensive touring that the choir undertakes, both nationally and abroad. Lara said that the "world is opened up" to [her] and fellow choristers" because the choir provides opportunities for them to "see places [they] have never seen before". She mentioned the upcoming tour to Nelspruit when the choir was going to perform at "Innibos Music Festival" as well as the tour to Spain in 2017. Elani commented on the planned tour to Spain, labelling it as an "opportunity that

her friends [outside of the choir] do not get to experience". Amare, Tiger and Ariel all mentioned that the choir tours are significant motivating factors for them when choosing to become members of the Camerata.

Choristers referred to the value that these tours add to their life experiences. Breyten accentuated the importance of the tour he experienced in 2014 to Latvia, Sweden and Finland as a chorister in the Camerata which was his first international trip and "the most amazing experience of [his] life". M2 agreed that experiencing the "national and international tours" play a substantial role in her life and Aria mentioned that she "would not have seen the things [she] had already seen" if it was not for her participation in the choir. Catherine supported the view that the touring undertaken by the choir is "something you can't get anywhere else" and labels it as "gaining a lifelong experience". Melissa stressed that by traveling abroad the "picture gets bigger" and it can assist her in deciding what she "wants to do with [her] life one day". May commented that these tours offer her and others "educational experiences" and Jess said that it expands her "horizons". Tango mentioned touring as a positive endeavour offered by the Camerata where they get to meet new people and experience new things.

Wilson was the only participant who referred to the negative aspect of extrinsic motivation for choristers to sing in Camerata. He recalled that choristers "just leave [the choir] because they came back from a nice tour overseas" and that these choristers simply "got what they came for". He concluded that these choristers join the choir for the wrong reasons and do not have the "music within them".

4.1.2.4 A safe and reliable environment

One of the findings was the choristers' perceptions of Camerata providing a safe and reliable space for them to freely interact and participate in choir activities. Several participants juxtaposed the uneasy situation on campus with all the protests to the calm and supportive Camerata environment.

> [Choir] is something concrete because, while everything [on campus] has been moved around, you know there will always be choir. I really feel that we all used choir to ground us because everything else is so uncertain. (Emma)

> I feel that when going to choir after experiencing all these protests is kind of a relief to see people from different backgrounds and how they get along with each other. I believe that most choristers feel better and lighter after practices with all of their fellow people. (Blommie)

For someone like me that has sung for a long time, Camerata has not only been about the singing. It is a safe place for me and for us all. (Koos)

Breyten said that if students built up "animosity" due to the protests on campus, they would always know that "choir is a safe space" where that sort of "rubbish" was not welcome. Zack mentioned that the protests took away from his "study time" due to classes being cancelled but loved the fact that Camerata "still made a plan" and continued as normal.

In his interview, Nkululeko stated that choir is a space where he can "vent or blow off steam" as he shares many "commonalities between the most unlikely people in the choir". Aria commented that choir is a place where people care and comfort one another and Nozipho referred to this space as "comfortable" because it is filled with "love and happiness". She perceived as an environment where people are willing to help each other. Emma asserted that choir reminds her of how "blessed [she] is" and that choristers all share their "challenging life experiences" with each other. One participant shared the view that the choir is accepting of all students, regardless of their individual preferences or identities:

> The choir accepts everyone for who they are. We all accept the gay guys in the choir and it doesn't matter if you are fat or thin or if you are different. It's ok to be who you are because the choir is a safe place. A place where we all know that we can simply be. (Alice)

4.1.2.5 More than 'just' music

Participants in the Camerata acknowledged that membership in the choir is more than about the music alone.

> When you are a member of the Camerata it's not just about learning your music and then you come and sing. You are part of something bigger. You help organise concerts, you market the choir, and you are responsible to the group. You need to become a part of the name 'Camerata' and cannot just be a singer. (Breyten)

> I thought it would just be about the singing, but [Camerata] is so much more than that, it has a purpose. We make a difference and we change the lives of those that hear us perform. It creates a feeling of happiness and absolute joy and I feel like nothing in the world can get me down. (Zack)

> I have seen how choristers have cried in performances. There are moments in the music that drives [us] to tears and goose-bumps and that is when [we] realise that there is something greater than humanity going on. These are supernatural aspects that we experience and it awakens something in [us] and fulfils a much needed purpose. (Brillianto)

Two participants recall experiences that meant a great deal to them:

> When we perform it is as if we are one and we had this in Riga and it was amazing. It is not a social or musical thing, it's simply indescribable. It is somewhat spiritual and we are all connected in a different way. (Ella)

> In Stockholm when we sang *Entreat me not to leave you* in the cathedral, I was suddenly moved to tears and experienced a moment of euphoria. I am not one that cries but I simply cannot understand where that beauty came from. (Ariel)

Betsie described choir as "more than just about music" and feels she is "part of something [that is] bigger than [herself]". May contributed by saying that the Camerata reminds her of life being "better and more beautiful", especially during the difficult times, and that it allows her to break away from her studies. Azania did not sing in a choir during the first year of her studies. Her perspective was that "something was missing from [her] life" and when she joined the Camerata she "gained it back again". Blommie said that choir is a "true blessing" and that it means so much to him that, if it were not for the Camerata, he would have "stopped studying in [his] first year". Troy was convinced that Camerata is so powerful that it has "changed him as a person for the better" and Fred added that he would not be "the person [he] is today" if it was not for the Camerata.

4.1.2.6 Socialising

Data analysis provided evidence that participants view the "social aspect" – which is a by-product of singing in Camerata – as an integral benefit.

> Through choir I made a lot of friends and we chat all the time and organise socials that are not choir related. (Blommie)

> I always enjoy spending time with the Camerata members, whether it is going to Spur for a birthday dinner, getting an ice-cream before choir, or just getting some Steers. I often spend time in the choir room before rehearsals getting to know people. (Zack)

> Spending time with the Camerata people is just so awesome. We socialise quite often, especially after performances when we go out for a coffee. (Nozipho)

> Camerata is not just a musical experience but a social experience. We really have a lot of fun and [these socials] really bring us together. (Alice)

In his interview, one participant offered an example of why the social aspect of choir is so important to choristers:

> Last week the choir went to Livingston's [a local student pub] after the performances and this gave us the opportunity to get to know each other socially and not just professionally. We try to go as in depth as possible which each other to cement friendships. (Breyten)

In her interview, Catherine commented that members often go out and "socialise big" after performances so that they may get to discuss "deeper things" and get to know each other "better". Ziggy said that these "get togethers outside of choir times" illustrate how close the choristers are to one another. Nkululeko referred to the choir room as "a hub for socialising" and a place where "to meet other choristers", allowing them to "enjoy each other's company". Brillianto is convinced that it is the "social events" that allow choristers the opportunity to "see each other in a different light".

In the interviews, participants mentioned the importance and impact of these social activities on their personal lives.

> [We] don't realise what [our] lives would be without [the Camerata] because we see each other so often. If [the choir] is taken away, [we] would realise that [we] are not just missing the singing of the notes, but the company and the feeling and energy it gives [us]. (Nancy)

> I have been singing my entire life and for me it has a great deal to do with the people in the choir. The reason why I have been singing so long is because I have had some of the best times in my life in this choir, all thanks to my friends. (John)

> When we return from a holiday, we realise that we missed the music a little bit, but actually it is the people and the friendships that we have missed the most. (Henry)

Fanie stressed that choristers don't sacrifice their social lives at all because the "friends you make here in choir are the same people you will have a party with on a Friday night". He stated that this is the main reason why he stays in the Camerata and commented that his friends that left the choir previously are now all in a "depressive state" as they are no longer part of the "social circle" of the Camerata. Jane confirmed that "without a doubt, the social aspect of the choir is for [her] very important" and Johnny substantiated that "socialising with people" in the Camerata is important to him.

4.1.3 Musical value

Two sub-themes resulted from the analysed data with regard to the value of music as perceived by the members in the Camerata. Firstly, choristers use the metaphor of being

"message bearers" when communicating to the audience through their performances. This is followed by the intrinsic value experienced by choristers while collaboratively making music.

4.1.3.1 'Message bearers': Communication through music

In the interviews, participants mentioned the act of performing as both a benefit to themselves as well as a duty towards the audience. Aria referred to her enjoyment of singing because the music "takes [her] on an emotional journey" and M2 insisted she looks forward to the performances because it "holds so much happiness and joy" for her. Troy summarised that he is reminded of the "beauty in the world" when the choir has a performance, while for Aurora, choir singing is "about the performances".

Additionally, participants mentioned the importance of 'reaching' the audience by providing a 'message' during the performances. In the interviews, some choristers said that it is the audience that inspires and motivates them to give their best. The following quotes provide support for this sub-theme:

> Everything is positive and exciting during a performance. The reaction on the faces of the audience members is what inspires me the whole time. (John Fleck)

> Knowing that [we] bring joy to the audience is always a motivation to work harder and give an even better concert the next time. (M2)

> I am keen to share the gift of song with the audience because someone out there can be touched by the songs we are singing. That means a lot to me. (Ziggy)

> To stand in front of an audience and give back all that [we] have put in during the practices, and to see the reaction of the audience is one of the best feelings I have ever experienced. (Blommie)

> When [we] touch somebody, or make them smile from our performances, that is the greatest feeling. (Qaqamba)

> It makes my heart so warm, so happy and warm, to see how the music moves and means so much to those that we sing for. (Aurora)

For some members in the choir, the message that is to be conveyed to the audience is paramount:

> [We] need to bear a message to the audience and during the performances, we experience a feeling of satisfaction and humility that [we] were an instrument that moved people. (Brillianto)

> I am an instrument of peace and responsible for sending a message to the audience and those around me. (Azania)

Friday expressed his view that choir music is more than just notes, explaining that it "has to do with the message that [we] put across to people" and later added that "music without meaning is just a bunch of notes on a page". Lowkey confirmed that the choir's duty is to "educate people" by "conveying a message" and to "make people feel something through the music".

Some participants remarked that they have the ability to change the lives of people for the better through the performances. In this regard, Aria explained that she wants to "communicate emotions" to the audience in the hope that she can "change their lives for the better". Zack shared his belief that the choir "really changes the lives of those who listen to [the choir] sing", while Andrew commented that "people who get to hear the music get something out of it". Nkululeko reflected that he sings in the Camerata while he is still able "to sing life into people" and Catherine offered her opinion that the "music touches the hearts and lives of others", saying this is her way of "helping others".

Some members of the Camerata expressed their view that, although the aesthetic beauty of a performance is important, there is always a higher calling and responsibility to communicate and share a message with the audience. In this regard, Zack mentioned that the choir has "a great purpose" as they have the "ability to make a difference through the music". He used the protests on campus as an example, sharing that the choir "needed to share a message" during such troubled times. Nkululeko echoed these sentiments of having a "purpose" because it is the responsibility of the choir to be the "voice of hope, love and compassion" to the audience. Azania mentioned that the "most important thing about being a human being" is our ability to "spread love" to others, a duty she connects to singing in the choir. Qaqamba offered that being members of the Camerata is important as it helps them "give back to society".

4.1.3.2   Intrinsic value
During the interviews, participants mentioned the intrinsic value of choir participation as a motivating factor for joining. This sub-theme is divided into four subordinate themes namely:

choir as a necessary activity; choir develops an appreciation of music; choir as a means to develop skills; and choir as an education connection.

- Choir as a necessary activity

Some of the students regard singing in a university choir as a logical step, while others reported that they cannot fathom a life without singing:

Some people chase storms and I chase choirs. I make it my aim to be part of a good quality choral ensemble and Camerata was such a choir on my bucket list. (M2)

All I really wanted from the Camerata was to continue with my love for music and I could not imagine a life without singing. (Alice)

When I came to university and a month went by, I realised that I could not live without choir as it is really something that I need. (John Fleck)

I saw Camerata as the next step. I have always been in a choir and I really wanted to join a choir of that level. (Emma)

I love to perform and I have sung all my life. I don't know what life [would be] without singing. (Catherine)

I have been singing my entire life and am now in my fourth year in this choir. (John)

I joined Camerata because of the music. (Wilson)

- Choir develops an appreciation of music

Several choristers mentioned that, as a result of singing in the choir, they now have a better understanding and a greater appreciation for classical music, especially in the choral genre. Fanie emphasised that, although he joined the choir for "the people", he finds that the music is now "growing on him" and that he is becoming more of a "choral snob" as his experience in the choir deepens. In his interview, Brillianto mentioned that his experience in the Camerata has resulted in him listening more to "choir and classical music" than his usual "dance and arm swinging" music. He further added that he has come to see choir singing as a "real art form" rather than "just a tradition". Alice explained that her "understanding of music" is far better and she feels like a "more rounded musician" thanks to the choir. Azania commented that she has been taken to "greater heights" in the way she "listens and experiences choral music", now seeing it as "three dimensional". Ilse and Emma B both shared their belief that the conductor's ability to marry the music with the text has expanded their comprehension and appreciation of choral music in general. Ilse stressed the fact that

the "music lives for [her] when the text is explained" as she "understands it more" and it "broadens her knowledge". Emma B explained that the song *Requiem,* which was performed by the choir, had a "profound and lasting effect" on her because the text and music was "explained". Zack endorsed that the Camerata has helped him "[develop] an even greater love for music" and explained that he "never thought [he] could feel this way about music".

- Choir as a means to develop skills

For a few participants, singing in the Camerata allows them to improve their singing technique and refine their skills as musicians. Nkululeko admitted that he struggles to "read music" and "understand the rhythms", but finds that "[he] aims to be the best [he] can" and will "get better" the more he tries. Zack said he joined Camerata to "develop [his] voice and gain more confidence in singing" and Blommie noted that Camerata has allowed him to "learn a great deal about the music, [his] voice and how to improve [his] singing technique". Lowkey is a new member in the choir and reported that he has already "learnt a great deal" about choir singing in the past few months. Being a member of the Camerata has "musically challenged" Azania, while the choir provided John Tucker with an opportunity to "learn music". Ilse expressed that she joined Camerata to seek a "higher musical experience" and Ella commented that people like herself sing in the choir to be "challenged" by "more difficult" repertoire.

- Choir as an educational connection

During the data collection period, Camerata had five students in the choir that studied music. Data analysis revealed that the cross-field connections between the choir members and their music degrees are of value. Jeremy, being one of the music students in the choir, plans on "going into choral conducting one day" and said that being a member of Camerata is "good for [his] career" as it is "great experience and exposure" for him within a music educational context. Similarly, M2 is "an aspiring conductor and choral singer" and shared her belief that her choir participation contributes "greatly to [her] music education". Ana added that she "learns a great deal about music", something which is vitally important to her because she "is a music student". Jasmine is not a music student, but added that singing in the Camerata "gave [her] the opportunity to do music at university".

4.2 Social capital as a by-product of participation within the University of Pretoria Camerata

In this section of data findings, the aim is to ascertain the possibility of social capital being generated amongst the choristers of the University of Pretoria Camerata. As outlined in

Chapter 3, the five proximal indicators of Putnam's theoretical framework (1995) serve as pre-existing codes or priori, which guided the coding process for this theme. The five themes emerging from the data according to Putnam's indicators are: voluntary participation; networks and connections; reciprocity; trust; and shared social norms and values. All these themes have been identified from the transcribed raw data, and verbatim quotes from the participants are provided to verify each theme. The flow diagram in Table 4 below outlines this main theme.

Table 4: Social capital as a by-product of choir participation and its themes/proximal indicators

SOCIAL CAPITAL
Themes/proximal indicators
• Voluntary participation
• Networks & connections
• Reciprocity
• Trust
o Personal trust
o Musical trust
• Social norms and values

4.2.1 Voluntary participation

Primarily, social capital involves the voluntary participation of members within a community or organisation. The findings of this study revealed that voluntary participation is one of the key characteristics of the Camerata choir. Due to the large numbers of students who are eager to become members of the choir, annual auditions are held in September and all full-time students studying at the University of Pretoria are eligible to apply. During interviews, some students alluded to their voluntary participation in the choir. Azania said that she is a member of the choir because she "loves to sing" and not because she "is forced" to be there. Henry commented that, although the rules of the Camerata are "rather strict", choristers sing because "they want to be there". These sentiments were echoed by Jone, who explained that "we are all here because we want to be here". Alice mentioned that she is in the Camerata because it contributes to her happiness and that the choristers would not join "if [they] did not enjoy it".

4.2.2 Networks and connections

Through social interactions, which largely take place outside of official choir events, choir participants form connections and networks with one another. This allows them to share resources and information, a core idea of social capital theory. During the numerous protest

actions which occurred during September and October of 2015, February 2016, and September 2016 until January 2017 at all universities in South Africa, safety regulations required that all student activities were discontinued on the University of Pretoria campus. Therefore several rehearsals and performances had to be rescheduled to other venues off campus. During interviews, participants explained that they could rely on fellow choristers who had motorcars to assist them with transportation, since walking to rehearsals or performance venues on campus was no longer possible:

> I pick up and drop off people on my route as it makes sense to do that. Most choristers use social media to chat and inquire whom needs lifts and then we sort it out amongst ourselves. (Brillianto)

> I found another member in the choir who stays about five minutes away from me and we take turns to drive, especially for performances so that we can share the burden. (Zack)

> [Due to the campus being closed down] people needed to make plans with lifts in order to get to the rehearsal venues. Three girls live close by to me, I gave them all a lift, and as a result, we are all good friends now. That 15-minute journey gave us the time to get to know each other. (Catherine)

Camerata comprises mainly students that do not study music, and during data collection, several of them expressed their need to be assisted by choristers that have music knowledge and skills. This highlights the importance of networking and collaboration regarding the sharing of expertise in music:

> We have people in the choir who help us with note bashing, and they are mainly music students. (Ziggy)

> I would ask the voice group leaders or anyone I know who can play piano or is good at reading music to help me study mine. (Aria)

> For me, I have no musical background. I can just see if the notes go up or down, so I needed a great deal of help. This was all way above my comprehension. One of the bass singers in the choir, an older singer, had more experience than me and whom I trusted not to laugh at me, helped me a great deal. Primarily, my help came from the choristers. (Brillianto)

> I help other people in the choir that struggle to learn their music. If they have a specific part of the music that they struggle with, I arrange a time, date, and work with them to help. (Blommie)

One participant specifically mentioned the importance of making connections with others in the choir:

> We meet people that open up doors for us. Later in life we might need these people. For example, we sing in choir with a medical student and later in our lives we might require his expertise. So doors and relationships are strengthened. Because we are a wide range of people, we might also find advice from someone that studies the same degree, so they can help us with our university path as well. (Andy)

The connections formed between the choristers extend beyond their time in the choir. Participants commented on the strength of these connections:

> We still share our lives with members that have left the choir and we remain close. (Breyten)

> This family stretches past the choir and when we leave that sense of family will still be there – in the choir and amongst the members that have already left. (Nkululeko)

> I stay in contact with members that are no longer in the choir. (Brillianto)

> I speak a lot to members that are no longer in the choir, I would say weekly. They are still friends and they are still a part of us. You can't leave behind the people that you have sung choir with. (Catherine)

During the observation period, I noted on several occasions that choir members would invite the whole choir to attend a social event. Most of these were coffee socials after a rehearsal or performance, and nearing the end of a term, choir friends would make plans to go on vacation together. A small group of choir friends planned an international trip to Thailand, which took place in October that year. One chorister explained the importance of networks on a social level:

> A few of us get together and go hiking in the holidays. (Aria)

The Camerata engages in forming networks and connections with schools, churches, charity organisations and departments within the University by presenting workshops and performances. Thus social capital is not only generated within the choir itself, but between organisations and institutions that are in some way connected or associated with the choir. Several participants said that they specifically joined the University of Pretoria due to being exposed to the Camerata choir:

It was at the CantaTuks Youth Choir Festival [which is annually hosted by the University of Pretoria Camerata] that I discovered the Camerata and then I just wanted to come to Tuks. Through experiencing the CantaTuks event, it was an immediate decision to come to Camerata. (Blommie)

I had the privilege of being in the audience last year and watched the Camerata perform and when they sang, it did something to me. That's why I joined. (Jane)

I have been following the Camerata since 2008 and was their hugest fan, watching all there concerts. I tried to see them whenever I could. (Breyten)

When I did see them for the first time, it was an amazing experience and they sang very well. I was really young, only in grade eight, but after that I started You Tubing them and according to what I heard, I really wanted to join the choir. (Jeremy)

I saw many videos on YouTube and thought this would be a cool thing to do. (Troy)

Several social groups form spontaneously within the choir that relate to the interests of certain individuals. During the choir camp, I observed a group running every morning as a means to keep up their fitness. Another social group is the movie club and on occasion, after rehearsal evenings, I observed as members left for the cinema. Two small music ensembles exist as a connection made between choristers, and these groups often play at weddings and in churches to earn an extra income. These networks and connections that form between choristers as a result of their participation within the choir is a strong indicator of the existence of social capital.

4.2.3   Reciprocity

Vignette 6

They attended the performance of the Camerata this past weekend. Both of them were visibly moved and filled with such pride that their alma mater was stilling going from strength to strength. Choir singing played a big role in their lives. They met in this choir and as a result have been married for more than 33 years. As students, money was always tight for them and touring overseas was a luxury. They are now in a position to give back to the choir, the place where they lived out some of their happiest student days. They hand over a cheque for R10 000-00 to the manager of the choir and ask that it be used to support students traveling abroad. They can only hope that other choristers will be encouraged to give back to the choir in the future.

Vignette 6 depicts the generosity of a couple that sang in the Camerata while students at the University of Pretoria many years ago. This couple is giving back to the choir, an institution that meant a great deal to them, in the hope that choristers will benefit and reciprocate such

behaviour in the future, although this cannot be expected. The couple donated R10 000-00 towards the Camerata's international tour, which is to take place in July 2017. This is only one example of several in which alumni of the University of Pretoria Camerata are willing to support the choir, financially or otherwise, as a gesture of thanks and goodwill to an institution that meant – and still means – a great deal to them, demonstrating the notion of reciprocity. This act of 'giving' without the expectation of a 'return' lies at the heart of social capital.

During the data collection period, I observed and documented the working relationships between the members of the choir committee. On several occasions, I witnessed this group of eight individuals as they assisted each other in completing their duties for the benefit of the choir. On one such occasion, the committee member in charge of printing and filing the sheet music for all the singers was assisted by the entire committee to complete the task as he was in the middle of writing tests. Committee members gave up their free time without any complaint and without the expectation that the favour would be returned, although it often was. The existence of reciprocity amongst the members is a strong indicator that social capital is being generated within the Camerata.

> Vignette 7
>
> *He is really struggling with the choreography of the traditional African song. It seems as if he does not have one rhythmical bone in his body... as if he has two 'left feet'. He is a music student and one of the voice group leaders in the choir. Throughout the year, he assists all choristers in studying the choir's repertoire, both during choir rehearsals and in his private time. He plays the piano and has an exceptional ability to sight-read fluently – indeed an asset to the choir. He can sing this African song with ease, but the correct movements seem to elude him. He is politely pulled aside by one of the African guys in the choir – almost nobody noticed. The two male choristers have a private session at the back of the auditorium while the rest of the choir continues to learn the song together. They are both smiling, and it appears as if he is making progress.*

Vignette 7 is based on an observation I made during the data collection period and illustrates the dynamics within a multicultural choir. The chorister in question is a white Afrikaans speaking music student. Although he has excellent music performance skills as well as a high level of music knowledge, he has difficulty to coordinate body movements while singing. He is passionate about assisting choristers throughout the year with the studying of the music for the overall benefit of the choir. At this particular rehearsal, he was unusually challenged and failed to cope with the task. A Zulu speaking chorister, to whom the moves of the song came naturally, assisted him in learning the traditional dance. On numerous

previous occasions, this Zulu chorister was assisted by the Afrikaans music student as the latter was the leader of the specific voice group. A possible interpretation of this observation is that neither of these individuals expected help from the other, but both realise the potential benefit of this collaboration as it would lead to a better overall performance of the whole choir. These students are able to assist each other (reciprocate) with aspects of the music that might be more comfortable to them by sharing their knowledge. More importantly, because of their differences (cultural, language, race) as a result of their participation in the choir they are able to bridge the divide between themselves and work together for a common cause. This is a form of bridging social capital and is imperative in a country like South Africa.

Every paid performance, be it a concert on campus or a corporate event, is mutually beneficial to all the singers as the revenue assists in paying for Camerata performance tours. In 2016, the choir performed at several such events to raise money for the choir travelling to Spain in 2017. Choristers that do not sing in 2017 will not benefit from this income. It is, however, very likely that they would have been recipients of this type of benefit from a similar situation in previous years.

In his interview, Henry commented that the Camerata provides an environment where people can trust each other and that "this trust is reciprocated". Several participants shared their belief that they can rely on support being reciprocated from other choristers:

> There is love and passion and it's like I can you help me or can I help you with that. It's a very comfortable environment. (Nozipho)

> I feel that everyone relies and depends on everyone and we never want to disappoint each other. We will always be there for each other. (Koos)

> A lot of times people give up their time for Camerata because they love the choir and want to thank Camerata. We stand up for each other, and we fight for each other. [We] might not like everyone in the choir, but [we] will always look out for [each other]. (Breyten)

> When new members struggle with the music they are helped and reminded of the purpose by older members and they are grateful for this servitude and support. (Nkululeko)

The findings illustrate a wealth of examples that show that reciprocation between members of the Camerata, as well as between the Camerata and the greater community, is being generated – another important indicator of the existence of social capital.

4.2.4 Trust

Regarding the theme of trust, two sub-themes emerged from the data namely trust on a personal level and trust regarding the music-making element within choral singing.

- Personal trust

The findings indicate that the personal trust experienced between the members of the Camerata is both varied and multi-layered. A few choristers acknowledged that they trust members in the Camerata unequivocally:

> For some reason that I do not know, I trust the people in the Camerata. (Lowkey)
> I feel that you can always trust choir people. People that are committed to something so beautiful can't be bad. (Johnny)

> There is so much trust. I would trust anyone of these people with a great deal of things. It is apparent also on a social level. I feel I can trust everyone. (Shepard)

> I think there is a big sense of trust in the Camerata to a point that you can leave your file, water bottle, handbag and cellphone in the [rehearsal room] and you know it will be safe. There is that trust that we believe no one in the choir will steal from us and will always return a pen that they might have borrowed. (May)

May added that personal belongings are only safe if "nobody strange" walks into the rehearsal room, implying that she does not trust people that are not members of the Camerata. Fred shared the same belief namely that he can trust the members of Camerata with his belongings.

For the majority of choristers, trust between the members is relative. Most of those interviewed acknowledged that there is some level of trust between all choir members, but advocated that trust is stronger within certain choir circles or groups.

> Yes [we] do experience trust with Camerata members but you experience more trust with certain members. There is a general cohesion between all choristers, but we trust the members that we started choir with more than those that joined later. (Nkululeko)

> In terms of personal trust, I think that there is a general understanding in the choir and it's almost like an unwritten rule that we trust each other personally. I think there are obvious exceptions in terms with the people [we] are the closest too whom we trust more. (Azania)

> I truly believe the choristers trust each other but [we] learn to trust the people [we] sing longer with. I don't know the new people that well but I try to get to know them and in so [doing] we build trust. The people that I have sung with for several years now, I trust completely. (Blommie)

General consensus between many choristers emerged namely that trust takes time to develop. Henry noticed that, at the beginning of the choir year, "nobody trusts each other" because "trust takes time". Brillianto agreed with this, commenting that "trust takes time to form", which resulted in him "not trusting the new members immediately". Friday said he "definitely trusts the people in Camerata" simply because he "spends time with them", while Henry added that "when [we] are in people's company a great deal of the time, then there is a level of trust that is generated". Breyten and Troy both attributed their trust in fellow choristers to the vast amount of time spent together "outside of choir".

Aria observed that choristers develop trust for one another simply because of their association with each other. She expanded by stating that "because [we] are in Camerata, I think there is already a level of trust". Jane agreed, adding that the "common passion" shared amongst the choristers allow them to "trust people in Camerata". Frikkie concurred by saying that the choristers are all "striving towards the same thing" and as a result this "contributes towards trust".

For some of the choristers, trust is linked to being able to depend on other choir members to provide support and assistance in a time of need; an attribute of a true Camerata singer.

> I trust them [Camerata members] to help me out in whatever way I need. If I need someone to hear me out, in that way I don't feel alone. I can talk to people in Camerata. (Ziggy)

> I have members in Camerata that I deeply trust and I would tell them how I feel and they would listen. (Zack)

Jeremy reflected similar sentiments, saying that "if I need someone, I trust that someone would be there to help me". Blommie trusted that choristers are always there to "provide support" and felt that he could "talk to them about anything" and that "they would listen". Alice B was convinced that she could trust other Camerata members to help her "in the

middle of the night" if her car had to break down, and Merida shared her view that someone in the choir will comfort and protect another chorister who is "crying" and needs empathy and support.

The perceptions of several choristers revealed that they are convinced that activities such as camps and tours are the reason for trust developing amongst the members. Brillianto was certain that the main reason for the "choir camp being at the beginning of the year" is to provide an opportunity for choristers to "trust" each other. Jasmine felt that after the choir camp during that year, she started feeling that "the members were there for [her]" and that she could share her problems with anyone. Qaqamba recalled activities that took place on the choir camp that forced her into an environment to "trust" her peers and that it allowed her to "step outside of her shell" and drove her to "trust everyone". Merida was terrified of going away on camps with "new people" but felt that she connected with choristers during the camp and progressed in order to feel that she could "trust them to listen". M2 agreed that "people are more joined together" after choir camps and that this trust is "easily earned" by the middle of the year. Lara recalled an incident on choir camp where old and new members were mixed together, and that these interactions eventually lead to trust being generated. John shared his view that after the international tour to Riga in 2014, he felt that choristers were more closely knit and that "everyone could chat to anyone" which he insisted automatically resulted in the development of "trust on a personal level" between the choristers.

Some choristers advocated that they trust Camerata members more than their fellow students. Andy saw that choristers share the same "moral values" which leads to "us trusting [each other] a great deal more than people [we] study or have class with". Elizabeth argued that trust in Camerata is essential because, unlike her own "study field, everybody works towards the same goal", which resulted in her trusting her fellow singers. Friday said that he "definitely trusts the people in Camerata more than the people he studies [with]" simply because he "knows them better". John Tucker commented that he does "not have friends in class" but only in Camerata, adding that he "trusts" only the latter. Henry completely agreed with this view, stating that he trusts people "far more in the choir than in [his] study group" because the choristers are there for each other during the "tough times". Hardus compared his relationship with his class peers as "professional" in contrast to his relationship to Camerata singers which he described as being "personal". From this respondent's comment, it transpired that there is a different type of trust for each type of relationship. In contradiction to the majority of participants in this study, Jess expressed her feelings on this topic, expressing that she trusts her class friends "a little bit more" simply because she studies

drama and they are a small class and have a lot of "one on one" time together. She has also been in close contact with these friends for "over two years" so she knows them "better than Camerata" choristers. Elani supported this view, adding that she went to school with many of the students enrolled for the same degree as she is, and as a result she "trusts them more" than choristers that she "might just have met".

On the other side of the spectrum, however, there is a negative aspect of trust that culminates within the choir. When trusting someone, an individual may share personal information which can be abused, leading to gossip or other undesirable consequences. Whenever people interact on a social level, there are bound to be harmful aspects which are an inherent part of human nature. The following responses from participants allude to this finding:

> I would not necessarily trust every single person in the choir because I don't know every person as well, and you get people who are fake, even in this good environment. (John Fleck)

Although Breyten explained that he "trusts the members of Camerata with [his] life" he was quick to add that "gossip and negative stories" tend to spread in the choir as a result of sharing and trusting personal information with others. M2 was of the opinion that the size of the choir makes it difficult to "get to know" everyone which results in a "lack of trust" between some. Jeremy and Aria agreed that trust is dependent on how well the choristers "know each other". Beukes was vocal about only trusting "a small select few" in the choir, saying that he does not "trust everyone in the choir". Ella expressed that people who are not trustworthy themselves, will struggle to trust others. She also admitted that "it takes her a long time to trust other people". Nkululeko added that he gets close to people that "share the same cultural understanding" and felt that this was the case throughout the choir. He indicated that it was "different for a black family" versus an "Afrikaans family", saying that trust grows exclusively within these groups, adding that this is a natural part of "human nature". Nancy contended that she does not have a "high level of trust for many Camerata members" because she feels "intimidated by some cultural groups," and that there is a great deal of "ugliness and gossiping" in the choir.

- Musical trust

Data analysis clearly indicates that choristers are unanimous in their belief that trust is a determining factor towards the musical success of the Camerata. Choristers are responsible

for individually studying their music and they trust one another to be accountable for learning and memorising the repertoire.

> There are three primary sides to the 'triangle of trust' that is required in order for the music to work. The members must trust each other; they must trust the conductor; and they must trust themselves. This trust needs to go both ways, otherwise the music will suffer. Trust is an integral aspect to the success of the choir. (Brillianto)

Elsa explained that her understanding of trust is that the choristers "rely on those around [them] to really know their music" otherwise the choir "would not be a success". Amare and Koos both referred to the notion of choir being a "team" effort and that everyone is "trusted to know the music". Ilse and Jan both agreed with this notion, adding that choristers are trusted to "pull their own weight". Ilse added that this trust is a requirement for the choir "to sing well" and Jan endorsed that an "equal effort" is required to make the choir work. Elani's view was that, in order to "achieve a common goal", the choristers need to "work collectively" and this is not possible without some form of "trust". Ziggy and Catherine commented on "trusting each other" when it comes to "knowing the music".

As an extension of this musical trust, choristers referred to the importance of trusting and relying on each other regarding the music, especially within performance contexts.

> When [we] get onto stage [we] open up yourself and when [we] do that with others, a connection starts to form. And because [we] share all these intimate moments [we] make ourselves vulnerable on stage through the music and this strong connection exists, and obviously you trust these people. (Breyten)

> When we perform together as a unit, as a choir, [we] open [ourselves] up to the audience, the conductor and to one another. And through that there is a feeling of trust that is forged immediately, from the very first performance. [We] have to trust each other if [we] are going to get through a performance and move forward together as a choir. (Shepard)

> There is a mutual respect and group love and when [we] are on stage we trust each other to work hard to achieve the same goal. (Nancy)

Catherine asserted that she "loves to perform" and that, when she "walks onto stage", she does it with "pride" with a "team that is trusted". She added that they "need to trust each other in performances" for the sake of the music. As far as Emma was concerned, "trust is essential" because when the choir "walks onto stage" every single person must give "a performance to the best of their abilities". Emma B and Henry agreed that this trust is

"reciprocal" between the choristers and an integral requirement for a performance to be successful.

> There is definitely trust, especial once voice placements have been done. It sounds strange, but these voice placements require you to trust not only yourself but those next to you. If you don't know the music, there is a sense of 'let's sort this out'. (John Fleck)

Alice proposed that the performance runs the risk of being a disaster "if [we] don't trust the people that sing next to us". Qaqamba commented that "trusting the people [we] stand next to when singing" is important especially because the choir "stands mixed" and not in "voice groups". She said that on stage, the choristers are musically "individual" and need to "build confidence" to rely on each other. Breyten added that choristers get close to those "they sit next to" and that this adds to the "trust factor".

In contrast to the findings related to personal trust, the data analysis provided evidence that not a single chorister disagreed or offered a negative view about the importance of musical trust within the choir context of the Camerata. Trust, be it personal or other, is an integral aspect of social capital and it is evident from the findings that the Camerata generates a wealth or trust amongst its members.

4.2.5 Social norms and values

Vignette 8
The choir calls them 'newbies' as it is their first year in this prestigious choir. At the first choir camp, the choir committee has them sitting on the grass like a primary school class waiting for the teacher to instruct them. One by one, each committee member lays down the 'law'. Camerata members are not to smoke or drink alcohol while in uniform; hair is always to be neat and gents need to be clean-shaven before every performance; ties may not be worn without blazers and vice versa; all rehearsals and performances are compulsory; all choristers are to speak English at all times; and so the list goes on and on. The Chairperson explains the history and legacy of the choir and clarifies that these values and beliefs have been the norm in Camerata for nearly five decades. These 'newbies' are now part of an elite choral tradition, one that extends far beyond the members that are currently singing. It is expected of each singer to always hold the name of the choir in the highest regard and to never bring the Camerata into disrepute. Above all, a true Camerata singer is one that values integrity and honesty above all virtues. After all the talking is done, the 'newbies' are officially welcomed into the choir as one of the group.

This vignette is a typical experience taking place during the first choir camp of the year, just after new members have been accepted via the audition process. The feeling of shared norms and values as perceived by the choristers emerged strongly from the findings. A supportive environment and a sense of belonging have already been discussed earlier in the chapter (sections 4.1.1.7 and 4.1.1.9), both which are regarded as social norms. From the interview transcripts, respect and integrity arose as two pivotal attributes as experienced by the participants.

> Respect and integrity are the two shared values that need to be adopted by all members in the choir, and although one would expect that these values are already shared in people 18 years and older, it is truly not. So this needs to be generated and nurtured in the choristers. (Brillianto)

> Integrity, discipline and respect are shared within the choir. If you don't respect these values, you might be excluded. These values are really promoted and some people might [join the choir] with a certain set of values [that are] not necessarily good values, and then they will end up with better values by adopting the values of the choir, these values that are shared amongst one another. (John Fleck)

> One of the values that I have learnt from choir is to have respect for one another, and to carry this outside of choir. An important aspect that attributes to the shared social values is the strong sense of integrity, discipline, and punctuality that is already fostered in the choir that I have not seen with other choirs. (Henry)

> I feel that Camerata is not just about the music, or excellence or the feelings that they generate, it teaches us integrity and how to better ourselves. We are taught discipline and always to strive for excellence. (Merida)

> I really learnt how to be disciplined in what you do and to really be honest. I think this is something that is [portrayed in our music]. Our biggest principle in the choir is to have integrity in what we do. (M2)

Participants voiced their opinions with regard to respecting each other's differences:

> Respect is a shared value in the choir. Not everyone can reach general consensus on everything, but [we] allow each individual to be themselves and respect that people are different. (Nkululeko)

> I think there is a great respect for each other especially where we differ and we don't have to agree on everything in order to be friends. And I think that helps a lot of people grow as people in the choir and say: 'I don't agree with you but I still love you as a person'. (Alice)

> We are all different and that makes it so much fun. I am from a religion that is pretty different and has certain perceptions, but when the choir hears that I am from this religion, they accept it and they don't judge me for it. They support and applaud my beliefs so it doesn't matter what you believe, the choir respects you for being you. (Zack)

> The choir does not judge anyone for what they believe, whether they are atheist or pagan, or whatever. So I think there is that understanding and level of respect. (Azania)

Jan expressed his belief that the choristers show a great deal of "respect for each other's cultures, backgrounds and traditions", stating that the choristers regard each other as equals and don't "think that one culture is right or better than the other". Henry felt that this very aspect is "integral" to him and that the choir "respects one another regardless of [their] background, race [or] who you might be". One participant offered an example of choristers' respect for one another:

> We are a group of Afrikaans speaking students and an English member joins the group. We then automatically switch over to English. I have experienced the same when I join a group of black students and they will always speak English for my benefit. (Blommie)

The terms 'common interest', 'team', 'goal' and 'working together' are all synonymous under the sub-theme teamwork and were mentioned by the majority of choristers. Teamwork is also considered a social norm. Many shared their feelings that Camerata has taught them about teamwork, something that they do not learn in their academic classes. Elizabeth compared choir to her studies, remarking that the former requires a "group effort" in order to be successful, unlike with her studies in which "everybody works towards their own goals and marks". Ella added that "when [she] studies [she] does it alone" and said that choir is a "big group project" and it asks for everyone to "pull [their] own weight", otherwise it simply "won't work". Jasmine was of the view that her academics and examinations are "all about [the individual]" while "choir is a team effort". Ana was in total agreement with the rest of the focus group, finally adding that "to study [one] is mostly alone" but in Camerata everyone is "part of a team". She shared her belief that this collective spirit is a "central pillar of the Camerata". Emma claimed that being in Camerata has taught her how to "work [in] a team with people", a skill that she ascribes solely to Camerata. May agreed that Camerata has added value to her life by teaching her about "teamwork", and Andrew concurred by adding that "Camerata teaches [me] how to work in a team". Beukes concluded saying that he has "learnt how to work with a big group of people towards a common goal".

The majority of choristers believe that in order for Camerata to be successful, the individuals that make up the choir need to work together. Amare shared her conviction that "Camerata is a team" and "cannot function" if made up of "individuals" only. Willem and Emma both used the phrase "pull your own weight", stating that Camerata members need to work together for the choir to be successful. In order for Camerata to achieve excellence, Koos agreed that "everyone needs to contribute" by working "as a team", and Nancy discovered that "in order to [arrive] at a good outcome", everyone has to "work together and rely on [one another]".

Shared norms and values are a significant factor in group cohesion. Choristers in the Camerata attribute their common passion and interest for allowing them to make friends and bridge the gap between their differences.

> In a choir we are reaching towards a common goal and we can't get there with one type of person. As a result, we appreciate each other's differences and learn [from one another]. (Alice)

> [Camerata] brings people together through [their] love for music regardless of their religious views, cultural backgrounds or past experiences. It's a place where all these different people come to work together to share a common love and interest. (Blommie)

Fred insisted that the success of integrating members within Camerata is due to the "common view" where all strive towards a "specific and certain goal". Nozipho concurred, stating that a "common love of music" allows people "from different places" to work together because music does not choose "black and white", a strong indicator of bridging social capital. According to Ricardo's perspective, choir "binds people together" because they are all "working towards the same goal", a sentiment echoed by Qaqamba who added that it is the "common passion that drives" members in Camerata to work together. The pursuit of a common interest is an indicator of bonding social capital.

4.3   Summary

This chapter presented the findings which were extricated from the analysis of transcribed raw data. Firstly, the values which choir members attribute to participation in a university choir was described; and secondly, the possible existence of social capital within such a choral community, based on Putnam's theoretical framework (1995), was presented. A discussion of the findings will be provided in the next chapter where correlations will be made to existing literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The findings presented in Chapter 4 illustrate the complexity and multifaceted experience of being a member in the University of Pretoria Camerata, as perceived by the members themselves. Although numerous studies have emphasised the importance of music-making as an integral human experience (Adderely, Kennedy & Benz 2003; Barrett & Smigiel 2007; Bartolome 2013; Chorus America 2009; Huxhold, Fiori & Windsor 2013; Hylton 1981; Louw 2014; Parker 2011; Pitts 2005; Stebbins 1996), only a handful of studies have focused on the perceived benefits of participating in a university choir as experienced by the singers themselves (Clift & Hancox 2001; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Sichivitsa 2003) and this study contributes to the body of literature that already exists. An extensive search revealed that no research has been conducted that specifically focuses on this topic within a multicultural South African university choir. Therefore, the dynamic and varied social context in which the Camerata choir operates can fill a gap in current literature. The aim of the study was to investigate two foci: what the perceived values of singing in the choir are as experienced by choir members; and secondly, the possibility of social capital being generated as a by-product of choir participation.

5.1 Perceived benefits as experienced by the choristers

Three main themes emerged during data analysis as described in the findings of Chapter 4 namely personal; social; and musical value of choir participation, which is similar to the findings of Kokotsaki and Hallam (2011), and Joseph and Southcott (2014). In her investigation with the Seattle Girls' Choir, Bartolome (2010) derived the same three themes, adding external and community benefits as a fourth. The most significant finding from the onset of the current study was the magnitude of value attributed to both personal and social aspects which was in direct contrast to that of the music. This correlates with previous studies which indicate the importance of social dimensions within choirs (Durrant & Himonides 1998; Faulkner & Davidson 2006). Each of these themes contains numerous sub-themes which were derived through data analysis of transcriptions of interviews, focus groups and observations. I have appropriately grouped the findings into major and minor themes. Major themes represent the common viewpoints amongst the majority of the participants whereas minor themes illustrate the unique experience of participating in a choir as experienced by fewer members.

5.1.1 Major themes attributed to personal value

The personal value of being a member in the Tuks Camerata as experienced by the choristers revealed eight major themes namely passion and enjoyment; achievement and

excellence; accountability and ownership; discipline and time management; academic achievement; commitment and sacrifice; health and well-being; and lastly, friendships and a sense of belonging.

5.1.1.1 Passion and enjoyment

It is evident from the data that the majority of the students in the Camerata participate in the choir mainly because they enjoy it. Several choristers mentioned that their lives would be unfulfilled without participating in a choir such as Camerata. Their deep rooted passion for choir participation is an intrinsic motivator, a well-documented reason for singers continuing with participation in a choral ensemble (Bartolome 2013; Brinson 1996; Durrant 2003; Eccles 1983; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kennedy 2002; Klinedinst 1991; Lucas 2011; Sichivitsa 2003). Choristers explained that being part of the entire choral experience of music making; social interaction; and an energetic and vibrant atmosphere; all contributes to them feeling better about life in general. In the participants' views, choir participation uplifts their mood and makes them happier people, an aspect which is substantiated in literature (Bartolome 2013; Clift & Hancox 2001; Clift, Hancox, Morrison, Hess, Kreutz & Stewart 2010; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Kennedy 2002; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; North, Hargreaves & O'Neill 2000 Tonneijck, Kinébanian, & Josephsson 2008). Performances in front of audiences were mentioned as another contributing factor regarding happiness and enjoyment, although it did not feature as significantly as the weekly choir rehearsals. There are numerous studies that specifically outline the importance of concert performance as perceived by its members (Adderley, Kennedy & Berz 2003; Barrett & Smigiel 2007; Joseph & Southscott 2014; Parker 2011) and similarly, there is a wealth of literature that encompasses the entire music making experience, from rehearsal to performance (Adderley, Kennedy & Berz 2003; Bartolome 2010; 2013; Elliot 1995; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Lucas 2011; Sweet 2010). Findings from very few studies, however, indicate that the rehearsal process is more meaningful and enjoyable to choristers as perceived by its members. Observation data from the current study revealed that the act of making music collaboratively during rehearsals is more important for members of the Camerata than taking part in concert performances. Choristers were visibly more relaxed and jovial at rehearsals in contrast to the more stressed and tense atmosphere during concert performances. Rehearsals provide students with the time to interact and socialise, whereas concert performances require far more focus from the singers; performing on stage in front of an audience implies that all parts of the music should be executed 'perfectly' the first time it is performed – there is no second take. Choristers mentioned the pressure they experienced during the performance of challenging music in a concert, especially if it was performed for the first time. The desire to achieve excellence is well documented as a significant finding in

Chapter 4, but this desire can create performance anxiety and stress (Ryan & Andrews 2009; Sanal & Gorsev 2014) an aspect not present during rehearsals. This contrast between rehearsals and concert performances was well documented in the raw data and emerged as a significant finding during the analysis process. Although participants mentioned the concert performances as positive experiences, the feeling of connectedness between choristers, the regular Tuesday and Thursday meetings at practice, and the 'work and play' atmosphere during rehearsals, are most special and worthwhile to the singers and the context where most of the social capital is generated. An extensive search of recent literature shows that this finding is unique to the current study and is therefore a noteworthy addition to the existing knowledge of this phenomenon.

5.1.1.2   Achievement and excellence

Being part of the University of Pretoria Camerata is seen by many choristers as a place of excellence and accomplishment. Achievement as a personal benefit of participation within a musical activity, such as the Camerata, is substantiated in the literature (Bartolome 2013; Creech et al. 2013; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Kennedy 2002; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; Pitts 2005). Just to be able to sing through a difficult song for the first time is regarded as a great achievement by members of the Camerata. Several choristers commented on their state of elatedness when achieving this goal during rehearsals. An important factor is that students in the Camerata are largely non music students and the chosen repertoire is challenging. Choristers gave more importance to striving for excellence during rehearsals than in performances. It is evident from data analysis that choir rehearsals offer opportunities for the participants to develop an urge to strive for excellence, a life skill that may enhance and enrich their future lives. The sense of pride that is shared amongst the members is a motivating factor for many to sing in the choir. Choristers mentioned the work ethic that is required to achieve excellence, another life lesson that filters into their daily routines.

5.1.1.3   Accountability and ownership

A major contributing factor to the participants' perceived success of the University of Pretoria Camerata is the accountability and ownership towards the choir which emerged through data analysis. The students experience the choir as being their own responsibility, and that its success depends on what they make of it. They are accountable towards the music, the performances, and the overall administration of the choir. This concurs with Bartolome's study (2013), which indicated that the singers in the Seattle Girls' Choir were empowered to take control of the learning process during rehearsals. Similarly, Coffman's (2002) and Sixsmith and Gibson's (2007) research revealed that simply participating in a choir can lead to empowerment of the elderly and people who suffer from dementia respectively. Goodrich

reports that students in a high school jazz band perform better as a whole because they are accountable and responsible towards the group (2005, 2007). Participants in the Camerata mentioned that their commitment to adequately prepare and study a large volume of music for rehearsals – often during holidays or in their free time – was mainly so that they do not disappoint their fellow singers. A common understanding amongst choristers is that each individual is responsible to the musical success of the choir, and this is achieved through hard work. Although there are avenues for students to obtain help in learning the music parts, for example through voice group leaders or consulting their rehearsal tracks, the onus lies on each singer to positively contribute and to be accountable for learning their own parts. Data analysis provides clear evidence that the choir members take ownership of the success, or lack thereof, of choir performances. Meetings held after performances allow the choristers to reflect and rectify mistakes in the music as to ensure that it is improved upon for the future. Several choristers commented on feeling negative when a concert does not go well, taking personal blame for the performance being mediocre. Participants were vocal about their desire to always improve in concert performances and to be nothing short of "phenomenal".

5.1.1.4   Discipline and time management

The members of the Camerata advocate that the discipline that is instilled in them through the choir is a benefit that filters through to their daily lives, an aspect which is substantiated in the literature (Adderley, Kennedy and Berz: 2003; Bartolome 2013; Chorus America 2009; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011). Several students believe that they are more disciplined in their studies and personal lives as a result of their choir participation. The improvement and need for good time management skills was almost unanimously mentioned by the participants, as the choir's busy schedule forces members to plan and manage their lives efficiently. Some students recognised that their academic work improves as a result of these acquired skills, such as self-discipline and time management which is honed within the choir context; important benefits to them for their academic development and future careers.

5.1.1.5   Academic achievement

In literature, participation in music activities is associated with academic improvement and success (Fitzpatrick 2006; Friedman 1993; Lillemyr 1993; Schneider & Klotz 2000; Trent 1997). A large-scale investigation was conducted to determine the effect that music has on the academic achievement of students (Catterall, Chapleau & Iwanaga: 1999). These researchers analysed the information from 25 000 students on the American Department of Education's database, claiming that those that participated in art programmes – including music – outperformed those that did not. These findings concur with similar studies

conducted by Kafer and Kennell (1998) and Schneider and Klotz (2000). Researchers involved in the Chorus America study (2009) found that children singing in choirs achieve better grades in school. Their study provides evidence that school children, their parents and educators, all perceive choral singing as a factor that improves academic performance, either through improvement of social skills – nurtured by constant group work – or improved discipline, memory, practise, homework habits, and promoting high levels of creativity (Chorus America 2009: 5). Schneider and Klotz (2000) investigated the effects of music education on academic achievement and found that students enrolled in music classes had higher scores in language, reading and mathematics than those who participated in athletics. In the current study, the link between choir participation and academic success is confirmed namely that the majority of Camerata members expressed their belief that their participation in the choir has a positive effect on their academic achievement.

5.1.1.6   Commitment and sacrifice

The majority of choristers mentioned choir as involving a significant commitment, one that requires them to sacrifice a great deal of their personal time. For the large part, participants see their commitment towards the choir as positive because it teaches them valuable life lessons and skills. Data analysis provides evidence that choristers feel their time at choir is often better spent and not wasted, and that a few hours away from their books can renew their energy and will motivate them to sit down and study again. Commitment as a benefit associated with membership in a choir is substantiated in the literature (Bartolome 2013, Chorus America 2009, Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011).

Some negative aspects regarding the sacrifices required for choir participation emerged from data analysis. Some participants revealed that choristers might resign from choir due to busy schedules. This may lead such choristers feeling anxious and stressed, especially with regard to their academic responsibilities. This is more prevalent to students that are further progressed in their study fields, specifically those that are final year candidates. Additionally, not having enough social time due to the very busy choir calendar was mentioned by two participants as a negative aspect of their choir participation. It is also evident that the choir is not an activity for everyone to join, as several of the interviewees mentioned fellow students that they know who do not audition for membership in the choir because of the sacrifice and commitment it requires.

During the observation period, the positive and negative effects of commitment as an inherent part of choir participation were well documented. Choristers often have to sacrifice special social occasions – such as the wedding or birthday of a close friend – in order to

attend choir rehearsals or performances. The atmosphere during choir rehearsals taking place around the time of test weeks and examinations is also visibly different, and more often than not, social time after such events would be very limited as choristers rush home to study. It was during these times that the positive effect that the music had on the students was best observed. Students would be distracted and ill-focused during the warm-up at the start of the rehearsal and there would be a quiet and subdued atmosphere. As the rehearsal progresses, singers would start to relax and the entire mood of the rehearsal would change. The atmosphere is transformed to one which is jovial and inviting, and students are observed with smiles on their faces as the music distracts them from their worries and concerns, and simultaneously moves them emotionally. This led to comments from choristers such as having renewed energy to go and study.

5.1.1.7   Health and well-being

With regard to personal value, one of the most significant findings is that choristers believe that their participation in the Tuks Camerata is beneficial to their health as it relieves stress and serves as an emotional outlet for the singers. Wide-ranging research over the past two decades indicates that singing, both individually and collectively, is extensively linked to human health and well-being (Anshel & Kipper 1988; Bailey & Davidson 2002; Bygren, Konlaan & Johansson 1996; Clift & Hancox 2010; Clift et al. 2010; Cohen 2009; Gick 2010; Grape, Sandgren, Hansson, Ericson, & Theorell 2003; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Meyers-Levy & Zhu 2010; Sanal & Gorsev 2014; Silber 2005; Valentine & Evans 2001). The results from the current study correspond and strengthen these findings, adding verification to the body of existing literature.

Participants in the University of Pretoria Camerata regard the choir as a place that helps them escape their daily lives and provides them with an emotional outlet. Several students referred to having "difficult days", advocating that choir participation "saves" them from their troubles. Political disruptions caused by protests on campus during 2016 contributed to the challenges faced by students, such as classes, tests and examinations being postponed, and several weeks of work being crammed into a few days. These disconcerting circumstances caused many students stress and anxiety, supported by quotes from the raw data as provided in Chapter 4. Sanal and Gorsev suggest that singing in a choir has "significant impact on decreasing the negative affect and state anxiety levels of singers" (2014:427), an aspect well documented within the current study. With continued uncertainty in the South African tertiary education sector due to political instability, activities that can assist students in relieving stress and providing social support might become a necessity in the future.

Camerata students expressed their views with regard to choir relieving stress and improving their overall mood. This finding substantiates similar findings in a study conducted by Bittmann, Snydery, Bruhnz, Liebfreid, Stevesyy, Westengardzz and Umbach (2004), where it was found that participation in music led to stress relief, relaxation and improved mood, especially in the lives of university students. Similarly, in a study conducted by Jacob et al. (2009:190), a significant theme was the perception of members that choir singing was experienced as a "stress relief", while Unwin, Kenny and Davis (2002) documented the improved mood of people that participated in a singing activity for as little as half an hour a day.

Bailey and Davidson (2002) found that singing in a group leads to a decrease in depression levels and enhances the overall well-being of the singers, both physically and emotionally. Several studies point out that singing boosts the immune system (Beck, Cesario, Yousefi & Enamoto 2000; Kreutz, Bongard, Rohrmann, Grebe, Bastian & Hodapp 2004; Kuhn 2002). Correspondingly, one of the Camerata members studying medicine was involved in a research project for medical students investigating the relationship between singing and lung capacity. The outcomes of that project were shared during his interview namely that singing in a choir improves physical health and increases lung capacity. Several participants in the choir believe that the breathing, stretching and posture exercises which form part of choral warm-ups have a positive effect on their physical health, verifying the findings of Clift and Hancox (2010), who found that singing is good for physical exercise as it involves breathing that is both deep and controlled. Equally, the mental and physical health of elderly people improved after participating in choral activities (Cohen, Perlstein, Chapline, Kelly, Firth & Simmens 2006; Houston, Mckee, Carroll, & Marsh 1998) and participating in group singing has been linked to relief of chronic pain in patients (Kenny & Faunce 2004).

A noteworthy finding which emerged from data analysis in the current study is that a few choristers experienced choir participation as contributing to increased stress. This corresponds with the findings of a study that investigated the benefits of choral singing on the social and mental wellbeing of singers (Livesey, Morrison, Clift & Camic 2012), where researchers found that a few choristers in a national survey believed that the pressure of performing in a choir can cause stress. In the South African context, a great deal of pressure is placed on students to perform well and to excel in order to be accepted into tertiary institutions (Marshall & Case 2010; Motala 2011). As mentioned in the data, choristers at times would resign from the choir in order to concentrate more on their academic studies, as they feel the choir adds unnecessary pressure due to the amount of time it requires from its members. This was especially noted with regards to students in their final year of study. This

is understandable as there are strict entrance requirements for all students who wish to continue their studies at a post graduate level and many degrees only accept a limited number of candidates. Further stress is created by the Camerata 'competing' for the attention and support of management at the University of Pretoria. The choir annually performs in local or international competitions so that top management may recognise it as an ensemble worthy of their financial or other support. Without these accolades and achievements, the choir struggles to secure funding from the University which in turn causes more stress on the individuals in the choir, especially those that are in difficult financial situations. As a result, the choir expects students to raise their own funds, and the data provides evidence of many students seeking employment to manage their financial obligations to the choir, especially with regard to paying for tours. The Camerata gives many concert performances to generate funds so that students can be assisted financially. Again, this adds more time to the choir calendar, taking away from their academic programmes, which results in added pressure on the singers.

5.1.1.8   Friendships and a sense of belonging

Due to the very social nature of choir, the data pertaining to friendships developing as a result of membership was saturated at an early stage in the research process. Participants believe that choir is a place to make friends and view these friendships as substantial in their lives. For many choristers, participation in the choir gives them a sense of belonging, an important attribute especially in a large university environment of approximately 50,000 students. This corresponds to findings in literature where choir is seen as a place for singers to 'belong' (Barrett & Smigiel 2007; Bartolome 2013; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; Tonneijck, Kinebanian & Josephsson 2008). Several participants joined the Camerata because they struggled to make friends at the university. The choir with its 76 members is small and intimate enough in order for choristers to get to know each other on a more personal level. As a result of these friendships, the choristers profess that the times shared in choir are some of the most meaningful and valuable of their student lives.

Choir friendships are not only limited to activities taking place during choir events on campus. Participants offered several examples of social events, such as going to the movies, having coffee dates, or even going hiking during the holidays, that occur as a result of making friends through choir. Many participants shared their belief that these friendships are strong and would last for a lifetime and one member offered an example of his parents that met in the choir, got married, and remained friends 30 years later with other choristers that sang during their day. For many, singing in Camerata is not only to make friends, but an

opportunity to spend time with friends already made as a result of their membership. Forming friendships as a by-product of singing in a choir is well documented in literature (Bartolome 2010; Bailey & Davidson 2002, 2005; Clift & Hancox 2001; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; Langston 2011; Langston and Barrett 2008; Livesey et al 2012; Silber 2005).

Additionally, choristers expressed that they feel special, empowered and needed in the choir. The data provides evidence that the participants have a desire to belong to something that makes them feel as if they fit in and feel at home. Participants in the current study offered insight regarding how they perceive themselves becoming numbers in a vast mass of students in certain overcrowded courses. This results in them not having any connection to their lecturers or fellow class mates. However, within the choir community, all choristers are known to each other, at the very least by name, and at most as intimate friends by several others. This finding was verified during observations since choristers were seen chatting, laughing and hugging one another before and after rehearsals. Various researchers came to similar conclusion, for example Tonneijck et al. found that choir singing "stimulates the feeling of belonging" (2008: 177); Bartolome reports that choir creates a place for singers to "belong" (2013: 408); and the results in a national survey in the United Kingdom as investigated by Livesey et al. documented that a large majority of singers join choirs because of the "sense of belonging" which is created as a by-product (2012: 16).

Friendships in the choir are experienced by some as exclusive, to the point that outsiders are excluded from joining. This is especially true between members that have sung for several years and those that joined the choir for a short time. This corresponds with studies researching the negative effects of exclusivity which may exist in friendship bonds, and that some individuals may feel excluded (Kawabata, Crick & Hamaguchi 2010; Park 2014). However, new members in the choir commented on the strong and exclusive bonds they observed between the older members in a positive light, and see it as something to look forward to, something which they hope to become part of. Pragmatically, there are bound to be clashes in personalities which may result in soured relationships between choir members. One participant mentioned this, but shared her belief that choir members in general are sincerely respectful to each other so that in such cases, choristers remain civil to one another.

5.1.2   Minor themes attributed to personal value

The multifaceted experience of singing in a university choir is substantiated by the minor themes as perceived by a smaller group of participants. Their opinions to this experience are vital and have been included to portray an overall perspective of the value attributed to singing. Minor themes include self-confidence and leadership; spiritual experiences and holistic experiences, and each of these will be discussed in relation to existing literature.

5.1.2.1   Self-confidence and leadership

The observation data revealed substantial evidence with regard to choir participation as a means to build self-confidence and leadership within individual members, a finding that is substantiated in the literature (Bartolome 2010; Chorus America 2009; Hylton 1981; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; Pitts 2005). The Camerata is run by a committee of choristers that do a great deal of administrative tasks which benefit the choir organisation. These responsibilities include weekly meetings, communicating with management and the choir, running daily activities for the choir, and holding fellow choristers accountable for misdemeanours. Data analysis of observations indicates how the leadership and communication skills of the committee members improved over time when they had to convey important information to the singers during rehearsals. These committee members showed initiative regarding the effectiveness of administrative matters. Several of them fulfilled pastoral roles for new choristers out of their own accord, as this tradition of playing 'big brother' has been a norm in the choir for many years.

Several participants shared their belief that the choir empowers them to be more confident as it provides them the space to be themselves. Standing in front of a large audience while performing as a group is an activity which nurtures and builds confidence, and several singers profess that the entire music making process has helped them to become less shy and reach their true potential. This confidence is not only related to the music, but to the personal lives of the singers. Observation and interview data shows how a group of gay students in the choir are accepted by the members, allowing them the liberty to be themselves. Religious and spiritual preferences are celebrated in the choir and students are encouraged to share their personal views with regard to their spirituality or the lack thereof. The environment created by the members in the choir is supportive and non-judgemental allowing the singers to have the confidence and freedom to simply be. Thorp's extensive research found that choirs in America used collective music making as a tool to empower and heal both their singers and the community they serve (2016) with regard to sexual and religious preferences, amongst several other identities.

5.1.2.2   Spiritual experiences

Singing in the Camerata is seen by some of its members as a spiritual experience. A few choristers connect their involvement in the choir to their religious beliefs, stating that they are fulfilling their purpose and duty as required by their church. It is an important aspect for these choristers as they feel their connection to God is strengthened by the moments and music that are shared in the choir. The act of performing for others, regardless whether the choir is singing sacred, secular, traditional or popular music is perceived by members as a spiritual occurrence. The connections and relationships formed between these choristers also contribute to their spiritual well-being. Although these heightened spiritual experiences are mainly referred to in the context of concert performances, the data illustrates examples of such occurrences outside the context of singing. Some of the members refer to their friendships as blessings 'from above', and the support of the choir as unique and heavenly. One singer specifically mentions the choir singing *Golden Moments* – a song which is part of the choir tradition and sung as a private prayer away from the concert stage – as a Godly act. For one member in particular, the connection of choir singing to spirituality and religion is of ultimate importance as he studies theology and truly advocates that his participation in Camerata has brought him closer to his calling than anything he has ever experienced. His sentiments are supported by other members who advocate that their faith and communication with God has improved as a by-product of membership in the choir. There are limited studies that focus on the importance of spiritual experiences as a benefit of participation in a choir (Clift & Hancox 2001; Jacob, Guptill and Sumsion 2009). Interpreting the data from this study may indicate that many participants regard the entire act of collective music making as a spiritual journey and that the pinnacle of this awareness is the concert performance.

Participants shared their belief that choir singing promotes messages of love and unity, and that gaps within our society can be mended through the power of music. Several choristers feel that the message the choir needs to relay to its audience is spiritual and the sheer beauty that is created within the context of singing is seen as a spiritual act in itself. During the observations, I documented how singers at times would close their eyes and immerse themselves totally in the sound and beauty of the music. After performances, choristers would share their experiences of how they got goose-bumps in a particular song and how they felt they really connected with the audience and with one another. The beauty that the music offers and the ability it has to help the singers escape from daily turbulences and realities of life is also regarded by them as a spiritual experience.

5.1.2.3   Holistic experiences

The development of life skills in a holistic environment is an important personal benefit of participation in a choral ensemble (Bartolome 2013; Chorus America 2009; Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; Pitts 2005). Participants mentioned that Camerata nurtures a holistic environment, teaching them valuable lessons which will equip them for the future. Apart from the music, choristers commented that they are encouraged to better themselves, strive for excellence, always show integrity and work towards life goals. Some choristers believe that these lessons are not taught in other facets of their lives and that they greatly benefit from them, especially with regard to their studies. Developing social skills in order to work together with other people for a common goal, even those that they might not get along with, is another important aspect mentioned by the research participants. Greater appreciation for the arts as well as becoming all-rounded individuals are two further facets mentioned by individual choristers during data collection.

5.1.3   Major themes attributed to social value

Singing in a choir is a collective activity and it is not surprising that participants placed great emphasis on the social value of singing in the Camerata. Data analysis revealed four major themes namely the choir as a metaphor for 'family' and camaraderie; integrating people; a safe and reliable environment; and socialising.

5.1.3.1   The 'family' metaphor and camaraderie

Participants in the Camerata regard the choir as an extension of their personal families as it provides a support structure and generates camaraderie amongst the members. Although there are studies which identify the notion of choir as a 'family' in their findings (Bartolome 2010; Clift et al. 2010; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011), the results in the current study appear to be more significant. Several of the singers call the choir their 'family', adding that members grow close to one another and care deeply for each other. Although several members mentioned that they do not necessarily like – or get along with – all members in the choir, this was added to their belief that the choir emulates a typical family environment. From their viewpoints, typical families often have disagreements and conflicts even though they care about one another. On the other hand, while the close relationship between choristers is perceived by most as a positive aspect, this same trait may lead to some individuals – especially new members in the group – feeling ostracised. This point was emphasised by several participants, saying that choristers have left the choir if they do not fit in. Only one chorister advocated against the notion of the choir being a family, stressing that her motivation for joining the choir is for the sake of music alone and not for the social aspects of choir.

An important aspect of any family is a strong support structure. Camerata singers feel that the environment created by the choir provides a similar support structure, allowing them to be themselves without fear of prejudice or judgment. During difficult times experienced by individual choristers –, be it student protests; a challenging academic cycle; or personal reasons –, choristers strongly state that they have support from their fellow choristers. People in the choir avail themselves to listen, comfort and encourage their singing companions. This willingness of individual members to assist others strengthens the camaraderie amongst the choristers. Participants see the choir as a community that is built upon friendships and trust, and that camaraderie within the choir is promoted by the choir management. Several choristers believe that they sing in the choir because of the strong friendship bonds they experience between the members, an aspect well documented within the literature (Barrett & Smigiel 2007; Bartolome 2013; Chorus America 2009; Clift & Hancox 2001; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011; Pitts 2005).

5.1.3.2   Integrating people

Several sub-themes emerged from the data with regard to the cultural integration of students within the Camerata. Choir members as part of a unique community of students: acknowledge that they are part of a diverse organisation; believe that the choir promotes conversations across cultural boundaries; regard the environment – as created by the choir – as being conducive for social integration; identify barriers that exist between the various cultural groups in the choir.

5.1.3.2.1 Choir as a diverse environment

Diversity as a benefit of participation within a choral community does not feature significantly in the literature. Although Bartolome (2013) discuss diversity within the Seattle Girls' Choir, she admits that the majority of singers come from similar socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds and that diversity is mainly found within the greater community. Van As (2014) discusses the challenges of diversity within a competition setting amongst corporate choirs in South Africa, while Adderely et al. (2003) briefly mentions diversity as a marginal benefit of participation in a music activity. Extensive searches have not revealed any study up to date that has investigated the benefits of diversity within a university choir on such a large scale as this current research, especially within a South African context.

The diversity of the Camerata is evident in several ways, such as that there are students from many cultural backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, race, languages, and study disciplines. For members of the Camerata, this diverse environment is unique and

differs from their upbringing or what they have been accustomed to before joining the choir. Several Afrikaans students explained that joining the choir was an adaption and a learning curve, as they had preconceptions of certain cultures and were not exposed to such a diverse environment during their school days. Others mentioned that the choir is a richly diverse group, which is not always the case in their residencies or study classes. Camerata is seen to be a 'forced' environment, as participants feel they are in a space that requires them to interact with people that are different, and as a result they get to know people that are different to themselves. The National Centre for Vocational Educational Research (NCVER) refers to this notion as a form of bridging social capital as it facilitates "relations between groups with significant differences" (NCVER 2004: 37). Several participants stated that they connected with others and built friendships across cultural boundaries as a result of their membership in the Camerata, an aspect that would have been unlikely without their choir participation.

5.1.3.2.2 Choir as a tool for cross-cultural communication

The participants in the Camerata believe that communication between singers from different cultures takes place through the music and through social interaction. The repertoire of the choir is so diverse and several singers noted that they learn a great deal by singing music from cultures other than their own. In her research, Van As found that singing music from various cultural groups within South Africa generated "cultural empathy" amongst the choristers in the Absa corporate choir (2014: 228). Zhu believes that this "cultural empathy" is merely the understanding of another culture's values; seeing the world through the eyes of another person (2011:117). For several Afrikaans students, singing a traditional African song allow them to learn more about a culture that is largely foreign to them. The students in the choir that speak one of the indigenous African languages, and who are accustomed to the traditional African ways of singing and dancing, offer great advice and assistance to those that may not be familiar with African indigenous music. Several choristers feel that this type of interaction – through the music – leads to understanding and respect for different cultural practices. Afrikaans students often assist in the pronunciation of their language to choristers that struggle to speak it, and similarly, the German students would do the same if the choir was to sing a piece in their mother tongue. This learning and exchange between a diverse group of people is at the heart of bridging social capital (NCVER 2004; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan 2000).

The student protests that took place in 2016 caused stress and anxiety on the university campus and as a result, this had an effect on the choir, an aspect raised during data collection by several of the participants. During these turbulent times, numerous

conversations took place between the various cultural groups in the choir, and although discussions became heated at times, the choristers felt the need to converse with one another on these sensitive issues. Although a large number of participants believe that adequate conversations were held about the protests, some felt that more was needed to calm the tension between the cultural groups within the choir. The sensitive nature of the issues raised in the protests, and a difference of opinion, were two reasons why choristers did not talk more about the conflict taking place at the university. In contradiction to this, one participant shared his belief that the choir accepts the varied perspectives of the individuals within the group and that, by conversing with each other, a great deal of learning and building of respect took place.

5.1.3.2.3   Choir as a platform for social integration

Many of the choristers in the Camerata applaud the choir for creating an environment that allows students from different cultural backgrounds to integrate on a social level. Several of the participants mentioned the warped views or stigmas that are attached to cultural groups other than their own, mostly due to ignorance, and how these have been diminished through their interactions with people that are different to them. Some participants offered personal accounts of how they needed to adapt their beliefs and attitudes to be more accepting and understanding of those that shared different cultural views to themselves. Data analysis provides clear evidence of friendships that have formed across cultural groups as a result of the choir, something which many participants believe would not have been the case if it had not been for the collaboration and social integration within the Camerata. Even the seating arrangement of the choir is important, as choristers mentioned that the people in their closest proximity within choir formation are the ones they form the strongest and most intimate relationships with.

Since participation in music making is the core activity of a choir, it plays a significant role in all aspects, including social integration. Choristers in the Camerata believe that the music is a powerful means to integrate the members. Several participants mentioned the ability that the music has to unite the choristers as they share a common goal and passion for music. This common goal is also a form of bonding social capital as it "enhances [the] solidarity of [a] group with [a] specific interest" (Langston & Barrett 2008: 119). Some of the interviewees felt that the music allows the choristers to see each other in a different light, namely as people and music makers rather than groups of people defined by the colour of their skin or the language they may speak.

Although the majority of choristers believe that cultural integration is taking place within the choir, a healthy number of them agree that more needs to be done to truly unify the choristers within the choir and that cultural integration occurs very slowly. A common theme derived through data analysis is that choristers form groups with people they are familiar with, be it through culture, language, or the colour of their skin. As a result of this cultural divide, people are often excluded from certain enclaves and tensions arise within the choir. Bonding social capital, what Putnam describes as "a kind of sociological superglue" that holds groups together (2000: 23) is present within the Camerata. A participant pointed out that the Camerata may seem integrated on stage or during rehearsals, but this does not extend outside of official choir events. Some choristers justify the segregation within the choir as they believe that 'birds of a feather will always flock together', and that respecting and accepting each other's differences is sufficient. From data analysis it is evident that the major challenge within the choir is integrating the Afrikaans students with the black students in the choir.

5.1.3.2.4   Cultural barriers within the choir

A unique phenomenon within the South African context is the many languages and cultural groups that can be found on a single university campus, especially at the University of Pretoria. In 2016, protests across South Africa broke out at universities that had Afrikaans as a main language of instruction. The *Afrikaans Must Fall* campaign, which originated at the University of Pretoria, sparked mass action at tertiary institutions, leading to campus closures for fear of violence from protestors (Kubheka & Corke 2016). The University of Pretoria was forced to adopt a new language policy which will see the removal of Afrikaans as an official language (Gqirana 2016), a decision which was implemented at the University of Bloemfontein three months earlier (Mdaka 2016). On the contrary, the University of Stellenbosch implemented an equal language preference policy for Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa students, as these are the three primary languages spoken in the Western Cape Province (Gqirana 2016). Internationally there is a move towards English Medium Instruction (EMI) at tertiary institutions, which includes countries such as China, Finland, Israel, Spain, France, The Netherlands and South Africa (Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra 2013). Elana Shohamy provides critical evidence of the challenges that face institutions when applying EMI too rapidly, advocating the implementation of language immersion programs in multilingual contexts (Cuenca 2015). Many of the choristers in the Camerata mentioned barriers that exist between Camerata members which prevents the choir from integrating completely and causes factions within the choir, and data analysis revealed that language is one of these barriers. Several Afrikaans students in the choir commented on how uneasy they feel when they need to speak English all the time, while those that do not understand

Afrikaans tend to avoid forming friendships with the Afrikaans choristers. Although the choir encourages that all communication is done in English for the benefit of the entire group, it is evident that in social settings the students select the languages that they are most confident and relaxed speaking in. One participant feels strongly against English being the only language of communication as it results in the choristers then adopting an English culture. From the observations, the Afrikaans students tend to form their own social groups, largely because they share a language and many of these students struggle to speak English. In comparison, the students in the choir that speak English, regardless of their race or cultural background, form better ties with one another.

There is evidence of a racial divide within the choir as the white and black students tend to segregate during social events. Walker argues that students at universities choose to associate themselves with others due to their "social and economic conditions", advocating that the ideology of apartheid – although subdued – is not "entirely defeated" (2005: 52-53). Data from the interviews and from observations clearly illustrate that integration between the various racial groups– although present – is not the norm. During breaks, before and after rehearsals as well as during social occasions, white and black students tend to group separately. Several participants from various racial groups feel that this divide is normal and do not see it as a problem. One singer believes that the black students form a group as they are the minority in the choir, while another comments on how excluded members feel when joining a group that is not of their own race or culture. Strayhorn (2011:146) found that black students in a predominantly white American university struggled to adjust to college life because they felt marginalised and socially isolated, and that singing in a gospel choir relieved these tensions. Both black and white students commented that Camerata sets an example of integration taking place, stating that the university hostels and academic classes could learn from what the choir has achieved. Choristers admit that more needs to be done to fully integrate the singers, but that a great deal is already happening in comparison to other organisations and societies at the University. It is probable that black students join the Camerata, in similarity to the students in Strayhorn's research, because the choir offers them a safe environment which is less marginalised and isolated than what the University of Pretoria campus provides. When the members in Camerata form groups based on their culture or language, bonding social capital takes place, as a common interest is shared amongst these close-knit groups (NCVER 2004). This does, however, lead to exclusivity amongst members who do not fit the group dynamic or social mores, another characteristic of bonding social capital (Putnam 2000).

5.1.3.3   A safe and reliable environment

According to Tonnejick et al. (2008: 173), choir creates a "safe environment" where choristers can be "distracted from [their] daily routines". This notion was intensely experienced by members of the Camerata during turbulent and disruptive times on the university campus in 2016 due to the on-going student protests (Roodt 2016). There would be tensions between student groups on campus, especially in regard to the *Afrikaans Must Fall* campaign which called for the removal of Afrikaans as an official university language (Makhetha 2016; Rushwaya 2016). Due to the multi-racial setup of the choir, tensions could be felt coming into the rehearsal space as assumptions and generalisations were made between the different cultural groups. Choristers, however see the choir as a safe space and a place where discussions could be held regarding sensitive topics. During interviews for data collection, several choristers referred to the protests and contrasted the unreliable and unstable campus situation with the safe and reliable environment created by the choir. Many see the choir as a constant, and although campus would be shut down for months on end, choir rehearsals continued, albeit in a venue far away from the University. Participants in the Camerata shared their belief that any animosity built up towards other students due to the protests would easily be forgotten when coming to choir, and that rehearsals often helped the singers to heal emotionally from the political unrest, and to feel uplifted. Choristers also expressed their view regarding the choir namely that it promotes equality between all members, regardless of an individual's race, culture, language, sex or sexual preference, and that Camerata is therefore a place for all to feel welcome and safe.

5.1.3.4   Socialising

The social aspect of being in a choir is of integral importance to the members, an aspect that is well documented in the literature (Bartolome 2013; Brinson 1996; Clift & Hancox 2001; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kokotsaki & Hallam 2011). During data collection, participants described several examples of their social activities outside of the rehearsal space, stating that it allows for the singers to get to know each other on a personal level. The interviewees professed that they enjoy these social interactions and see the choir room as a hub for socialising with other singers. For some of the Camerata members, these social interactions have great impact on their personal lives, and are the sole reason why they remain in the choir. Sacrificing free time for the choir is seen by some as not being a disadvantage at all as they have the best time in the choir, as their friendship circles consist mainly of singers in the Camerata.

5.1.4   Minor themes attributed to social value

From the data, two minor themes emerged namely extrinsic value and choir being more than 'just music'.

5.1.4.1   Extrinsic value

Brinson defines extrinsic motivators as factors that persuade singers to join choirs that come from "without" the realm of the actual music (1996: 19). A recurring extrinsic motivator mentioned by several Camerata members during data collection was traveling for concert tours. Some mentioned their experiences of traveling with the choir in the past, while others looked towards future tours that were already in planning. Some believe that the tours offered by the choir have great educational value as they expand their overall view of the world and add new experiences and exposure to other countries and people to their lives.

5.1.4.2   Choir is more than 'just' music

For individual choristers, singing in the Camerata is far more than just about the music itself, and really about the heightened emotional experience as a result thereof. Choristers recalled events in the choir that were pure ecstasy and euphoria, saying it was difficult to describe the emotions they experienced and that they are not moved so profoundly outside the choral environment. Participants see their role in performances as significant as it gives them a purpose. Individual contributions of singers explain choir as a life changing event; a motivating factor to continue studying at the university of Pretoria; allows them to be part of something 'bigger' in life; serves as a reminder of the beauty the world offers, especially during the turbulent times on campus; and sees choir as a blessing. Although these contributions were made by individuals, they remain no less significant nor are they less profound.

5.1.5   Major themes attributed to musical value

The musical value attributed to membership in the Camerata as perceived by the participants was less substantial than both the personal and social aspects. This is in contrast to studies which found that musical benefits are a primary gain of participation in a choral ensemble (Bartolome 2013; Meisenbach & Kramer 2014). Data analysis in the current study was organised according to two major themes. Firstly, choristers use the metaphor of being 'message bearers' in order to communicate with the audience, and secondly, participants mentioned intrinsic aspects that are of great value to them individually.

5.1.5.1 Message bearers: Communication through music

Participants value concert performances a great deal as it is an opportunity for them to communicate a message to their audience. Several choristers used the metaphor of 'being a message bearer', saying it was their duty to touch the lives of audience members; to educate people about music and life through song; to share their talent; to inspire; and to act as an instrument to convey important messages and emotions. A common thread that participants mentioned was the choir's ability to obtain an emotional reaction from the audience and from within their own ranks. The pure satisfaction of seeing the audience smile, cry, or be moved by the music is a great motivator for many of the choir participants. Some of the choristers shared strong opinions about their responsibility to change the lives of those that experience a performance for the better, saying that their role in the choir is for a greater purpose than just singing the notes. Participants offered philosophical beliefs about the importance of having music that can spread messages of love, hope, humanity, and compassion, an aspect which others believe was integral during the campus protests.

5.1.5.2 Intrinsic value

The analysis of data revealed that participants greatly value the intrinsic benefits associated with singing in a choir. Brinson describes intrinsic motivation as that which comes "from within", stating that it is a choral director's ultimate goal that the chorister's reach this inner enthusiasm for it is the most "meaningful and lasting" motivator for choir participation (1996: 19). Choristers in the Camerata explained their need to sing in a choir, either as a continuation from previous experience, or because of the intrinsic love and enthusiasm for choir singing instilled within them. The majority of choristers mentioned their love for music itself, and that this motivated them to sing in the Camerata. This was corroborated during observations made at rehearsals and performances, where choristers were visibly moved by the music. Several participants mentioned that their lives would be empty without choir, while others saw it as a natural progression from singing in previous choirs. A greater appreciation for choir music; improved musical skills; and an education connection were other intrinsic factors mentioned by participants. The latter was especially important to a handful of students that want to pursue choral conducting as a career, and they expressed their involvement in the choir as having great benefit to them personally.

5.2   Social capital as a by-product of participation

As explained in the literature review, the theoretical framework guiding this study is that of Putnam (1995) who identified five proximal indicators to ascertain if social capital is being generated in an organisation. The analysed data were compared to these five proximal indicators, leading to the result namely that the University of Pretoria Camerata can be seen

as i) an activity that is voluntary; ii) an activity that builds connections and networks between its members; iii) an activity that allows for reciprocity; iv) an activity that generates a wealth of trust between its members (the singers); and v) an activity that produces shared social norms and values among the participants as a result of their involvement. In the following sections, each of these proximal indicators will be discussed in relation to existing literature.

5.2.1 Voluntary activity

Voluntary participation and involvement is identified as a key factor of determining if social capital is generated within a community (Langston 2011; Narayan & Cassidy 2001; NCVO 2003; Putnam 2000; Stolle & Rochon 1998; Tocqueville 2001). Singing in the Camerata is completely voluntary and is observed as an extramural activity that is offered by the University of Pretoria. Like any society or club, members need to pay fees in order to enjoy the benefits that the organisation offers. No students in the Camerata are remunerated in any form, be it financial or by receiving academic credits towards the completion of their degrees. Any full-time student at the University of Pretoria is eligible to audition for the choir, regardless of his/her chosen career path or degree. There are numerous reasons why the members sing in the choir as discussed at length in this Chapter as well as in Chapter 4. One such reason as revealed by the data is that choristers sing in the choir for intrinsic reasons because it brings value to their lives. This is substantiated by literature which argues that "[such] voluntary participation provides an environment in which networks may be developed" (Langston 2011: 165), and also "increases the chance that trust between members will be developed" (Stolle & Rochon 1998: 48).

5.2.2 Networks and connections

The sharing of resources and information by establishing connections and building networks with another is a core aspect of social capital (Coleman 1988; Langston 2011; Putnam 1993, 2000; Stone 2001; Woolcock & Narayan 2000), one that allows the cooperation and collaboration between individuals for mutual benefit (Cox 1995; Putnam 1993, 2000; Langston 2011, Schuller, Baron & Field 2000). A practical example offered by the interviewees of such connections is the sharing of transport to and from choir activities. During the protest action, several rehearsals were scheduled off campus and choristers needed to arrange transport for themselves. Data analysis revealed that choristers formed lift clubs and ensured that those that required assistance were adequately supported. For some participants living in close proximity to one another, lift clubs to choir rehearsals are the norm and sharing the burden of transportation seems to be more practical and financially beneficial.

Some of the musically advanced choristers have established networks amongst themselves, providing support by sharing their wealth of knowledge in practical singing with those singers with less experience or formal training in music. This finding corresponds with a study conducted by Goodrich (2005, 2007), where students in a high school jazz band developed social capital by helping one another through mentoring on a social and musical level. This mentoring took place during rehearsals as well as outside of official band activities. Data analysis provides evidence of friendships forming between less experienced singers in the Camerata who seek assistance from musically advanced choristers who are often students enrolled for music degrees. Helping others to "develop skills, knowledge, habits and dispositions to engage in such musical pursuits can ultimately help them develop bridging capital" (Jones 2010: 296). Music students assist greatly in passing on their knowledge of how to read music and to study choral scores to other choristers, which is beneficial to the overall process of memorising new music. However, this provides opportunities to build connections between different choristers. This sharing of knowledge and information is "beneficial to groups who have a common interest" (Langston & Barrett 2008: 121), and this commonality also strengthens bonding social capital (Putnam 2000). In this respect, one chorister mentioned the advantage of networking with students from various facets of life. While being at university simultaneously, connections made between different choristers could be beneficial through the sharing of knowledge, for example when a fellow chorister studies the same degree but is older and has already completed a certain course or year of study. Such a student could offer advice from personal experience to the younger student. The other benefit of networking is that bonds can be formed with singers that might be able to contribute to an individual's life in the future, such as having a friend that is a medical student that might be able to offer advice, another example of bridging social capital (NCVER 2004; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan 2000).

Social connections and networks between choristers are important aspects that warrant mentioning. Singers in the choir form strong friendships, often socialising in their own time and even partaking in joint holidays. These connections are imperative as they provide a support structure and a place where choristers can bond and converse on a personal and emotional level. Some groups in the choir form between choristers that have similar interests, such as a running club, a movie club that meets after rehearsals, as well as two musical ensembles earn an extra income by playing at events. Forming such intimate relationships through a common interest is well documented as an example of bonding social capital (Coleman 1988, NCVER 2004; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan 2000).

The choir – as an organisation and as part of the university as an institution – creates additional networks between the community and choristers. Langston (2011: 174) uses the example of a community choir singing at a Christmas parade as a form of networking between the choir and the community, and Langston and Barrett describe performance opportunities at churches – organised by choristers in a choir – as examples of networks that strengthen the community (2008: 127). In a similar vein, Camerata annually offers several free concerts and presents numerous workshops on choral techniques for the community. The choir is invited to perform at several churches throughout the year, often organised by choristers within the choir. Furthermore, marketing the choir through social media platforms results in networks being established between the university and people from the surrounding communities.

5.2.3   Reciprocity

A society rich in social capital is bound to have networks of individuals that foster reciprocity within their community or organisation (Coleman 1988; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Stone 2001). Alumni of the University of Pretoria Camerata support the choir by attending concerts and on occasion, provide financial assistance by sponsoring the choristers for concert tours. Choristers themselves are aware that all concert income is used to assist students who struggle to pay choir fees especially with regard to international concert tours. The choir has an 'all for one' policy, meaning that either every member participates in concert tours, or nobody does. This means that the income from performances assist all members, even those that might not benefit directly by receiving some of the funds, but by the notion that the concert tour will take place for all to attend.

Participants shared their belief during interviews that all members in the choir are there to care for one another, especially in a time of need, and that they can rely on this support to be reciprocated.

5.2.4   Trust

A fundamental ideology of social capital is that of mutual trust (Coleman 1988; Fukuyama 2001; Langston 2011; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 1993, 2000; Stone 2001; Wehlage 2000). Langston and Barrett found that trust within a community choir "appears in many forms" (2008: 125). In the current study, two evident sub-themes emerged from the data, namely choristers trusting each other on a personal level, and trusting each other for the sake of musical excellence.

5.4.4.1 Personal trust

Personal trust, as experienced between the choristers of the University of Pretoria Camerata, varies significantly depending on the individual. For some of the participants, personal trust shared between themselves and others choristers is unequivocal. These participants experience a wealth of trust, stating that choristers are reliable and worthy of such praise. Choristers in amateur choirs, such as the Camerata, learn to trust each other through their participation even though it is not the purpose of their affiliation (Putnam 1993; Van As 2014). Several studies advocate that choirs generate a wealth of trust amongst its members (Langston 2011; Langston & Barrett 2008; Putnam 1993, 2000; Van As 2014) but none highlight that this 'trust' is dependent on the relationships between the singers. For most choristers in the Camerata, trust is a relative phenomenon and depends on specific circumstances and individuals. The majority of singers advocated their belief that there is a level of personal trust between all members, but that this is strengthened within close friendship circles which are at times exclusive. Some choristers experience that their trust in fellow choristers grow and increase as time passes, with many believing that personal trust within the choir is reliable and valid due to the amount of time spent together during rehearsals, performances and social activities. An important motivation for trust developing within a close community such as the Camerata is a shared or common interest, which in this case is choral singing, and is substantiated widely in the literature (Jones 2010; Narayan & Cassidy 2001; Langston & Barrett 2008; Putnam 1993; Stolle & Roche 1998; Woolcock 1998).

5.4.4.2   Musical trust

In comparison to personal trust, the feedback during interviews and focus groups were unanimous regarding a strong belief from choristers to trust each other musically for the benefit of the music. Langston and Barrett discuss attendance, preparing the music for rehearsals, and being put on the spot to sing a solo or duet, as examples of trust which is expected of members in a community choir for the benefit of musical excellence. (2008: 125). The choristers in the Camerata also trust each other to study their music and always aim to give their best so that rehearsals and concerts will be successful and that everybody pulls their weight for the task at hand. Striving towards a common goal has been cited as a motivating factor for trusting each other on a musical level. The singers in the choir truly advocate their belief in trusting their fellow choristers to always give a great performance and know that they will not be let down. Several participants also mentioned the importance of trusting the members that stand next to them in the choir, advocating the need to force a connection with them for the benefit of the music.

5.2.5   Social norms and values

Sharing social norms and values is considered a cornerstone of social capital as it strengthens the ties and connections of individuals within a community (Fukuyama 2001; Langston & Barrett 2008; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 1993). Integrity and respect are two pivotal attributes emerging from the data as shared by the majority of singers in the Camerata. Several participants mentioned these aspects as values that are adopted through choir participation and that it is expected from all singers. Additionally, there is a shared notion amongst the participants that these principles of integrity and respect – although basic and necessary for any institution or organisation to be successful – are not always engrained in people and that these assumed values serve the choristers outside of the choral environment. Participants believe that they are holistically enriched with norms and values that benefit them in their personal capacities as a result of the way they are taught to conduct themselves and to learn the music within the Camerata. Choristers reflected that the notion of respect does not imply that individuals should always be in agreement with one another. Members of the Camerata do, however, allow people to be different through their own beliefs, be it religious, cultural, or sexual preference, and they do so without passing judgement. This supports the finding of Langston and Barrett namely that social capital can only develop within a community or organisation if there is "some degree of common understanding, acceptance, and sharing of common norms" (2008: 122).

Teamwork is another important aspect of the choir and a social norm adopted through participation. Tonneijck et al. found that members in a choir had the "desire to act together as a whole" allowing them to become more "competent" singers (2008: 177), which is substantiated by the research of Langston and Barrett in which members in a community choir show a "willingness to work as a team" in order to "ensure success" (2008: 132). In a middle school boys' choir, Sweet found that teamwork was integral to these young singers (2010: 11), and in Bartolome's study of the benefits of singing in the Seattle Girls' Choir, choristers understood the importance of working in a group (2013: 405). Several choristers in the Camerata choir see themselves as individuals when it comes to their academics, but in choir they are taught all about working as a collective, striving for the same goal. A common opinion by the choristers is that Camerata contributes greatly to teaching the members within the choir about team work, striving towards goals through having a common interest. It is also well documented in the current study that, in order for the Camerata to be successful, every single member needs to contribute by knowing their music as they form part of an integral chain that is only as strong as its weakest link. Kokotsaki & Hallam (2011) and Livesey et al. (2012) substantiated these findings in their research with regard to

teamwork as an essential benefit as perceived by the choristers in their respective contributions to the literature.

Discipline, a sense of belonging and having an environment that is supportive for its members, are all norms and values that are cultivated within the choir and shared by the members. A study conducted with the Milton Community Choir (Langston & Barrett 2008: 127) found that caring for one another was a generalised norm amongst the participants, an aspect that is also evident within the University of Pretoria Camerata.

5.2.6 Bridging and bonding social capital

Social capital has been divided into three forms, each with different characteristics. These are bonding social capital (Coleman 1988; Giorgas 2000; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan); bridging social capital (NCVER 2004; Putnam 2000; Woolcock & Narayan); and linking social capital (Putnam 2001; Stone 2003). In the current study, linking social capital was not investigated as it concerns the vertical links between institutions and their authorities (Stone 2003; Woolcock 2001) and this study is only concerned with the perceived values of choir participation by university students.

Woolcock refers to bonding social capital which is generated amongst "family members, close friends and neighbours" (2001: 4) and Putnam considers it to be a "kind of sociological superglue holding groups together" (2000: 23). The Camerata members generate a great deal of bonding social capital and data analysis revealed that this is perceived both as a positive and negative attribute. The common interest shared amongst the members of the Camerata, namely choral singing, allows for bonding social capital to exist. Friendships are formed and the choir as an organisation almost becomes an exclusive entity. Choristers refer to the choir as an extension of their families, providing rich evidence of the strong bond that exists between them. As mentioned in the findings, friendships between specific groups can be negatively perceived, appearing to be exclusive based on race, language, culture and sexual preferences, which supports Putnam's view on bonding social capital being "bad" (2001: 18). Observation data also substantiates these findings as racial groups – white and black students – tend to form separate social groups during rehearsal breaks and in their leisure time. Bonding social capital tends to be most prevalent between choristers that share a common language. The findings clearly describe the barrier that exists between choristers that do not share a common mother tongue, and how bonding social capital occurs as singers of a common language tend to group and socialise together. Although bonding social capital within the Camerata creates a sense of unity within the group, its very nature tends to preclude individuals (Langston 2011).

In contrast to bonding social capital, bridging social capital is outward-looking and "involves people across a wide spectrum" (Langston 2011: 164), fostering the generation of "broader identities and reciprocity" (Putnam 2000: 23). Bridging social capital also facilitates the "relations between groups with significant differences" (NCVER 2004: 37). The data reveals that many choristers in the Camerata were "forced" to be in an environment that promotes multiculturalism when first joining the choir. Several participants mentioned the homogeneous environments –such as schools, church, and community – that they grew up in, which essentially would have resulted in bonding social capital at the expense of bridging social capital. By joining the Camerata, a great deal of bridging social capital is taking place. Data analysis reveals many examples of students becoming friends with choristers they would not have ordinarily socialised with, ultimately bridging the gap between cultures, languages and race. Choristers attribute a great deal of this bridging to the music as they believe that the music unites the singers across all boundaries and differences. There is more than just tolerance amongst the members of the Camerata; there is a deep respect and a willingness to learn from each other. Some choristers also provided powerful testaments of how their perceptions about certain cultures have changed for the better as a result of socialising and working in the diverse environment provided by the Camerata.

5.3   Summary

This chapter highlighted the personal, social and musical value attributed to membership in a university choir as experienced by its singers. Using Putnam's five proximal indicators as a theoretical framework informed the discussion with regard to social capital being generated in the choir, and links were made to compare the findings of this study with those already found in the literature. Stolle and Rochon found that the existence of social capital is robust and varied across countries (1998: 62), recommending the need further exploration on this topic.The multifaceted experiences of choristers in the Camerata therefore provide ample evidence of social capital as described and discussed in this chapter and, although the singers perceive their choir participation to lead to mostly positive outcomes, there are some negative aspects to take note of. As a community, the University of Pretoria Camerata produces a wealth of bonding and bridging social capital amongst its singers. Using Putnam's five proximal indicators as a framework for this research has resulted in an extensive explorative study into the generating of social capital in a diverse university choir.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and conclusion

This study investigated the multifaceted benefits associated with singing in a multicultural South African University Choir with the aim of establishing to what extent and in what ways social capital is generated as a by-product of such choir participation.

6.1   Answering the research questions

This study aimed at answering the following research questions:

- What are the personal values which choristers attribute to participation in the University of Pretoria Camerata?
- To what extent are Putnam's key proximal indicators generated amongst the members of the Camerata that could establish the existence of social capital?

Primarily this research highlights the personal, social and musical values attributed to membership within the choir as perceived by its members. Furthermore, the contributions in literature that already exist with regard to the importance of participation in a music endeavour are highlighted (Adderley, Kennedy & Berz 2003; Asmus & Harrison 1990; Bartolome 2010; Brown 2012; Correnblum & Marshall 1998; Demorest 2000; Durrant 2005; Gates 1991; Hylton 1981; Hughes 1978; Jacob, Guptill & Sumsion 2009; Joseph & Southcott 2014; Kennedy 2002; Klinedinst 1991; Mizener 1993; Phillips 2004; Pitts 2005; Schmidt 2005; Smith & Sataloff 2013; Sweet 2010). By discussing and relating the existing literature to the findings of the current study, it became evident that singing in a choir is polygonal, and that experiences for choristers are rewarding, plentiful, and even challenging at times. Camerata members partaking in this study shared their perceptions, referring to the following aspects regarding their choir participation:

- it has a positive effect on their health and well-being;
- it is a safe environment in which friendships and a sense belonging are fostered;
- it instils discipline, time management and life skills that are necessary to succeed in daily life activities;
- it offers potential for integration and education to take place between the various cultural groups within the choir;
- it creates an opportunity to fulfil an essential human need namely to make music collectively;

- the feeling of connectedness between the singers, and the 'work and play' atmosphere during rehearsals, are most special and worthwhile to the singers and the setting where social capital is primarily generated;

- it fosters high levels of trust, intercultural understanding and civic engagement between choir members;

- it creates strong networks between the singers, regardless of their culture, race, religious and sexual preferences, generating an environment that is accepting of all students and conducive to positive learning.

Additionally, the research results lead to an understanding of some challenges or negative perceptions of choristers regarding their choir participation:

- Some Camerata singers are of the opinion that the long hours required for choir rehearsals and concert performances can add to their levels of stress, especially with regard to their academic programmes.

- Furthermore, cultural and language barriers exist within the choir which can prevent integration between certain groups from taking place. Such barriers create cultural divides, which ultimately leads to the formation of exclusive friendship circles.

- The aspect of trusting fellow choristers unconditionally emerged as possibly leading to compromising situations. Choristers mentioned that, in some instances, sharing personal and private information could be abused, resulting in gossip and malevolence.

Regardless of these challenges, members of the Camerata voluntarily sacrifice a great deal of time and money to sing in the choir. Interpreting this aspect leads to the understanding that the advantages of choir participation are far greater than the trials which choristers need to occasionally endure. The University of Pretoria Camerata is an active music making community offering the students an "anchorage to life" (Borglin, Edberg & Hallberg 2005: 205), and an example of an institution that supports the well-being of the individual, while providing opportunities for the singers to share their culture and heritage within a diverse environment.

This study suggests that social capital is being generated as a by-product of participation within the University of Pretoria Camerata. By using the framework recommended by Putnam (1995) and endorsed by several other researchers (Gauntlett 2012; Langston & Barrett 2008; Narayan & Cassidy 2001; Procter 2011; Stolle & Rochon 1998; Woolcock & Narayan 2000), the study provides empirical evidence of how two types of social capital,

namely bridging- and bonding social capital, are facilitated. Data analysis revealed confirmation of bridging social capital that exists amongst students from different ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, the study affords evidence of bonding social capital between specific language-, racial- and cultural groups. As a result of choir participation, social norms and values are shared amongst the singers and networks and connections are established across all sorts of boundaries which create an environment of reciprocity between singers. As determined by several researchers, trust is a precondition of social capital (Coleman 1988; Cohen & Prusak 2001; Fukuyama 2001; Jones 2010; Langston & Barrett 2008; Paldam & Svendsen 1999; Putnam 2000; Wright 2012), and evidence from the current study highlights that the Camerata establishes a wealth of trust between its members, both on a personal and professional or musical level. This study explored the creation and importance of social capital within a diverse South African university choir, adding to the understanding of this phenomenon within the existing canon of literature.

6.2   Limitations to the study

As conductor of the Camerata, my role during the study was as participant observer. My dual role as teacher and researcher causes concern for bias. Subjectivity remains a prominent concern in qualitative research (Creswell 2013; Durrant 2005; Leedy & Ormrod 2010; Stake 1995). Stake advocates the importance of participant observers, stating that "one role may work much better for certain people, [in] certain situations" (1995: 104). In this role, I acknowledged etic issues (Creswell 2013; Stake 1995) as I explored the perceived benefits of singing in a multicultural university choir. As recommended by the Faculty of Humanities Ethics Committee at the University of Pretoria, a research assistant was employed to conduct and transcribe all interviews, and pseudonyms were assigned to all participants to shield their identity from fear of prejudice. From the onset the research was explained to all choristers, consent forms were issued, and singers had a choice whether or not to participate. Results emulating from the data were handed back to all interviewees for member checking and also shared with the research assistant as well as with my supervisor to alleviate any further bias. Triangulation was obtained by comparing the interviews and focus groups with extensive observation data. I acknowledge that my close personal interaction with the choristers in the choir, and my status as employee of the University of Pretoria, result in this study offering, at times, a personal opinion (Stake 1995).

Since this is a qualitative study, the advantage of this dual role allowed for a greater in-depth perspective of the lived experiences of the participants as I have intimate knowledge of the choir, both as conductor and as a chorister several years ago. This assisted me greatly in understanding and analysing the data. Numerous acclaimed international studies have

utilised a similar research strategy where the choir conductor acted as the researcher. Examples include Bridget Sweet's study of a middle school chorus (2010); Balandina's work in Macedonia (2010); and Bartolome's extensive work of the Seattle Girls' Choir (2010).

The results of the study may not be generalisable to all choirs since it was a single case study focusing on the perceptions of the choristers from only one South African university choir. However, extensive data collection generated a significant amount of data, leading to a better understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

6.3   Recommendations emanating from the research findings

It is evident that during the time this research was being conducted, South African universities were experiencing political and social turmoil. However, findings from the current study revealed that during the protests, members in the choir were able to communicate amicably about the challenges which South Africa and its universities face. Policy makers and departments in charge of formulating educational strategies should scrutinise the possibilities that choirs have in producing trust, honesty and mutual reciprocity within communities, schools, universities, and churches, and provide support to such initiatives which could ultimately benefit society at large.

The study divulged that a university choir such as the Camerata is an important marketing tool for a university, both on a national and international platform, as members in the choir act as brand ambassadors when performing for the community at home and at large. Several participants referred to selecting the University of Pretoria as their primary choice of tertiary institution after attending a concert performance of the Camerata. In general, universities should provide more support in terms of funding towards choral organisations. The benefits experienced by the members are not only self-enjoyed, but directly impact the university and its wider community. The wealth of social capital generated through the Camerata warrants substantial motivation that additional support should be provided for such an endeavour. Universities across South Africa could benefit from establishing choral communities through funding efforts.

6.4   Recommendations for future research

Findings from this study indicate that close connections and friendships are generated according to the choir formation; choristers standing nearer to each other within the choir formation tend to bond in closer relationships. It is therefore recommended that a study is conducted to determine to which extent bridging social capital can be maximised within a

culturally diverse choir setting. Other research questions emanating from the current study include the following:

- What are the lived experiences of singers in community youth choirs in rural areas of South Africa?
- What are the lived experiences of choristers participating in choirs at other universities in South Africa?
- What are the lived experiences of university choir conductors regarding the generating of social capital in South Africa?
- To what extent do communities, such as choirs, have the potential to unite members within a diverse environment, especially in a country like South Africa?
- What are the positive and negative effects of generating bonding- and bridging social capital within a diverse community choir?
- To what extent can understanding the benefits of social capital inform music educators in their role to adequately adapt and change their methods and strategies to effectively teach and inspire singers within a diverse South African environment?

Such inquiry and investigation into the lived experiences of singers and conductors in various contexts, be it different cultural environments or types of choirs, will contribute to the relatively small body of literature that is available, and can generate a better understanding of this polygonal phenomenon in a South African context.

6.5   Conclusion

Research provides evidence that diversification within communities – such as a culturally diverse community at a South African university – can have negative effects, but that these challenges can be rectified by increasing the social interactions between individuals (Stolle, Soroka & Johnston 2008). The present study suggests that a choir has strong abilities and potential to build social capital within such a community. The members of the University of Pretoria Camerata represent a diverse community which, according to Stolle et al., should be "accompanied by lower levels of trust" due to its "high levels of "racial and ethnic heterogeneity" (2008: 58). The findings of this study, however, reveal that the choir generates high levels of trust amongst its members, fostering what Putnam (2007: 139) terms a "broader sense of we". This notion is reflected succinctly in one of the Camerata member's views, as quoted below:

Camerata actually opened up an entire new world for me. I am opened up to new cultures, traditions and ways of thinking. In the past, if we went to Sun City and there were a bunch of Zulus doing traditional dancing, then we walked past because it was simply just a noise. Now, I am all up in that dance and I would join in – I would be part of the music and I have such a great appreciation for it now – simply because I understand what is being said in the music and through the dances and language. And for the first time in my life – through singing in Camerata – I saw choir music as a real art form rather than just a tradition. My spiritual, 'Godly' experience was unbelievable. I did not really realise how God could talk without really speaking; how God could be heard without anybody really saying anything. And how, in a moment of silence, the most could be said. These are the things that have the greatest value for me and this value is not measurable….

(Brillianto)

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Appendix A: Semi-structured interview schedule

This interview schedule will be used for face-to-face interviews with individual members of the University of Pretoria Camerata.

1. Tell me about your choral singing experiences. Which choirs have you sung in prior to joining Camerata (if any), and for how many years have you sung in such choirs?
2. What were your expectations of the Camerata before you joined?
3. Tell me about your reasons for wanting to sing in the Camerata choir.
4. What has been your experience of being a Camerata member?
5. Tell me about what have you learnt from being a member in this choir.
6. What is your opinion about the notion that choirs bring together people of different backgrounds?
7. How do you experience cultural integration within the choir?
8. What is your opinion regarding the numerous protests on campus in recent months?
9. Do you believe these disruptions have had an effect on the choir? Explain.
10. How would you describe your feelings after a rehearsal?
11. How would you describe your feelings during and after a performance?
12. How would you describe the value your experience as a chorister brings to your life?
13. Where and how would you gain assistance if you needed help with learning your Camerata music?
14. How do you arrange lifts to and from rehearsals?
15. What are your feelings regarding financial support to a Camerata member who cannot afford joining a concert tour? How do you think challenges like these should be dealt with?
16. Imagine this scenario: The committee asks volunteers to assist in painting the *Tuks Wall* on campus to promote an upcoming concert. This will take place on a Saturday morning. What are your feelings about such a situation – would you volunteer or not? What are your reasons?
17. Please describe how you experience the feeling of trust (if any) between Camerata members. Explain your views.
18. How often do you communicate (text, email, phone, social media, etc.) with fellow choristers outside of the official choir events? Daily, weekly, monthly? What do such communications relate to – choir matters only or other aspects? Please describe.
19. How often do you socialise (movies, coffee, etc.) with fellow choristers outside of the official choir events? Please describe.
20. Who are the choristers with whom you socialise? How are these fellow choristers similar or different to you regarding language, culture, gender, study field, etc.?
21. The choir has a social after a rehearsal. How long do you stay? What are the factors that determine how long you stay and your enjoyment during the event?
22. What are your views regarding camaraderie in the choir? Please elaborate.
23. What is your view regarding shared social values between choir members? Please elaborate.

Appendix B: Focus group interview schedule

This interview schedule will be used for small groups of members of the University of Pretoria Camerata.

1. What value does choir singing offer you as members of Camerata?
2. In what way – if any –do you think the Camerata encourages and fosters friendships across cultural boundaries?
3. Choir singing has been connected to improved health for its members. What are your views on this statement? Please elaborate.
4. What is your view of the statement: "Choir singing is more than just about the music"? Elaborate.
5. In your opinion, why do choristers voluntarily offer up so much of their time (and money) to participate in the Camerata?
6. What aspects do you believe attribute to continued participation in the choir especially during the tough times (examinations, test week, a social outing that needs to be sacrificed, etc.)?
7. What are some of the aspects that might lead choristers to resign (either immediately, or eventually)?
8. If you needed help with learning your Camerata music, who would you ask? Could you approach anyone or would you be specific in whom you asked? Please elaborate.
9. You need a lift home after rehearsal. What are your views regarding fellow choristers to assist you? Please elaborate.
10. How would you describe the relationship or friendship bonds between members of the Camerata?
11. The choir has added an extra performance to the calendar and the committee asks of the availability of the choristers. What are the factors that you need to consider before agreeing to participate? Please explain.
12. Please describe how you experience the feeling of trust (if any) between Camerata members. Explain your views.
13. The choir has a social after a rehearsal. How long do you stay? What are the factors that determine how long you stay or your enjoyment during the event?
14. What are your views regarding camaraderie in the choir? Please elaborate.
15. What is your view regarding shared social values between choir members? Please elaborate.

Appendix C: Focused observation protocol for rehearsals

This three month observation schedule will be used for all rehearsals that take place at the University of Pretoria.

Observation Schedule: University of Pretoria Camerata rehearsal		
Date and time:		
Observation Protocol	**Descriptive Notes**	**Reflective Notes**
Describe the venue/setting. Anything different from previous rehearsals?		
Describe the behaviour and movements of students prior to the activity. Who is chatting to whom, what language are they speaking, what is the mood and atmosphere of these interactions?		
Start of the activity – members missing, committee notices, opening, etc.		
Suggestion box notices: what suggestions are presented to the choir – what is the reaction of choristers?		
Warm-up: discuss the mood of the choir and their responsiveness. Discipline important. (20 min)		
Rehearsal procedure. Music rehearsed– level of success, atmosphere, response of choristers etc. (20 min)		
Rehearsal procedure. Music rehearsed– level of success, atmosphere, response of choristers etc. (20 min)		
Rehearsal procedure. Music rehearsed– level of success, atmosphere, response of choristers etc. (20 min)		
Rehearsal procedure. Music rehearsed– level of success, atmosphere, response of choristers etc. (20 min)		
Rehearsal procedure. Music rehearsed– level of success, atmosphere, response of choristers etc. (20 min)		
Committee member's communication at the end of the rehearsal – how does the choir respond – who is talking to the choir, what is being discussed, etc.?		
Mood of the choir at the end of the rehearsal – how does this compare to the mood at the beginning?		
Interactions of choristers at the end of the rehearsal.		

Appendix D: Focused observation protocol for performances

This three month observation schedule will be used for all performances that take place at the University of Pretoria.

Observation Schedule: University of Pretoria Camerata Performance		
Date and time:		
Observation Protocol	**Descriptive Notes**	**Reflective Notes**
Describe the venue/setting. Anything different from previous performances? Size of audience – mood of audience? Length of the performance? Is there an interval, etc.?		
Are there visiting choirs for this performance? What is the interaction between Camerata and these choirs?		
Is there a mass choir work? How do the choristers interact with one another? What is the general mood/atmosphere of the mass choir work?		
Describe the behaviour and movements of students prior to the performance. Who is chatting to whom, what language are they speaking, what is the mood and atmosphere of these interactions? What responsibilities are being completed and by whom?		
Warm-up: discuss the mood of the choir and their responsiveness. Discipline important.		
Performance procedure. What music is performed – level of success, etc.? Comment on the behaviour of the choristers.		
What is the general mood of the choir after the performance? Comment on the interactions directly after the concert.		
What is the responsive of the audience for this performance?		

Appendix E: Letter of informed consent – choir members

Participation in research study: Exploring choristers' perceptions of a university choir as potential for social capital and personal value

Dear Camerata choir member

You are invited to participate in this research project which is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Doctorate in Music (Performing Arts) through the University of Pretoria. This research is being conducted by myself (Michael Barrett) and is under the supervision of Dr Dorette Vermeulen.

Please read the following information regarding your participation in the above-mentioned study. The participation in this study is completely voluntary and even if you have agreed to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time. Your decision to not participate will not affect your relationship with the University of Pretoria Camerata, the Conductor, the Choir Committee, the Department of Music, or the University in any way.

Aim of the study

This study aims at understanding the perceived values of participating in the University of Pretoria Camerata by its members. I intend to explore the main reason why students join the Camerata choir, and how both music and non-music students, as well as members from different culture groups, perceive their experiences in the choir.

Research procedures

You are invited to participate in an interview – either individually or in a focus group – during which questions will be asked regarding your participation in the choir. These interviews will be conducted and audio-recorded by an independent party. A transcript of your interview will be provided to you before the data will be used. You will be asked to verify the transcript so that it is a true reflection of the views which you shared during the interview. The interviews will last between 30-60 minutes and will take place during choir times in the Camerata choir room as to cause the least amount of disruption to your personal schedule. I will also be making observations during choir rehearsals and performances during the data collection period and extensive notes will be made on the behaviours and reactions of choristers in the choir. These observations will be recorded with a video camera.

Confidentiality

All information will be treated as strictly confidential. Only the researcher, the supervisor and the research assistant will know your identity, but this will not be revealed in any of the research outputs. All recorded interviews and transcripts will be held safely at the University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years, after which they will be destroyed.

Risks, stress, or discomfort

There are no known risks or stress associated with this study. There will be no benefits awarded due to participation in the study, be they financial or other.

Participants' rights

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and should you as participant feel uncomfortable with some of the questions or with the knowledge that the interviews are being recorded, or that you are being observed during choir rehearsals and performances, you may decline to answer questions or withdraw from the study. Should you choose to do so, it will be without prejudice from the University and the researchers involved in this study. In such an event, the data will be destroyed.

Contact details of the supervisor:
Dr Dorette Vermeulen
Tel: +27 12 420 5889
Email: dorette.vermeulen@up.ac.za

Contact details of the researcher (DMus student)
Mr Michael Barrett
Tel: +27 12 420 4182
Email: michael.barrett@up.ac.za

Informed consent form: Camerata members

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music

I hereby acknowledge that this research study has been explained to me. I understand what is required from me and that I may withdraw at any time should I wish to do so with no ill consequences. I will be interviewed, after which I will receive a transcript of the recorded interview in order for me to check if my views have been accurately documented. I acknowledge that I will be observed during rehearsals and performances during this process of data collection, and that these observations will be recorded using a video camera. I understand that my identity and details will not be made public at any time and will only be available to the researchers for the purpose of this study. The data will be kept safely for a period of 15 years. I understand that there are no benefits awarded for participating in this study, be they financial or other. My participation is completely voluntary and out of goodwill.

Please tick the appropriate box:

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

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

_____   _____   _____
Name and Surname (optional)   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Researcher   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Supervisor   Signature   Date

Appendix F: Letter of informed consent – research assistant

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music
Date:

Participation in research study: Exploring choristers' perceptions of a university choir as potential for social capital and personal value

Dear research assistant

I would like to invite you to participate as research assistant in a study which I am conducting as part of my Doctoral degree. Please read the following information regarding the above topic so that you can provide me with your informed consent should you agree to be an independent researcher for this study.

Aim of the study

This study aims at understanding the perceived values of participating in the University of Pretoria Camerata by its members, both past and present. I intend to explore the main reason why students join the Camerata choir, and how both music and non-music students, as well as members from different culture groups, perceive their experiences in the choir.

Procedures

As conductor of the Camerata, it is necessary for me to seek the assistance of a colleague in the field of choral music to conduct the interviews and focus groups on my behalf. This will allow the members of Camerata to speak more freely without the fear of being intimidated. Interviews with 20 individual choristers will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 18:00-20:00. Each interview will last approximately 30 minutes. Focus group interviews will be conducted with groups of 5-8 choristers and will last approximately one hour per focus group. The interviews and focus groups will commence as soon as the approval of the Faculty Ethics Committee has been obtained. Both the interviews and focus groups will be accompanied by a schedule of questions according to which you can guide the discussions. Before the interviews commence, we will have a detailed discussion regarding the research strategy in order for you to probe effectively to attain detailed answers from the respondents. All interviews (individual and group) will be recorded using a digital recording device which will be provided. Transcripts of each interview will be made by me and sent to you for your approval. All interviews will take place in the Camerata choir room.

Risks, stress, or discomfort

There are no known risks or stress associated with this study.

Participants' rights

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without having to provide reasons for doing so, or with no ill consequences. In such an event, the data would be destroyed.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be adhered to at all times during the research process and all information gained during interviews need to be kept strictly confidential. Although you as research assistant will know the identity of the respondents, this information should only be shared with the researcher and supervisor as part of the research process. Your own identity will also be kept confidential in all research outputs. The raw data will be kept safely for a period of fifteen years at the University of Pretoria.

Contact details of the supervisor:	**Contact details of the researcher (DMus student)**
Dr Dorette Vermeulen	Mr Michael Barrett
Tel: +27 12 420 5889	Tel: +27 12 420 4182
Email: dorette.vermeulen@up.ac.za	Email: michael.barrett@up.ac.za

Informed consent form: Research assistant

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Music

I hereby acknowledge that this research study has been explained to me and that my role as research assistant has been clarified. I understand what is required from me. I will receive a transcript of all recorded interviews which I conducted in order to verify the correctness thereof. I also understand that I may withdraw at any time should I no longer be willing to act as research assistant in the study. There will be no ill consequences if I decide to withdraw from the study. I realise that the data will be kept safely for a period of 15 years at the University of Pretoria, and that it will be available only to the researcher and supervisor for research purposes.

Please tick the box below if you agree to act as research assistant by conducting interviews with Camerata members.

☐ I hereby give consent to participate as research assistant. I understand that all information gained during interviews need to be kept strictly confidential at all times, and that my identity will also be kept confidential in research outputs.

_____   _____   _____
Research assistant   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Researcher   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____
Supervisor   Signature   Date