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The Effect of Choir Leader Interventions on Singers' Morale and Attainment.

Ken Fayle

(Student Number 2028833)

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Project Proposal

1) The context

The researcher has been a singer and choir director for thirty years and a singing teacher for the past 3 years. That experience suggests that recruitment and retention for the choirs has always been challenging and finding pupils for an emergent teaching practice is not straightforward. The researcher's conducting and teaching styles have developed from a mixture of formal training from the Association of British Choral Directors (abcd) and the Association of Teachers of Singing (AOTOS), private literature study, discussion with peers and personal experience.

The health and well-being benefits of singing are widely recognised (Dingle *et al.*, 2019), yet surprisingly, only approximately 3% of the adult population sing regularly as members of a choir or in formal lessons (Boileau, Edwards and Swann, 2017). To better understand the causes of this limited engagement, previous studies by the researcher have investigated the barriers preventing individuals from singing and the factors that motivate people, initially to start singing, and then to adopt it as a regular part of their lives (Fayle, 2023). This project aims to delve deeper into the benefits of singing by examining the experiences of choral singers based in Cheshire, with a particular focus on individuals associated with the researcher through their roles as choir singers and private pupils from the researcher's practice. Additionally, directors, or members of the Association of British Choral Directors (abcd) and those of colleagues at the Association of Teachers of Singing (AOTOS) will be included in the study.

2) Hypothesis

The proposal is to answer the research question by testing the following Hypothesis:

An approach for choir leaders and singing teachers using Intervention

Techniques based on eleven Motivation Categories derived from Motivation

Theory will improve the singers' morale and attainment.

3) Justification - Why is Motivation Theory important to Singing Leaders?

Researchers have observed that there is a perception in western society that making music, including singing, is a pastime for an elite group (Ruddock, 2010). This makes those who do not belong to the 'elite' feel excluded from an activity which could potentially be of great benefit to them (Bailey and Davidson, 2005). For many, this leads to a false belief that they are not musical, often compounded for potential singers by an unjustified self-diagnosis of "tone-deafness", an ill-defined term that roughly means "lacking the innate ability to sing" because of an inability to discriminate between musical pitches (Kazez, 1985; Kervin, 2023). Societal pressures reinforce the view that a given individual is unlikely to be a singer (Abril, 2007). The combination of these factors means that an adult is unlikely to join a choir or seek singing lessons unless they had a positive experience singing earlier in their life.

An earlier literature review conducted by the researcher identified potential ways in which this problem could be addressed (Fayle, 2023). This study led the researcher to propose a theory that an approach for choir leaders and singing teachers based

on Motivation Theory (the study of understanding what drives a person to work towards a particular goal or outcome) could improve:

- Recruitment (the number of people who come forward to join a choir or start singing lessons)
- Retention (the proportion of singers who continue to sing regularly after starting)
- Attainment (the standard of musical achievement)

The project will test this theory by applying a set of techniques designed to improved singers' motivation and measuring the effect on the three specified areas.

4) Project Aims

The aims of this research project will be:

- To complete a literature review into Motivation Theory as it relates to singers and singing leaders, extracting themes concerning specific techniques used by teachers and choir directors to improve motivation. This is a continuation of a literature review from an earlier study that examined motivation of singers in a broader context (Fayle, 2023) and will deepen the researcher's knowledge of Motivation Theory.
- To use the findings from the literature review to develop a set of practical techniques that singing leaders can use to positively impact motivation
- To conduct a study using these techniques to test the *Hypothesis*, that a motivation-led approach from singing leaders leads to better outcomes for the singers.

5) Project Goals and Intended Impact

The first intended impact is on the researcher's practice. A successful outcome to the project will result in increased recruitment, improved retention and higher musical attainment for the singers. This will also affect singing leaders in the researcher's immediate circle, initially those involved in the field study, then others as the techniques are refined and used more widely.

It is also intended that this project may have wider ramifications through providing a toolkit of motivation techniques that other choir leaders and singing teachers can apply in their own practice to gain the same benefits.

6) Research Methodology

The project is planned to be a field study involving two choirs. The choirs sing similar repertoire and are conducted by the same director. One choir will be the study group, using the motivation techniques being tested. The other choir will continue as usual and act as the control group.

Research Methods

It is proposed that the study will consist of 6 phases.

- Phase 1 is a short literature review, building on the previous study conducted by the researcher into motivation for singers. The purpose of the literature review is to select and refine practices and techniques to be used during phase 4 of the study. A narrative review methodology has been chosen as it allows for a broader perspective and more nuanced insights compared to a systematic review (Rhoades, 2011), which would be also require more time to complete (Berkeljon and Baldwin, 2009).

- Phase 2 is a set of interviews with two choral directors, including the one involved in the study and one or two singing teachers.
- In phase 3, a questionnaire will be sent to both choirs. The questions will be designed to measure the singers' current morale, commitment to the choir, and assessment of their own singing ability. It is expected that there will be approximately 20 choir singers participating.
- Phase 4 is a field study, in which the study group will be subjected to the motivational techniques. The control group will continue to practice with no use of the techniques.
- Phase 5 is a second literature review.
- For phase 6, the final part of the project, the participants will be sent another questionnaire to measure the impact of the study. The questionnaire will contain the same questions as the initial one with additional questions about the participant's reactions to the study methods.

The data from the questionnaires will then be analysed to assess the success of the techniques used during the study.

The project will last from July 2023 until February 2024. Phase 1 will take place in July and August. Phase 2 interviews will be conducted during August. The phase 3 questionnaire will be sent out in September. Phase 4 will last from September to December. The second literature review for phase 5 will take place in November and December. The phase 6 questionnaire will be sent out in mid-December.

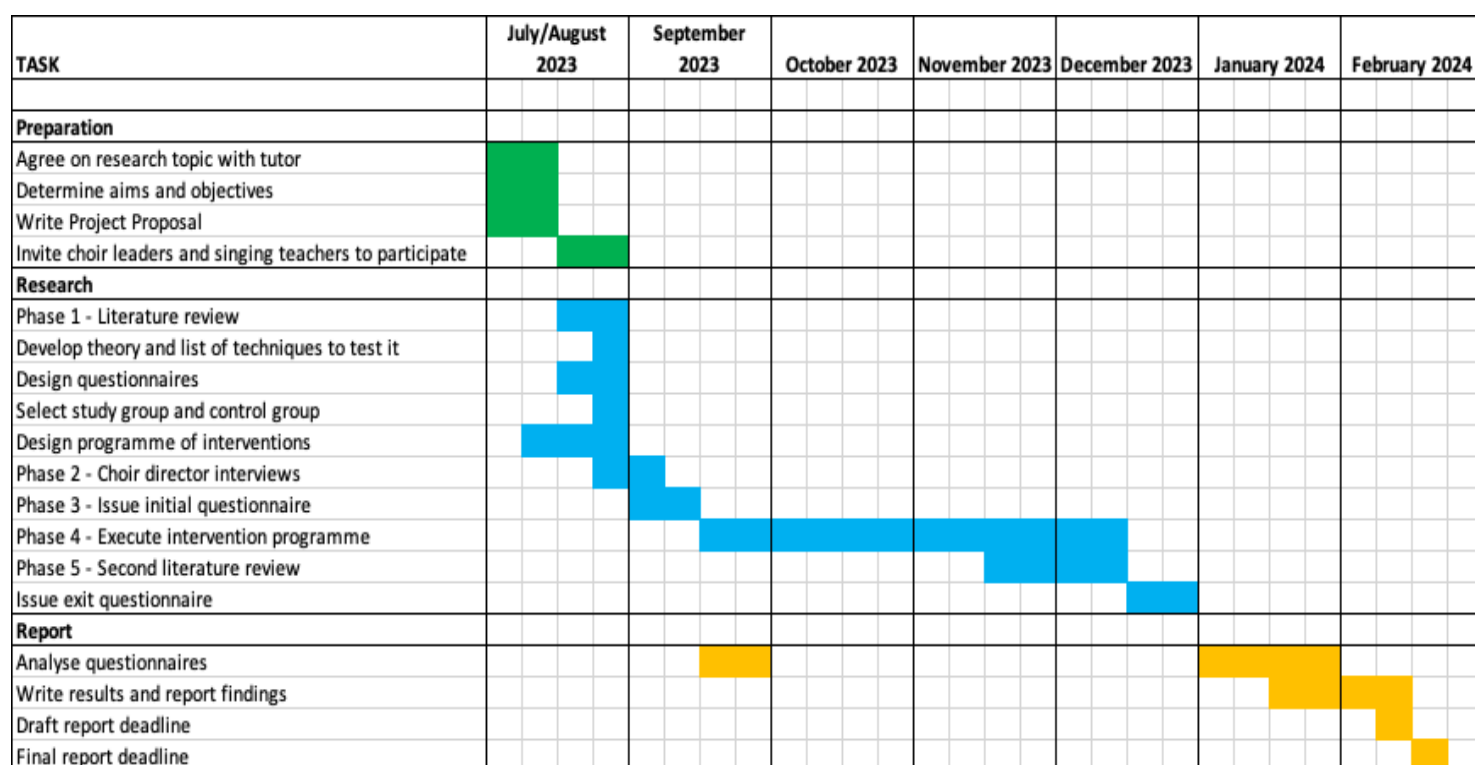


Figure 1 - Project GANTT Chart

7) Ethical Considerations

The insider researcher faces challenges in being objective, making it difficult to engage effectively in the research (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013). For this project, the researcher's role as choir director and singer may lead to participants and professional colleagues thinking they are expected to respond in a particular way instead of expressing their own views. The interview questions will be kept open and

objective and participants will be encouraged to share their ideas without being judged (Kitzinger, 1995). Questionnaire responses will be anonymous.

Participants will be given the opportunity to provide confidential input in an email and this may help to mitigate this and all information in the report will be anonymised.

Interview and questionnaire response will be kept completely confidential.

Where a choir has existing safeguarding and data protection policies in place, will be followed in addition to the University policies. The project has passed the UWTSD ethical review ^{**Appendix A – UWTSD Ethics Approval p90*}. All data will be stored in password-protected folders and handled in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (Laybats and Davies, 2018). Data analysis will take place on the researcher's password-protected computer. No data will be transferred elsewhere. Following project completion, the data will be deleted in accordance with UWTSD ethics policy.

8) Personal learning outcomes

- To better understand the importance and impact of individual motivation for singers in my teaching practice and choirs
- To become proficient in applying the motivational techniques from the study
- To move my personal focus as a singing leader from goal-based objectives (such as grade exams or concert performances) to a motivation-led approach
- To listen, learn and appreciate the perspectives and views of a group of experienced industry professionals

- Following the completion of the project, to engage with professional organisations, such as abcd and AOTOS, to promote the wider use of motivational techniques by singing leaders

Project Report

1) Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the report.

Table 1 - Definitions

Motivation Theory	The study of understanding what drives a person to work towards a particular goal or outcome (Cook and Artino, 2016)
Motivation Categories	A set of eleven themes derived from Motivation Theory as it relates to singers in choirs or lessons. These were selected from an earlier study into singer motivation (Fayle, 2023).
Intervention Techniques	A set of activities, based on the Motivation Categories, to be performed by the singing leader during the study.
Morale	The confidence, enthusiasm, and discipline of a person or group at a particular time (Oxford Languages, 2010). In this study it refers to a singer's feelings about being a member of the choir.
Attainment	The standard of musical performance achieved by the singers. In this study it refers to a singer's perception of their own ability as a singer.

2) Hypothesis

The research question will be answered by testing the following Hypothesis:

An approach for choir leaders and singing teachers using Intervention

Techniques based on eleven Motivation Categories derived from Motivation

Theory will improve the singers' morale and attainment.

3) Introduction

The researcher has been a singer and choir director for over 30 years and a singing teacher for three years, with a background in church and classical music and an

interest in music of all styles and periods. He began research into the reasons why people choose to sing in a choir or with a teacher, to find more potential candidates for his teaching and conducting practice.

The initial investigations examined the barriers that discourage people from singing, either by taking lessons or joining a singing group (Fayle, 2022a). This led to a study into what motivates those who do sing regularly, which included an examination of Motivation Theory, the study of understanding what drives a person to work towards a particular goal or outcome (Cook and Artino, 2016), as it relates to making music (Fayle, 2023), in which a set of themes that are particularly relevant to singing were identified. The study went on to propose a hypothesis for future research that an approach for choir leaders and singing teachers based on Motivation Theory could improve the singers' morale in ways that brought specific benefits to their professional practice. Those themes were refined into the eleven Motivation Categories and the hypothesis became the Hypothesis for this study. The report did not recommend practical methods that could be used during lessons or practices, so the Intervention Techniques are designed as part of the current study. The Hypothesis relates to outcomes that would be of interest to both singing teachers and choir leaders, so it was decided to design and execute practice-led research to test the proposition. "***Practice-led Research*** is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice," (Candy, 2006, p1).

Music Psychology and Vocal Pedagogy

Singing is a fundamental human activity, a natural part of our lives (Ruddock, 2010).

It has been argued that vocalising musical sounds predates speech in human

evolution (John Koopman, 1999; Jordania, 2011). The art of teaching singing has been studied and practised for thousands of years, in ancient Greece for example (Cartwright, González and Piro, 2021). Systematised methods vocal pedagogy have evolved over the centuries, including chanting in medieval European monasteries (Plainchant and Gillion, 2019) and the Bel Canto style of 19th century opera (Moldovan, 2019), through to Contemporary Commercial Music today (Lo Vetri and Weekly, 2003). Two styles of teaching are currently practised. The first is a mechanistic approach based on ensuring that the physical components involved in voice production are used in the right way (Phelan, 2021). The other focuses on the mental and emotional engagement of the singer with the music, based on the idea that the right mental state will ensure that the physical components will automatically be in place (Fetokaki, 2023). Both approaches are concerned with creating the right conditions for a singer to sing well and have many practitioners who achieve good results. The Hypothesis that the current study is designed to test asserts that introducing the Intervention Techniques into their existing practice will achieve better outcomes for the singer. A similar approach has been shown to work for instrumental players (Creech and Hallam, 2011; Hallam, 2014). Singing differs from instrumental music in a fundamental way because “Voice is an integral part of our being and living” (Chong, 2010, p. 120). The Hypothesis arose from an earlier literature review conducted by the researcher which identified potential ways in which instrumental teaching practices based on Motivation Theory could be adapted to work for singers (Fayle, 2023). The synthesis phase of that review identified eleven distinct themes that were common to practices used in several published reports in the field of instrumental teaching and, more broadly, in education and

business. These themes comprise the Motivation Categories used in this study and are:

Table 2 - Motivation Categories

	Motivation Category	Definition
1	Choir Goals	the overall goals that the director has for the choir
2	Singer Goals	the individual goals each singer has for their own personal enjoyment and development
3	Repertoire	the pieces the choir learns and performs
4	Singer Self-Perception	how a choir member assesses their own ability as a singer
5	Flow	the mental state in which a person performing some activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity
6	Intrinsic Motivation	motivation that comes from inside an individual rather than being imposed or coming from the environment
7	Technical Complexity	how to handle singing techniques that are beyond the technical understanding of the singers
8	Time Pressure	planning the time available for learning and singing
9	Opportunities to Perform	public performances for the choir beyond the normal routine commitments
10	Elitism	the situation where some singers feel inadequate because of the attitude and behaviour of other singers or the conductor
11	Musical Experience	musical activities that a singer engages in outside the choir

For each theme, the current study will design one or more techniques, the Intervention Techniques, that the conductor can introduce into rehearsals and performances with the aim of having a positive impact on that aspect of the singers' motivation. The study will test the effectiveness of each Intervention Technique by measuring the morale of a study group and control group, conducting a field study using the Intervention Techniques with the study group, measuring the morale again following the field study. This will be discussed more fully in *Methods*.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher became aware that singers in the study group choir who did not choose to participate in the study would still be present when the techniques were being used. This was discussed with the choir director. It was decided that none of the techniques involved the director doing anything that the director might not reasonably choose to do regardless of the study, so no further consent was necessary. To ensure that no singer was subjected to anything they would object to, the study information sheet was provided to all singers and the researcher explained the nature of the study to the entire choir at the first rehearsal, giving everyone the opportunity to object. Nobody expressed any concerns publicly or privately.

The insider researcher faces challenges in being objective, making it difficult to engage effectively in the research (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013). For this project, the researcher's role as choir director and singer may lead to participants and professional colleagues thinking they are expected to respond in a particular way instead of expressing their own views. The interview questions will be kept open and objective and participants will be encouraged to share their ideas without being judged (Kitzinger, 1995). Questionnaire responses will be anonymous.

Participants will be given the opportunity to provide confidential input in an email and this may help to mitigate this and all information in the report will be anonymised. Interview and questionnaire response will be kept completely confidential.

Where a choir has existing safeguarding and data protection policies in place, will be followed in addition to the University policies. The project has passed the UWTSD ethical review ^{*Appendix A – UWTSD Ethics Approval p90}. All data will be stored in password-protected folders and handled in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (Laybats and Davies, 2018). Data analysis will take place on the researcher's password-protected computer. No data will be transferred elsewhere. Following project completion, the data will be deleted in accordance with UWTSD ethics policy.

4) Project Aims and Goals

The aims of this research project will be:

- To build on the foundation of an earlier literature review that examined motivation of singers (Fayle, 2023), by completing a new literature review into Motivation Theory as it relates to singers and singing leaders, extracting themes concerning specific techniques used by teachers and choir directors to improve motivation, broadening the researcher's knowledge and understanding of Motivation Theory.
- To use the findings from the literature review to develop a set of practical techniques, the Intervention Techniques, that singing leaders can use to positively impact motivation

- To conduct a study using these techniques to test the theory set out in the Hypothesis, that a motivation-led approach from singing leaders leads to better outcomes for the singers.

The first intended impact is on the researcher's practice. A successful outcome to the project will result in increased recruitment, improved retention, and higher musical attainment for the singers. This will also affect singing leaders in the researcher's immediate circle, initially those involved in the field study, then others as the techniques are refined and used more widely. Once the Intervention Techniques are shown to be safe and effective, and can be used without the need for coaching, it is planned that they will be given to other choir directors so that they can use them in their own practice.

5) Selecting the Study Group

The researcher has had links with Chester Cathedral for many years both as a choir parent and as a singer in the choirs. The Cathedral Music Department was considered as a possible source for the study group because the structure of the choirs there seemed to lend itself to such a study. The way the department is organised is described below.

Chester Cathedral Music Department

The Cathedral Music Department comprises three full-time musicians and two choirs. The department is headed by the Organist and Master of the Choristers. There are two other organists, the Head of Music Outreach and Assistant Organist, and the Sub-Organist.

The Cathedral Choir sings eight services per week, shared between boy and girl choristers singing with the Lay Clerks, who are professional singers, and the Choral Scholars.

The Nave Choir consists of auditioned adult singers and sings one service per week.

Rehearsals for the Cathedral Choir are shared between the three organists. The Nave Choir is conducted by the Sub-Organist.

The choirs sing sacred music from the fourteenth century to the present day in the Cathedral choir stalls. Much of the standard church repertoire is sung by both choirs, who share the same music library (Rushforth, 2024).

The Nave Choir was chosen as the study group and the Cathedral Choir Lay Clerks as the control group. The rationale for choosing to conduct the study with the Cathedral Choirs was that they are two choirs with the same conductor, singing similar repertoire in the same location to a consistent musical standard. The Sub-Organist is a professional musician with a good understanding of choral conducting practice who is interested in discovering new approaches to improve singer morale. The Nave Choir was selected as the study group because it only has one conductor, allowing consistent interpretation and use of the Motivation Techniques. Two other options were considered for the control group. The first was the full Cathedral Choir, which was rejected after discussion with the Cathedral authorities about ethical and safeguarding concerns associated with including children in the study. The second was the Manchester Cathedral Voluntary Choir, which is a similar choral foundation to the Nave Choir. This option was not chosen because the choir has a different conductor and sings in a different location.

6) Methods

The researcher approached the study through a constructivist lens, recognising that the skill and knowledge acquired by choir directors is constructed from experience and interaction with their singers and other musicians (Applefield, Huber and Moallem, 2001). However, it is acknowledged that the application of techniques that come from Motivation Theory is essentially a pragmatic approach (Sundin and Johannisson, 2005). This means that the study methods are a blend of constructivist and pragmatic approaches. It is a mixed method study collecting qualitative data from interviews but relying more on quantitative data from surveys conducted on the study and control groups.

The study consisted of these phases:

1. July-August 2023. A Narrative Literature Review to form a composite view of the current state of knowledge relevant to each Motivation Theme to inform the design of a rehearsal technique for each theme (Randolph, 2009). These techniques became the Intervention Techniques.
2. September-December 2023. A set of interviews to collect qualitative data from experienced choir directors. This was both to ensure that the Intervention Techniques would be practical and non-intrusive, and to avoid repeating practices that were already in common use. The three members of the Cathedral Music Department were selected because they are all experienced choir directors, each with a different role and perspective. In addition, they were all aware of the project and supported its aims. Since all three come from a church music background, a fourth conductor was chosen

from a different environment, a non-auditioned choral society. This was to give the perspective of a secular, amateur choir director and ensure that the Intervention Techniques were not solely applicable to church choirs. Face-to-face interviews were chosen to include social cues (body language, voice, intonation etc.) as part of the information collected (Opdenakker, 2006).

3. September 2023. Pre-study Survey. A survey was executed to measure the morale of each singer in the study and control groups to set a baseline against which to measure the effect of the Intervention Techniques. A survey is a useful tool for measuring multiple variables at a moment in time efficiently (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). If all the Lay Clerks and Nave Choir members chose to answer the survey, there could be up to 40 participants. Since there was limited time available to complete the study, it was decided to use an online self-completion questionnaire. This meant that the participants could complete the survey in a reasonable amount of time without intervention from the researcher. Such surveys often use a Likert scale which makes it for the participants to understand the options and answer consistently, as well as providing a consistent set of data for analysis (Allen and Seaman, 2007). The option of using open text fields to collect qualitative data was considered, but rejected because there would be insufficient time to analyse and synthesise the responses adequately.

How well do you understand the director's plan for the choir this term? *

1 is Not at all5 is Completely

1

2

3

4

5

Figure 2 - Sample question using 5-point Likert scale

The design chosen was to have a small number of initial questions about background, overall morale and self-perception as a singer, then a set of questions related to each Motivation Category using the same 5-point Likert scale for ease of analysis. 5 points is a common choice for Likert questionnaires because respondents can quickly understand and answer the question on first reading, even though a larger scale can produce more nuanced data (Norman, 2010). A final question with an open text field allowed respondents to make any additional comments. MailChimp was chosen as the tool to provide and administer the surveys because the researcher was familiar with it, it supports anonymous questionnaires, and supported the export of the response data in a format that could be analysed in a spreadsheet. The option to complete the survey on paper was offered, but none of the participants chose to do that.

4. September-December 2023. Field Study. The purpose of this exercise was to use each of the Intervention Techniques with the study group so that any change that resulted could be measured later. The Cathedral Nave Choir was the study group and the Lay Clerks of the Cathedral Choir comprised the control group. They are both conducted by the Sub-Organist. Each Intervention Technique was applied during the winter term. The techniques were not explained or revealed to the singers. The techniques were not used with the control group.
5. December 2023. Post-study survey. The purpose of this survey was to measure any change in each Motivation Category from the baseline established in the pre-study survey. The questions from the pre-study survey were asked again in the same way, using the same scale. This allowed direct

comparison between the two surveys during the analysis phase, enabling the researcher to measure any change in the scores for each Intervention Category and identify any significant changes which might have resulted from the Field Study.

6. January 2023. Exit interview. The conductor who participated in the study was interviewed again to collect his views on the success of the techniques.

7) Literature Review

In answering the research question, the purpose of the Literature Review was to clarify the Motivation Categories and search for more recent published studies since the researcher's previous review (Fayle, 2023). The studies in each Motivation Category were examined for practices that could be adapted into techniques that a choir director could use. This produced a list of Intervention Techniques, which were then discussed with the conductor of the study group to ensure they could be used in rehearsals and performances without disrupting the normal operation of the choir. He did not request any changes to the list from the review.

The review is divided into sections, one for each Motivation Category. The first one concerns the overall goals that the director has for the choir.

Motivation Category 1: Choir Goals

The nature of a choir means that the overall goals of the choir are determined by the musical director or a small committee of singers. Successful choirs are those in which the singers and leader share the same goals, and experience the music together (Caliga, 2020). Motivation Theory is a broad term encompassing the main theories relating to motivation (Wigfield and Koenka, 2020). There is no published

literature on using Motivation Theory to set goals for choirs, but (Austin, 1988) studied its use in setting goals, planning practices and arranging performances and showed an improvement in motivation and long-term achievement for band players.

The study group works on three terms per year, with the goals and plan for each term decided in advance by the conductor. A practical way of involving the choir in this process and improving their motivation would be to share that plan with the singers at the start of the term, giving them the opportunity to comment on it and discuss their own ideas.

Intervention Technique 1: Share the term's plan and rationale with the choir. Decide some goals for the term that the singers agree are worthwhile and make things better.

The goals for the choir may be different from the individual goals each singer has for their own personal enjoyment and development. These are the subject of the second Motivation Category.

Motivation Category 2: Singer Goals

The motivation theory concerning individual goals is Attribution Theory, the study of reasons individuals attribute to what happens (Harvey *et al.*, 2014). (De Young, 2017) argues that clear goals are essential for professional singers. Studies on Self-Determination Theory, such as (MacIntyre, Schnare and Ross, 2018) show that motivation for musical achievement comprise many different elements. Decisions about singing in a choir are affected by the singers' self-perception and what they see as a desirable, possible future self (Powell, 2017). For a choir director, the task of discovering and understanding the goals of individual singers is a complex one,

made harder by the fact that they change and evolve with each significant singing achievement (Asmus, 1994).

Some singers enjoy talking about themselves and will freely discuss what they want from singing in the choir. Others are quieter or less confident and need encouragement to talk about why they are choir members. To ensure that the goals of all singers were captured, an approach was chosen that mixed informal conversation and a structured questionnaire.

Intervention Technique 2: Discover the goals of the choir members informally by discussion and formally using a questionnaire.

The activity of a choir is largely determined by the repertoire selected, the pieces they learn and perform. In many ways, the selection of repertoire can have a great effect on how the singers feel. This is examined in the next Motivation Category.

Motivation Category 3: Repertoire

One of the most important decisions a choir director takes involves the selection of repertoire, which may influence motivation and attainment in ways that are not obvious (Tomkins, 1962). (Hedden and Allen, 2019) suggested that text, melody, variety and matching the choir's abilities are all criteria used by experienced choir leaders in selecting pieces. A study of a successful Australian gospel choir found that repertoire selection was critical to engendering a sense of belonging and identity among the choir members and helped to build an emotional and musical connection with the audiences in a wide variety of community settings including prisons, hospices, hospitals, community centres, festivals and other events (Joseph and Southcott, 2017). Outside choral music, repertoire selection has been shown to

have a strong connection to performers' self-identity and whether they feel supported (Cumberledge and Williams, 2023).

As will be shown in the interview analysis later, choir directors are open to repertoire requests and suggestions from singers, but feel it is important that everyone accepts and understands that the choice of repertoire is ultimately the responsibility of the director. To keep this balance, the Intervention Technique was designed to increase the singers' enthusiasm for the chosen repertoire by explaining it carefully together with the process that led to the choices.

Intervention Technique 3: Talk about the repertoire and why you chose it. Explain what the choir will get from it. The objective is to help the singers feel that they are considered in the selection process, not to let them think they can influence it.

A singer's voice is often an integral part of their personal identity (Numminen *et al.*, 2015). How a choir member perceives themselves as a competent singer can have a significant impact on their motivation. This is explored in the next Motivation Category.

Motivation Category 4: Singer Self-Perception

For people who sing, their perception of themselves as a singer is part of their identity (Paul Evans, 2015). A study into singing in pre-war Trieste concluded that choral singing became heavily politicised in the media and was used to foster national and political alliances, suggesting that a singer's self-perception has influence far beyond a musical context (Santi, 2017). For singers in a choir, their sense of security and inclusion is heavily influenced by how competent a singer they consider themselves to be (Adams, 2020; Juan-Morera *et al.*, 2023).

A study into why piano pupils choose to stop or continue having lessons found that the strongest influencing factor was how the teacher approached correcting mistakes that the student made (Costa-Giomi, Flowers and Sasaki, 2005). The situation in a choir practice is different because mistakes must be corrected in front of other singers, rather than in a private lesson when no-one else is present. For this technique, it was decided that concentrating on how singing problems were corrected would be an effective way of influencing motivation.

Intervention Technique 4: Correct problems in a way that builds the singers' confidence and self-perception as a singer.

Handling problems constructively helps avoid negative influences on singer morale. The next category focuses on one of the most positive aspects of making music, what happens when everything goes right.

Motivation Theme 5: Flow

One of the most powerful motivators for a choir singer is the experience of a state of “flow”, the mental state where the singer is fully engaged in a feeling of energy, focus, and enjoyment in the process of the activity (Custodero, 1999). A recent study into motivation for hobby musicians found that flow experiences were the mechanism that caused the higher life satisfaction, reduction of negative feelings and improved emotional connection associated with making music (Koehler *et al.*, 2021). A survey investigating the effect of banning group singing during Covid lockdown concluded that flow experiences were the aspect that singers felt most keenly (Theorell *et al.*, 2023).

A limitation of all these studies is that they do not explain how flow was achieved in each case, beyond creating conditions in which it could occur. This makes it difficult to design a technique with a specific instruction. Instead, the technique is general in nature but gives some suggestions that the conductor could try.

Intervention Technique 5: Create a state of flow (deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, such as singing a particular piece in a resonant place, or at a special occasion).

The next Motivation Category is more theoretical in that it relates to the difference between external things that motivate singers, such as the music chosen for them to sing, and things that come from the singers themselves, such as the desire to improve their technical ability.

Motivation Theme 6: Intrinsic Motivation

Motivation Theory identifies two different classes of motivators, intrinsic which comes from inside the individual and extrinsic which originates from someone else, and there is a tendency in many fields to over-rely on extrinsic motivators (Derfler-Rozin and Pitesa, 2021). Driscoll (2009) observed that intrinsic motivators are more effective for musicians over time and extrinsic ones, such as examinations or rewards are only effective for a limited time and may limit development. Experienced music teachers say that motivation must come from the individual musician, and there is little the teacher can do to build it (Stephenson, 2018).

These studies make a strong case for the advantages of intrinsic over extrinsic motivators but give no practical advice on how to use this knowledge. For the Intervention Technique, a statement of the overall aim together with examples was

given. Giving a more specific instruction, such as arranging regular social events or building personal development plans for each singer was considered. These meet the criterion of being intrinsic, but would mean a significant change from normal practice which the singers would notice, so it was decided to leave the technique more open.

Innovation Technique 6: Use intrinsic motivators, such as social interactions, rather than relying on extrinsic ones such as improving standards.

A significant challenge for both conductors and singers is how to improve standards when the action required is not straightforward and can be difficult to explain. The next theme examines how a director can handle such situations.

Motivation Theme 7: Technical Complexity

In her book for singing teachers dealing with children and young adults, Jenovora Williams (2019) states that singers are often not able to control aspects of their singing, such as tuning, timbre and power directly. The process of learning to sing a new piece involves more than just remembering the words and music; a singer must absorb the physical actions to produce the desired sounds through a combination of arranging the configuration of lips, tongue and jaw position, the tension, tilt and height of the larynx, the right amount of breath at each point during each note, and other factors such as facial expression and posture, few of which are controlled by conscious thought (Radu-Giurgiu, 2023). The complexity involved is demonstrated by the difficulty in designing information processing systems to measure singing quality (Gupta, Li and Goto, 2022). Many of these physical actions are not intuitive and may even seem pathological out of context (Guzman *et al.*, 2014). As a result,

the methods singing teachers use at an advanced level are sophisticated and require careful study (Azharabu *et al.*, 2021).

It is important to recognise that many choir directors, including the one participating in the study, are not trained singing teachers. This means it would be unreasonable to ask them to use advanced teaching techniques. The Intervention Technique is worded to avoid unclear instructions about singing technique.

Innovation Technique 7: Avoid asking the singers to do something they don't know how to do (tuning, tone etc.).

In human activity, the pressure of deadlines and insufficient time has a large effect on an individual's mental state and efficacy (Tinghög *et al.*, 2016). The next section examines the effect of time pressure on singers.

Motivation Theme 8: Time Pressure

In a study involving music students over 30 years ago, Austin (1988) showed that time pressure had no effect on their achievement but had a very strong impact on their motivation and interest in music. The effect of time pressure on teleworkers has been studied often since the Covid-19 pandemic and is seen as one of the main factors affecting motivation (Thulin, Vilhelmson and Johansson, 2019). Business managers know that time pressure is not always negative and a certain level of stress can have positive results when properly managed (Maruping *et al.*, 2015). An interesting perspective from students who transition to professional musicians is that the time required to perform makes it difficult to practise as much as they need to maintain and develop their skill (Creech *et al.*, 2008).

Translating this into a practical approach a choir director could use led the researcher to focus on predicting when time pressure is likely to increase and finding ways to reduce the impact on the singers.

Innovation Technique 8: Mitigate time pressure by planning for situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short and there is a risk that the singers may not learn the music in time.

For most choirs, the opportunity to perform to an audience provides a target for the singers to aim for, and an opportunity to achieve the flow state described in *Motivation Theme 5: Flow*. The next section explores how creating performance opportunities may affect motivation.

Motivation Theme 9: Opportunities to Perform

At every stage of their training and career, singers improve technically and are more motivated when they have opportunities to perform (Creech *et al.*, 2008). There is also a positive social effect that results from people with different backgrounds performing together (Darrow, Johnson and Meeker, 2016). Meerschman *et al.* (2022) found that voice quality improved significantly following a performance but noted that singers' anxiety about vocal strain also increased. There is a well-established link between the state of flow described in *Motivation Theme 5: Flow* and musical performance (Spahn, Krampe and Nusseck, 2021; Antonini Philippe *et al.*, 2022).

It follows that the Intervention Technique for this should ask the director to arrange additional performances for the choir.

Intervention Technique 9: Create additional opportunities for the choir to perform in public beyond their regular commitments.

The section titled *Motivation Category 4: Singer Self-Perception* discussed the relationship between a singer's voice and their sense of identity. One thing that could threaten this is the opinion attitude of others in the choir or broader organisation, such as the Church authorities. The next Motivation Technique examines elitism in the group.

Motivation Theme 10: Elitism

For the white Western upper- and middle-classes, classical music has been seen to embody the utmost expression of culture, an expression of their power and superiority (Kolbe, 2021). By contrast, Bailey and Davidson Jane W (2005) showed that the positive effects of group singing can be realised by the most marginalised and disadvantaged members of society. As far back as the 1980s, researchers were demonstrating that the idea of elitism in choral singing is destructive and based on the false premise that singing is the preserve of the exceptionally gifted (Hylton, 1986; Phillips, 1988).

The judgment of others is something everybody worries about on occasion. In a previous study, the researcher learned that most singers have experienced hostile elitism in a choir, which made them feel inadequate and unwelcome (Fayle, 2022b). The technique chosen to address this asks the director to be alert to the danger of elitism and create an environment where it is seen as unacceptable by all choir members.

Intervention Technique 10: Find a way to eliminate the risk of elitism in the choir making new or less experienced singers feel inadequate.

Some choirs are fortunate to have members who have significant musical skills and knowledge who can assist with running part rehearsals and helping less experienced members with problems. If the conductor is unaware of these singers, a valuable opportunity to improve the choir can be missed. The final Motivation Category concerns the musical experience and activity of singers away from the choir.

Motivation Theme 11: Musical Experience

One strong factor in that can increase a singer's motivation to sing is whether they have a musical background (Sichivitsa, 2003). Earlier studies found that experience of instrumental and singing lessons during early education is a strong indicator of the desire to sing later in life (Stewart, 1991; Neill, 1998). Barrett (2006) showed that musicians who also compose had stronger motivation to perform and succeed. More recently, researchers have discovered a strong link between prior musical experience and the skills needed to sing well, such as tuning and breathing (Paoliello, Pereira and Behlau, 2021; Platte *et al.*, 2021; Kervin, 2023).

Being aware of the musical hinterland of all the singers helps the conductor recognise what knowledge and musical understanding can be assumed, allowing higher standards to be achieved. This technique simply asks the director to get this knowledge.

Intervention Technique 11: Discover and recognise the musical background of the singers.

This concludes the Literature Review.

Table 3 - Intervention Techniques

	Motivation Category	Intervention Technique
1	Choir Goals	Share the term's plan and rationale with the choir. Decide some goals for the term that the singers agree are worthwhile and make things better.
2	Singer Goals	Discover the goals of the choir members informally by discussion and formally using a questionnaire.
3	Repertoire	Talk about the repertoire and why you chose it. Explain what the choir will get from it. The objective is to help the singers feel that they are considered in the selection process, not to let them think they can influence it.
4	Singer Self-Perception	Correct problems in a way that builds the singers' confidence and self-perception as a singer.
5	Flow	Create a state of flow (deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, such as singing a particular piece in a resonant place, or at a special occasion).
6	Intrinsic Motivation	Use intrinsic motivators, such as social interactions, rather than relying on extrinsic ones such as improving standards. ß
7	Technical Complexity	Avoid asking the singers to do something they don't know how to do (tuning, tone etc.).
8	Time Pressure	Mitigate time pressure by planning for situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short and there is a risk that the singers may not learn the music in time.
9	Opportunities to Perform	Create additional opportunities for the choir to perform in public beyond their regular commitments.
10	Elitism	Find a way to eliminate the risk of elitism in the choir making new or less experienced singers feel inadequate.
11	Musical Experience	Discover and recognise the musical background of the singers.

8) Findings

The results of the study are presented below in a section for each Motivation Category, following an introduction covering the wider survey questions and interview findings.

Survey Averaging and Normalisation

The survey results are summarised in ^{*Appendix B, C, D and E p103}. There was insufficient time to analyse the open text responses to the final question and they were not relevant to the research question. Since many of them contained personal references which could identify the respondent or others, they have been redacted.

The data from the questionnaires was a set of Likert scores from 1 to 5 for each question. Strictly speaking, Likert scales provide ordinal data and there is no justification for assuming normal distribution for the results (Allen and Seaman, 2007). For large-scale surveys, it is recommended that non-parametric measures such as range, median and mode be used. Norman (2010) points out that these are often meaningless for smaller data sets and, provided the researcher is aware of the risk of reaching the wrong conclusion that might result from assuming normal distribution, the use of parametric measures such as the mean and standard deviation is reasonable and appropriate.

Figure 3 - Comparison of averages shows the three usual ways of measuring the average of a data set for the results from the initial survey. From this table, there is insufficient variation between the questions for the mode (the answer that appears most often) and the median (the middle number when the answers are sorted in order) to draw any conclusions. The mean (the statistical average) shows more

change between the pre- and post-study surveys. It was decided to use the mean as the measure to compare, taking caution not to draw conclusions based on population distribution.

	Mode		Median		Mean	
	Pre-study	Post-study	Pre-study	Post-study	Pre-study	Post-study
Question 4: How well do you understand the director's plan for the choir this term?	4	5	4	4	4.14	4.33
Question 5: Do you feel the director is aware of your personal goals and reasons for singing in the choir?	4	3	3	3	3.29	2.89
Question 6: To what extent do you feel the director takes your personal goals and reasons for singing into account?	3	3	3	3	2.71	2.89
Question 7: Do you understand the reasons behind the choice of repertoire?	4	4	4	4	4.07	3.67
Question 8: How do you feel about the choice of repertoire?	4	4	4	4	4.07	4.11
Question 9: How does your experience in the choir make you feel about your ability as a singer?	4	4	4	4	3.57	3.56
Question 10: When you are singing in the choir, how often do you feel completely happy, that everything is going right?	4	4	4	4	3.64	3.78
Question 11: How often do you feel you are being asked to change something about the way you sing without understanding how to do it?	4	4	4	4	4.14	3.89
Question 12: Do you feel there is enough time given to learn the music, either during rehearsals or in your own time?	3	3	3	3	3.07	3.22
Question 13: Outside the regular services, do you feel that the choir have enough additional opportunities to perform in public?	3	3	3	3	3.00	2.78
Question 14: How does the way other singers in the choir talk and act make you feel about your contribution?	3	4	3	4	3.29	4.00
Question 15: To what extent is the director aware of your musical background and activities outside the choir?	4	3	3	3	3.29	3.00

Figure 3 - Comparison of averages

To test the Hypothesis, the surveys are designed to measure whether the techniques used have a positive or negative effect and whether that effect is significant enough to justify the use of each one. This is represented by the size and direction of the change during the study. Some changes would happen anyway as the term progressed and the Christmas season approached.

	Study Group			Control Group		
	Pre-study	Post-study	Change	Pre-study	Post-study	Change
Question 4: How well do you understand the director's plan for the choir this term?	4.14	4.33	0.19	4.60	4.25	(0.35)
Question 5: Do you feel the director is aware of your personal goals and reasons for singing in the choir?	3.29	2.89	(0.40)	3.80	3.50	(0.30)
Question 6: To what extent do you feel the director takes your personal goals and reasons for singing into account?	2.71	2.89	0.17	3.80	3.00	(0.80)
Question 7: Do you understand the reasons behind the choice of repertoire?	4.07	3.67	(0.40)	4.80	4.25	(0.55)
Question 8: How do you feel about the choice of repertoire?	4.07	4.11	0.04	4.20	4.50	0.30
Question 9: How does your experience in the choir make you feel about your ability as a singer?	3.57	3.56	(0.02)	3.40	3.00	(0.40)
Question 10: When you are singing in the choir, how often do you feel completely happy, that everything is going right?	3.64	3.78	0.13	3.00	3.75	0.75
Question 11: How often do you feel you are being asked to change something about the way you sing without understanding how to do it?	4.14	3.89	(0.25)	4.40	4.75	0.35
Question 12: Do you feel there is enough time given to learn the music, either during rehearsals or in your own time?	3.07	3.22	0.15	3.60	3.50	(0.10)
Question 13: Outside the regular services, do you feel that the choir have enough additional opportunities to perform in public?	3.00	2.78	(0.22)	2.20	1.75	(0.45)
Question 14: How does the way other singers in the choir talk and act make you feel about your contribution?	3.29	4.00	0.71	4.00	3.75	(0.25)
Question 15: To what extent is the director aware of your musical background and activities outside the choir?	3.29	3.00	(0.29)	4.00	4.25	0.25

Figure 4 - Results before normalisation

These effects can be seen in the results of the control group in Figure 4 - Results before normalisation. which show there is an effect to be allowed for in the analysis. Because of the similarities between the groups, it was decided that any change that happened to the control group would also have happened to the study group if the study had not taken place. This is an assumption, but it seemed reasonable.

A method was derived to normalise the survey result by removing the effect of the changes that happened to the control group ^{*Appendix F p125}. The Normalised Survey Result will be referred to as the Survey Result in the charts throughout the following sections.

Interview Coding

There were five interviews in total, two with the conductor of the groups and one each with the other Cathedral organists and the choral society conductor. The

interviews consisted of one question for each Motivation Category ^{*Appendix G p125}. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. In Vivo coding was used for the first cycle, chosen as a “generic” coding method that would preserve the language used by the participants (Saldana, 2016, p116). A second pass linked together similar themes from different interviews and grouped them into categories. The final pass identified how often each category was mentioned by the interviewees and ranked them for each Motivation Category ^{*Appendix H p127}.

Survey Results

General Survey Questions

There were two questions that measured overall attainment and morale. These are the results described in the research question and will support or disprove the Hypothesis.

Reading the Charts

The survey questions all had a Likert scale of 1-5, with 5 being the most positive score. All the charts in this section show the average for each question across the study group. The top bar shows the average answer before the Intervention Techniques were used. The second bar shows the average answer at the end of the field study, after adjusting to compensate for changes that also affected the control group. These calculations are explained in *Survey Averaging and Normalisation* above.

Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability?

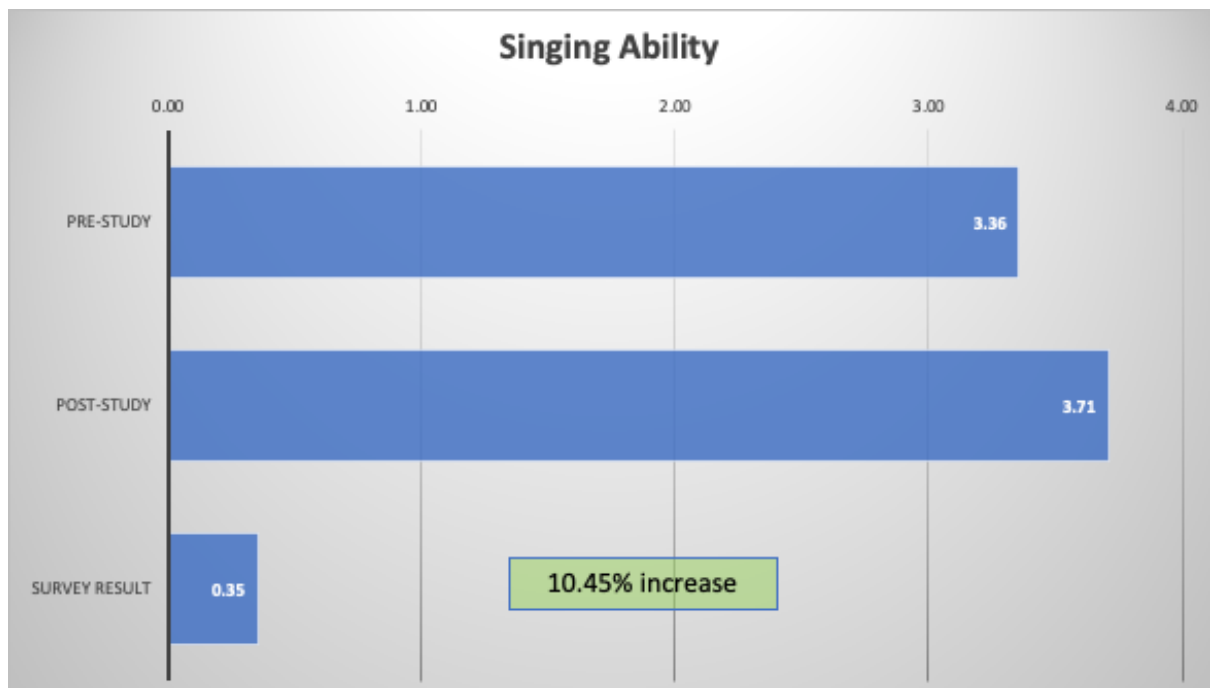


Figure 5 - Singing Ability survey

This question was chosen to capture how the singers felt about their level of musical competence as a singer. The increase is significant enough to indicate that the Intervention Techniques as a whole had a positive effect.

What is your current feeling about being member of the choir?

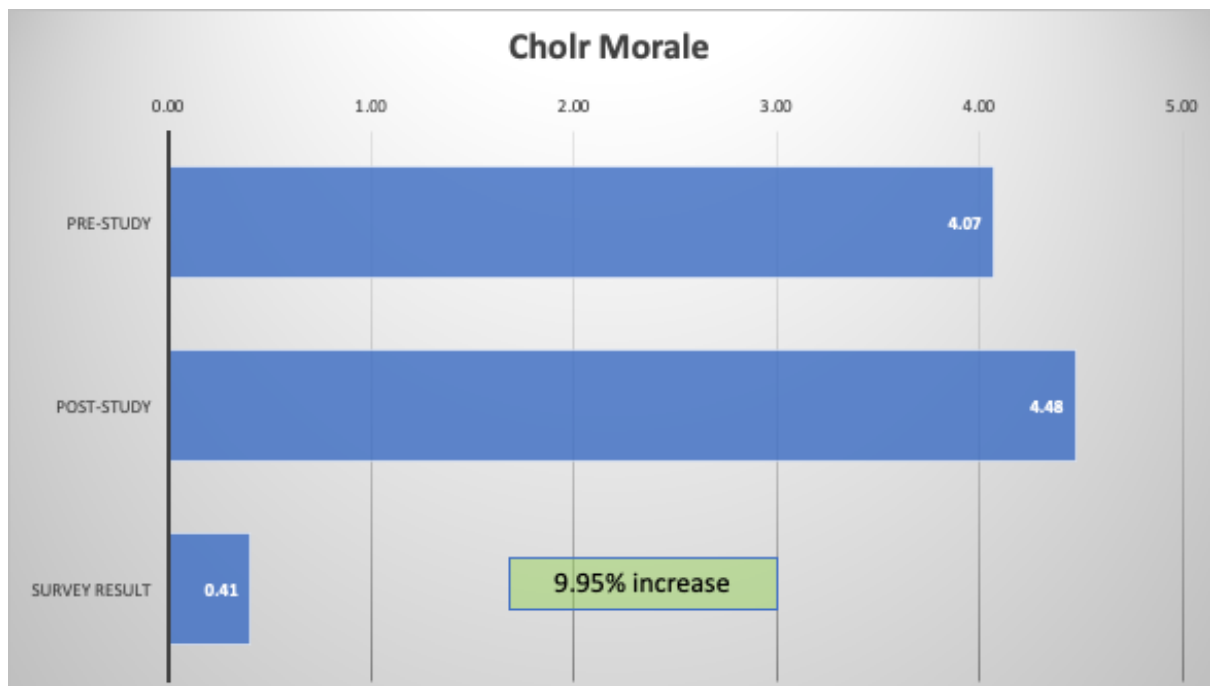


Figure 6 - Choir Morale survey

This also suggests a positive effect of the Intervention Techniques on overall choir morale.

Overall, the results for the general questions support the Hypothesis. The next section examines the result for each Motivation Theme.

Survey Results by Motivation Category

Motivation Category 1: Choir Goals

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The plan for the term is determined by the Cathedral service dates and repertoire the director feels would be good for the choir. He then asks the singers to confirm when they expect to be absent and adjusts the plan to match the resources available.

During the Study

The director took time during the first rehearsal to describe the plan for the term, what repertoire he had chosen, and why. He had not done this previously, but it was done naturally as part of the practice. Some of the singers noticed that this was slightly unusual, but it was generally welcomed.

Survey Score

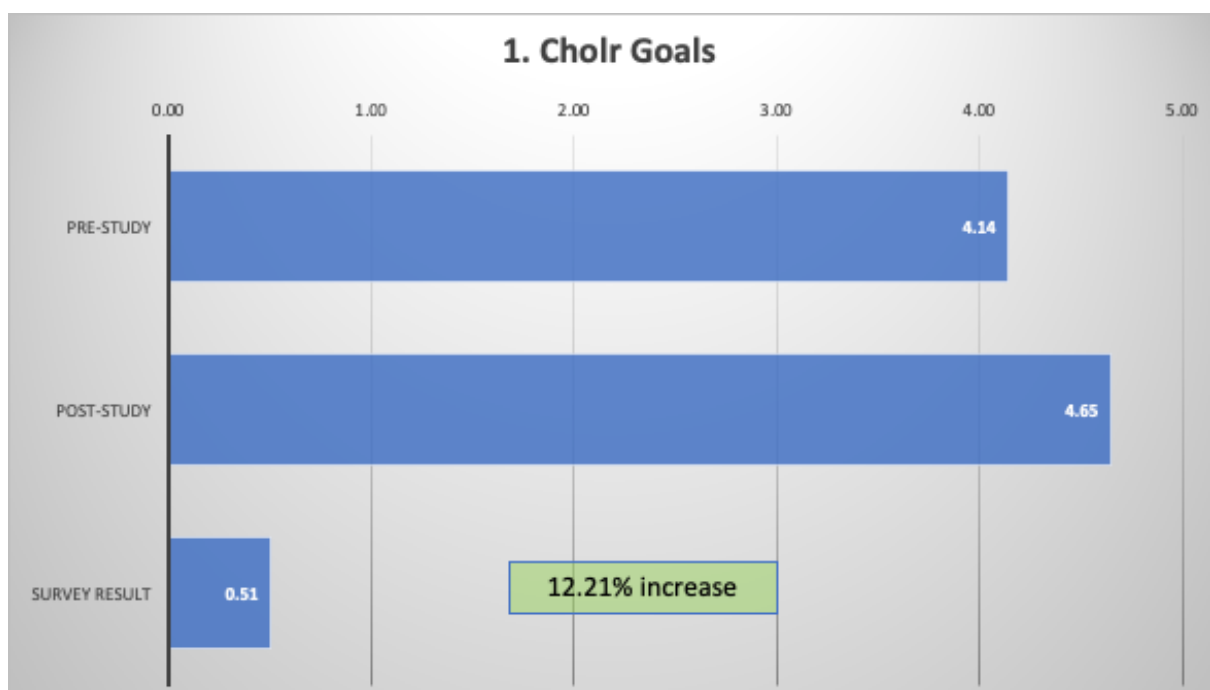


Figure 7 - 1. Choir Goals survey

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director said he found explaining his goals for the term to be a positive experience, "it was good just to walk people through it. And to talk to them a bit of us and the music that I was excited about us singing like the Palestrina or the Dove, especially, and about, you know, the rationale for picking certain pieces for certain occasions. He realised that many of the singers will not be aware of the liturgical

reasons for selecting some of the repertoire or what he was doing to improve singing standards.” He plans to continue doing this regularly.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

All of the interviewees mentioned enjoyment for the singers as an important goal for the choir – “I do try and take into consideration their wishes, because it makes for, you know, a happy choir”, “They love singing”. It is an essential element for the Choral Society but it was also a consideration for cathedral organists, even when working with professional singers. Variety of repertoire was mentioned by all those outside the study, but not by the Nave Choir director. Everyone except the head of the Cathedral Music Department cited time pressure and singer inclusion (making the singers feel they belong and are valued) as key elements. The Cathedral organists are constrained by liturgy (the requirements for settings of particular texts at specific times) but also feel it is valuable to explain it to the singers and can have a positive effect. The Nave Choir and Choral Society singers are all volunteers and the directors need to consider what pieces are suitable for the resources available – “I know what I've got is a monolithic community choir, who have aspirations to sing some of the big works.”

Discussion

A normalised increase of over 10% suggests that explaining the director’s goals for the choir had a positive effect. The interviews show that every director has different priorities for their choirs which are not always obvious to the singers. Taking time at the start of each season to set out the goals for the choir, together with the director’s reasoning is a useful technique. The study director decided that it is a useful thing to

do and plans to repeat it – “I’m planning on doing it doing it again this evening. I think that helped”.

Motivation Category 2: Singer Goals

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The director does nothing formal to collect information about individual singers’ goals but makes a conscious effort to talk to every singer at every practice and learns about their priorities that way – “I’m aware by well, just through conversations I have with them”. He feels that the onus is on the singers to tell him what they want but recognises that there is a danger that the more extrovert singers are more likely to express an opinion, particularly those who have been with the choir a long time – “the onus is more on members of the choir to tell me what they’re trying to get out of it”.

During the Study

The director collected views from the singers at the initial rehearsals and during discussions outside practice time. Towards the end of the study, an online questionnaire was sent out to the group *Appendix M p197. The results showed a wide range of different priorities across the choir.

Survey Score

There were two questions relating to this Motivation Category. The first concerned the director's awareness of the singer's goals and the other asked to what extent the goals were being met.

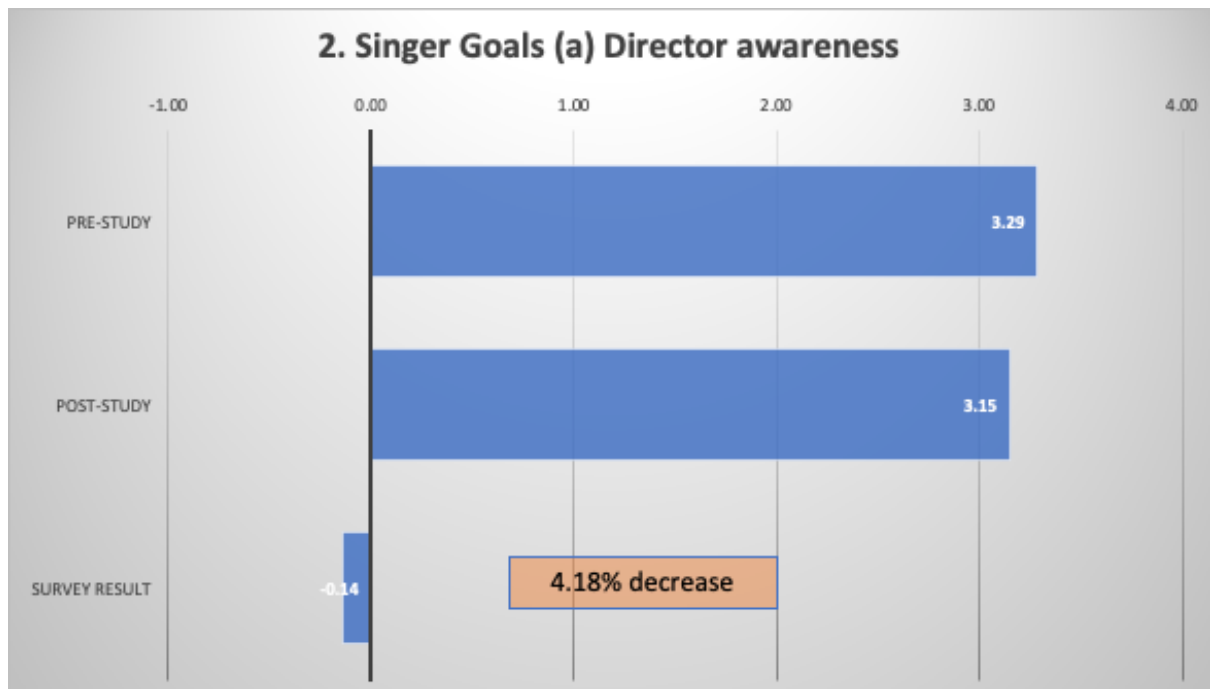


Figure 8 - 2. Singer Goals survey (a)

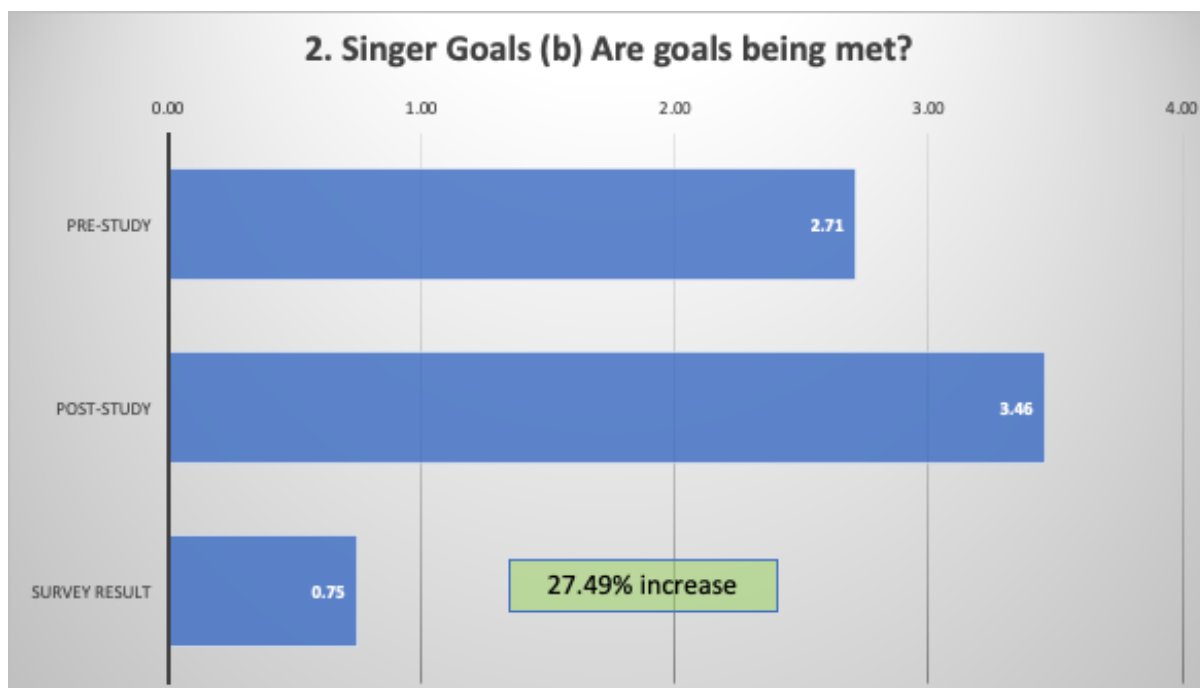


Figure 9 - 2. Singer Goals survey (b)

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director discovered some things about the singers' priorities that he hadn't expected. The social side is important for several of the members, but not all – "more social events, it's definitely something that's, that's come out to me here". Attendance at practices and services is more important to several singers than he expected – "I think that if we want to maintain and improve the musical standard of the choir, that we as members must support the choir director in our commitment in regular attendance at rehearsals and services." *Appendix M p197. Some strong singers are often absent for good reasons, which he is not able to share for privacy reasons, and this appears to feed the resentment of others who feel they put more effort in and are held back by a few unreasonable people. This is not true, and the director recognises that he needs to balance this issue carefully – "the majority of time, there's a very good reason when people aren't here. And they are reasons that you can't share with the whole squad. But yeah, that is maybe something worth looking

at, like a minimum attendance or something like that, so that people feel a bit more motivated to be here”. Several singers expressed a desire to perform some larger works and the director would like to plan something like that in future.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

All interviewees mentioned growth, the improvement of standards and achievement for each singer. The next most important theme was the social aspect of the choir, the need to feel part of a social group. To set expectations reasonably, the directors need to be aware of the limitations of individual singers. There is a need to recognise that singers have different goals, which may conflict with others and the director must balance these appropriately. Two of the directors, the more experienced ones, admitted that they were mostly unaware of the individual goals of the singers – “I’m not too aware of that. Either with the choristers or the Lay Clerks”. The younger directors said that it is important for the singers to enjoy the practices and performances and the social side is very important – “social satisfaction is a goal in its own right”.

Discussion

The survey results and the interview themes indicate that the choir directors have less understanding of the individual singers’ goals than they had assumed. This may simply reflect the fact that all the Cathedral organists are full-time professional musicians, and the singers are not. The 27% increase in the choir’s perception of whether their goals are being met implies that the singers felt that the director was taking positive steps during the term to take them into account. The technique, especially the goals survey, appears to be a powerful tool in improving choir morale

and engagement. These results highlight the difference in approach and expectation between a conductor and a choir, and the benefits of discussing individual goals with the singers.

Motivation Category 3: Repertoire

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The director receives many repertoire suggestions from the more confident singers. When these coincide with what he wants the choir to achieve, he tries to include them but makes it clear that it is his decision – “in terms of how it influences me, it doesn't really, because I feel like I don't want the choir to be run by committee”. He is aware that some singers will try to impose their own preferences and he resists this. A lot of thought goes into the repertoire selection and there are constraints, such as liturgy requirements, that the choir may not be aware of. This term he deliberately took time to explain the thinking behind his selection.

During the Study

As well as talking to individuals about particular pieces, the director discussed his repertoire choices to the whole choir at the start of term and explained the liturgical significance of some of the works throughout the term. For one concert in a venue which played a role in the Civil War, he had chosen works from that period including one by a composer who was killed in a battle nearby. When this was explained to the choir, it was clear that several of the singers were interested in the additional background.

Survey Score

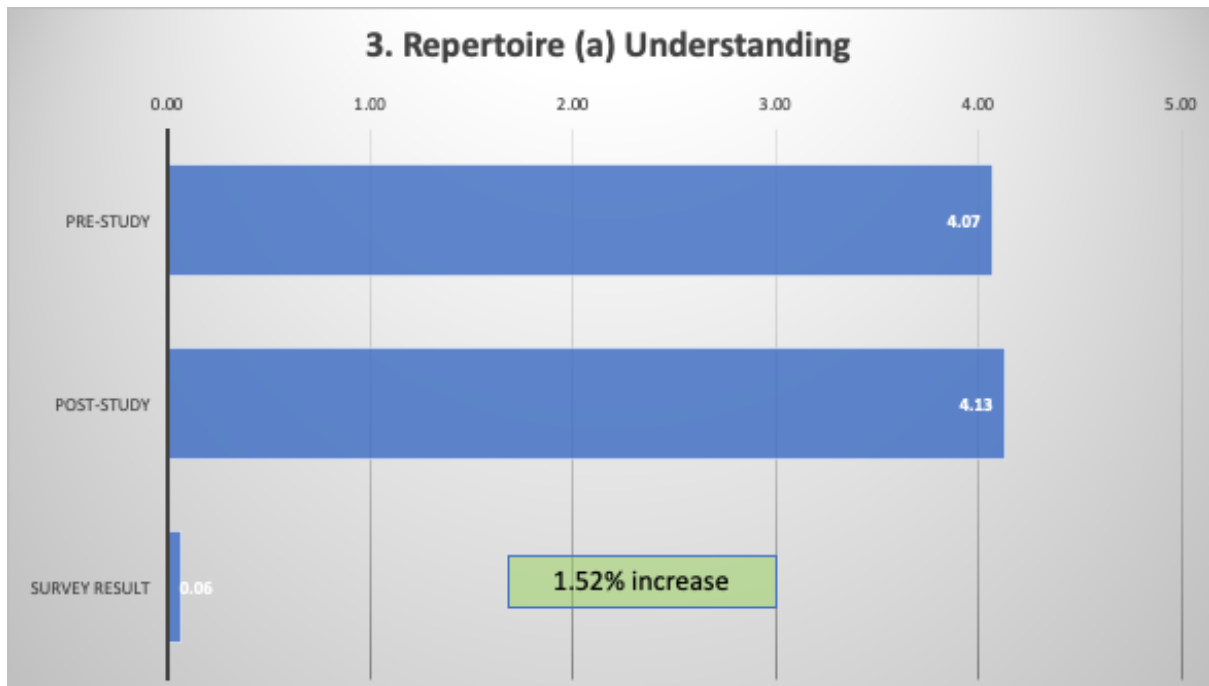


Figure 10 - 3. Repertoire survey (a)

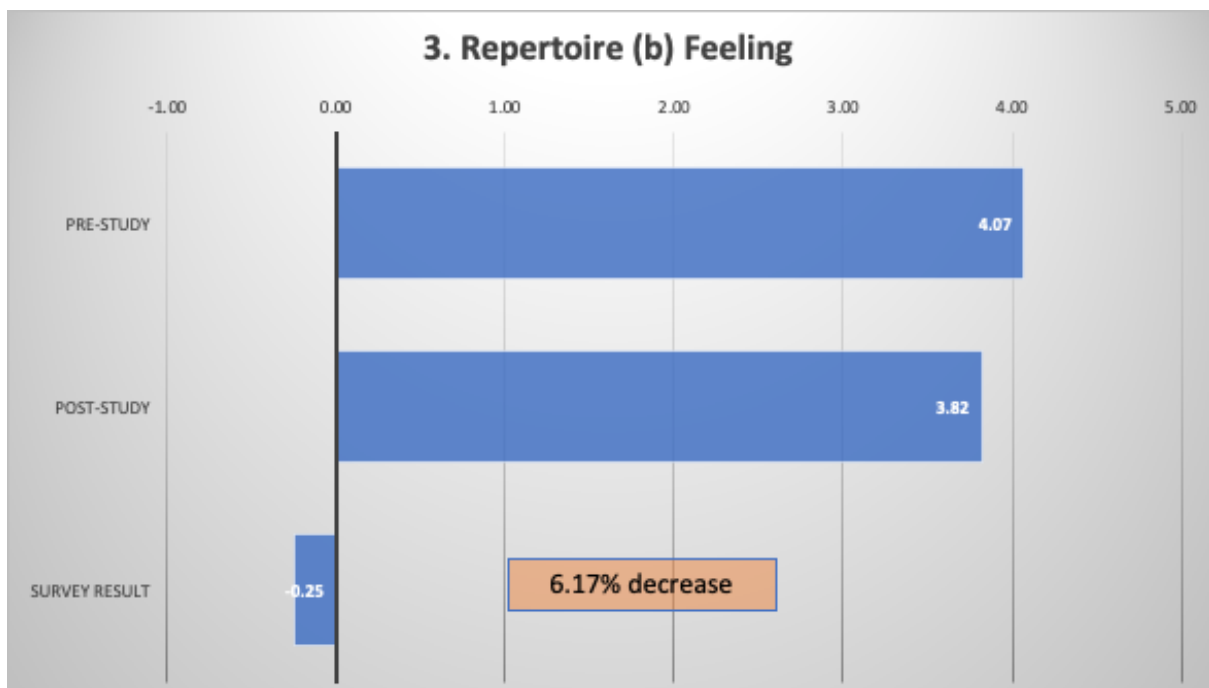


Figure 11 - 3. Repertoire survey (b)

The director said that he had explained the repertoire in more detail than previously and tried to include more solos to help individual singers develop. He also mentioned several things he had done to improve listening skills. He was not able to include all the pieces he wanted to because of time constraints, and this included several suggestions from the singers – “People have come with repertoire suggestions... I've taken some on board”. He is keen to demonstrate that he considers suggested repertoire, but the choice has to be his.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

All the directors are open to repertoire suggestions from the choir but will only programme pieces that fit in the overall plan and are suitable for the resources available – “If anyone ever has an attractive suggestion, door's always open”. They all feel it is important to show that the director takes the ultimate decision – “I don't consult and say ‘would it be alright if I put this down?’”. Two of the conductors actively consulted singers about repertoire choices. Two chose to explain their choices to the choir during rehearsals.

Discussion

The results suggest that the technique of explaining the repertoire choices had little effect. From the interviews, it appears that the singers are generally unaware of the constraints the directors have on the choice of music, even for the choral society. If this is true, it seems likely that understanding, and therefore any positive effects, would only come after using the technique over several terms.

Motivation Category 4: Singer Self-perception

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The director said that most mistakes fall into one of three categories, rhythm, notes or tuning. Tuning is the hardest to fix. His approach is to sing through a piece and then focus on small parts where there are likely to be problems. He uses sectional rehearsals or combines two parts to go over difficult phrases. Rather than trying to explain technical issues, he uses repetition and encourages the singers to listen and correct their own errors. He consciously uses positive messages alongside corrections to maintain morale. When things go badly wrong, he uses humour and makes it clear that he shares the responsibility with the choir.

During the Study

The director consciously made a positive comment before correcting any errors during rehearsals and was careful to make encouraging remarks after services as well as thanking soloists in person. When pieces went badly wrong in a service, he made a joke about it immediately after, taking part of the responsibility for the problem.

Survey Score

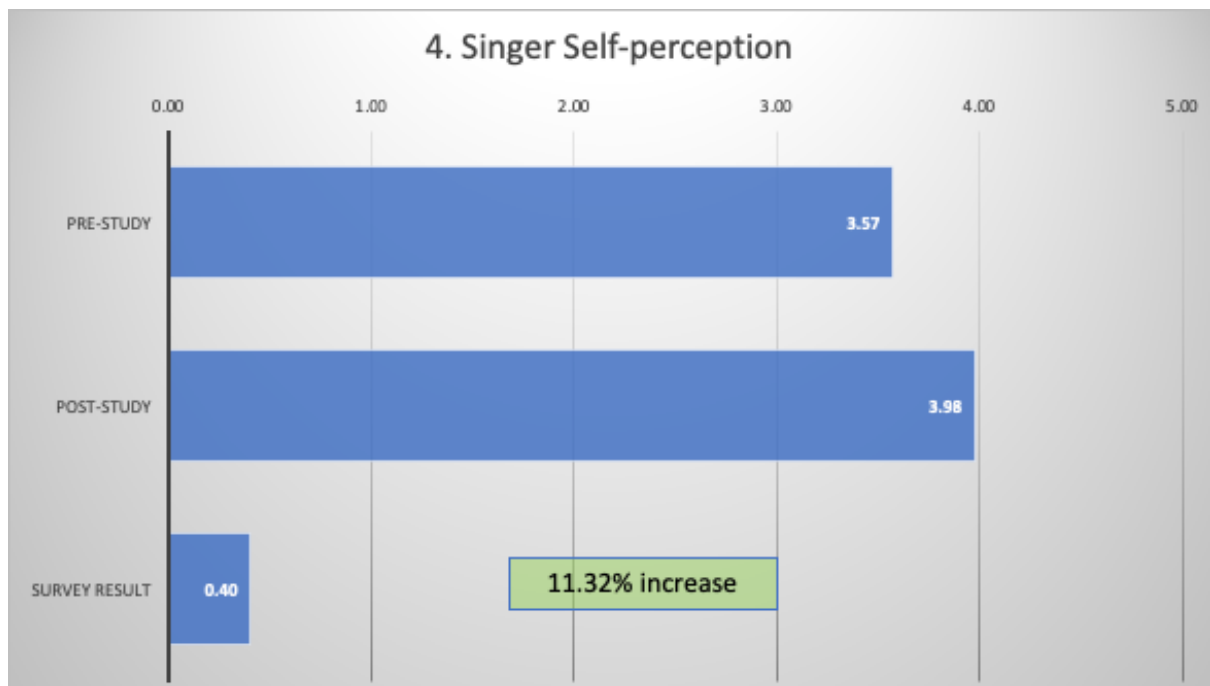


Figure 12 - 4. Singer Self-perception survey

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director was careful to keep morale high and to use mistakes as an opportunity to learn and improve, rather than assign blame. This is something he feels he has always done, but he has noticed an improvement since COVID. The commonest serious problem is with tuning, which is hard to correct because there are many possible causes.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

All the leaders select sections to work on instead of singing though pieces. Giving a positive message is seen as important, as is making clear that the director shares the responsibility with the choir for the standard of performance. Tuning is seen as the most common problem that is non-trivial to correct. Most of the conductors run

through new pieces from beginning to end and encourage the singers to sing out and not worry about mistakes, which can be corrected later. For the volunteer choirs, the directors are conscious of the need to keep the rehearsals enjoyable.

Discussion

For conductors, there is a tension in choirs that aspire to perform to the best of their ability between the need to correct mistakes and the desire to make the rehearsals enjoyable for the singers. The study results suggest that the technique of correcting problems in a positive, supportive way has a significant positive effect on the singers' self-perception.

Motivation Category 5: Flow

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The conductor arranges joint services with the Manchester Cathedral Voluntary Choir once a term and chooses larger scale works that are beyond the normal reach of the Nave Choir. He says that the experience of singing these bigger pieces is a different, more joyful exercise for the singers. He also chooses more striking works for special occasions, such as the Christmas Eve midnight mass, with the aim of creating a similar effect.

During the Study

The director arranged several occasions where the choir was likely to achieve a state of flow. One was performing a commissioned piece during the Chester Contemporary Arts Festival under the direction of the composer, part of which was broadcast on Radio 4. The music selected for the joint service with Manchester

Choir was chosen to give the singers a joyful experience. The music used at the Christmas services was designed to enhance the choir's feeling of doing something special that impressed the congregation.

Survey Score

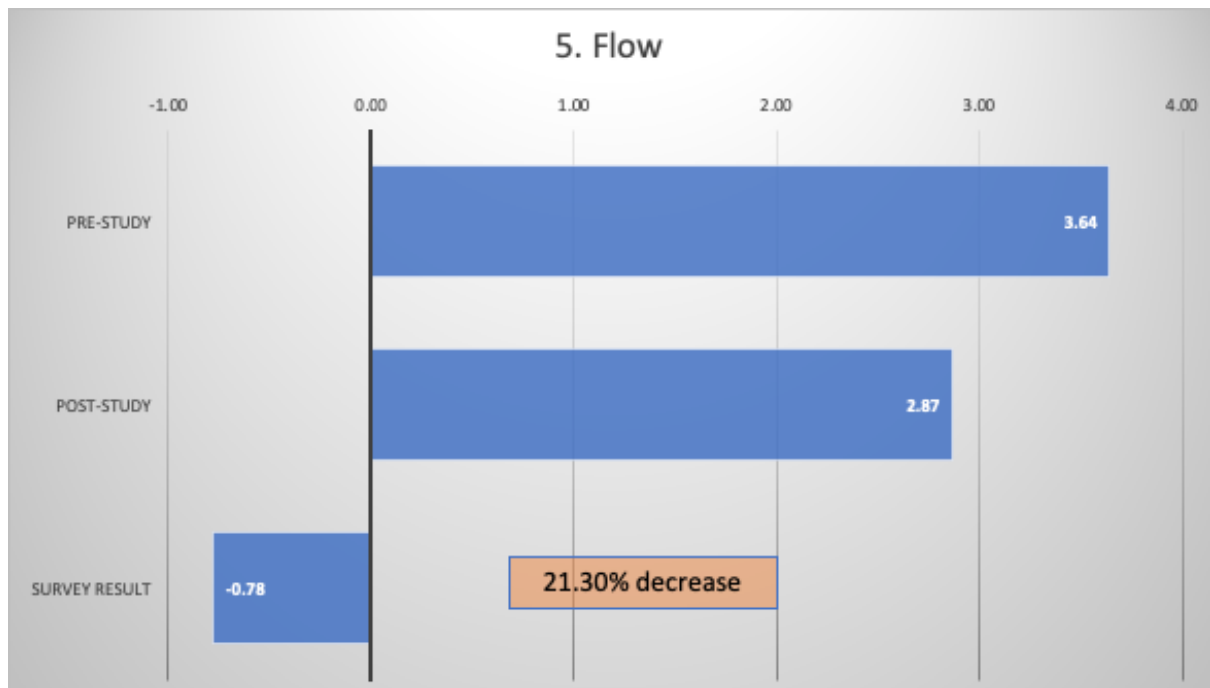


Figure 13 - 5. Flow survey

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director had hoped to sing a piece the choir knows and performs well in the Cathedral's resonant St Werbergh Chapel but was unable to find a suitable time. He tried to create flow during some rehearsals by getting the choir to sing pieces they enjoy without a conductor, so they could focus on enjoying the music. He felt this worked. Over the Christmas period, the choir performed some beautiful pieces exceptionally well. The Epiphany weekend was particularly joyful, but this was after the study had finished.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

The one thing in common between all the conductors concerning flow was the benefit of performing in a resonant location. Getting the choirs to sing pieces they know and perform is used widely to improve morale, especially if there has been a hard rehearsal. Preparing and performing larger works outside the normal repertoire is something the conductors feel is a very positive experience for the singers. The main Cathedral Choir has opportunities to sing with professional musicians, work with famous conductors and participate in television and radio broadcasts, all of which are exciting events, especially for the younger choristers.

Discussion

The normalised result decreased by 21.30%. However, the absolute score increased slightly *Appendix C 109. This may be because the Cathedral Lay Clerks perform many special services as Christmas approaches which present many situations where flow could happen. Theorell et al. (2023) reflected that professional singers place high value on flow experiences. This made the score for the control group increase significantly, making the normalised result for the study group drop.

The dramatic increase in the score for the control group (3 to 3.75, which is an increase of 25%) reflects the number of occasions when the Cathedral Choir was able to achieve a state of flow. Although the study director tried to create similar opportunities for the study group, there were many fewer such occasions. Since flow is so closely associated with motivation, this technique is likely to be successful but requires significant thought and planning by the director (Koehler *et al.*, 2021).

Motivation Category 6: Intrinsic Motivators

There was no survey question for the singers on this theme because it relates to the director's approach and there is no direct effect that can be measured with a questionnaire.

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The director is conscious of the danger of the choir perceiving the drive for higher standards as something he imposes on them. He takes care to avoid talking down to the singers. The impression he aims for is that the choir and director are working together to reach the same standard.

During the Study

During the term, the conductor encouraged the choir to take responsibility for their own sound. When time allowed, singers were moved so that they were not standing by anyone singing the same part. Pieces from different parts of the liturgy were sung unconduted without during rehearsals. As well as making the singers listen to, and watch each other, it helped them understand when they needed a conductor.

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director chose to focus on making the singers feel positive, even when things went badly. Occasionally, the choir made a bad mistake during a service. The director reflected carefully on what to say so that, by the time he talked to the singers after the service, he was able to mention the error, but give the impression that he shared the responsibility for it. This meant that the singers went away in an

optimistic frame of mind and approached the next rehearsal positively. He always remembered to thank the choir and soloists.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

The main theme that was raised are the need to remain positive, even when things go wrong. Singers are more deeply affected by criticism that many conductors realise, so an unguarded negative comment can have a devastating effect. The directors interviewed make an effort to find something positive to say, especially when they are feeling negative. The directors feel a sense of ownership, that any problems are ultimately because they are doing something wrong, and they should not blame the singers. Two conductors mentioned pushing for higher standards as a goal that is assumed to be shared. They did not seem to question this or accept the idea that some singers may come solely for other reasons. A sense of shared achievement when things go well was important to the younger directors, but the more experienced ones did not mention it.

Discussion

There was no survey result to support the use of this technique, but the director adopted it naturally, possibly because it fitted naturally with his aim of improving the choir's overall technical ability and his personal style. Adapting the technique to focus on encouraging the singers to listen to each other and take responsibility for their own sound could be effective (Sjoerdsa, 2005).

Motivation Category 7: Technical Complexity

The director had already covered this theme in the discussion about Singer Self-Perception add had nothing to add at this point.

During the Study

The conductor tried several ways to get the singers to listen to each other, including singing without a conductor and singing in a “scrambled” formation. Rather than correcting tuning and breathing problems directly, he used indirect techniques including demonstrating how he would like a phrase sung, asking a part to stagger breathing (agree to breathe at different points), and changing the vowel sound.

Survey Score

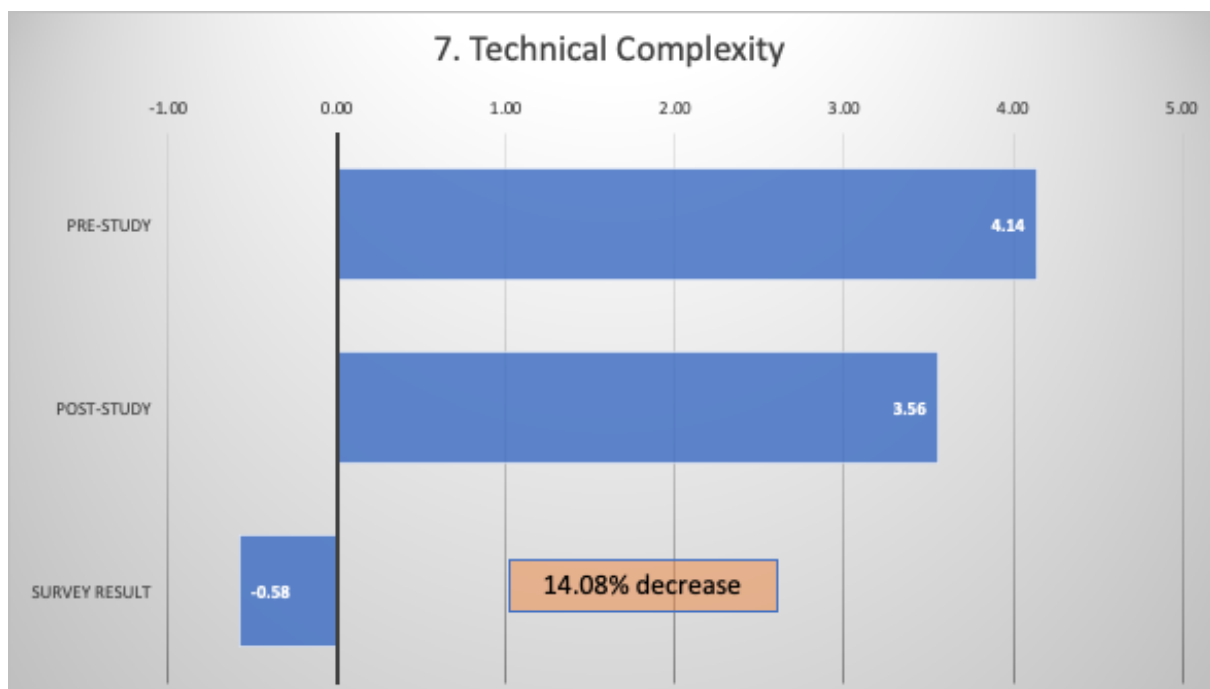


Figure 14 - 7. Technical Complexity survey

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director found demonstrating how he wanted something singing to be an effective way of getting singers to achieve a particular sound without having to use highly technical language. However, he did feel extremely uncomfortable doing it because he is not a trained singer, unlike some of the choir members. He plans to persist with it because he is aware that nobody is judging him as a singer. Exercises that made the singers listen to their own voice in the context of other parts worked well, particularly arranging them so that no-one was next to someone singing the same part. This was particularly useful with no conductor or accompaniment. Practices he had used with junior choristers, such as matching vowel-sounds and thinking “high” also worked with the adults.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

Everyone agreed that getting the singers to listen to themselves and others in the choir is the best way to correct problems with complex causes. The interviewees were divided on correcting mistakes, particularly with regards to tuning. The senior Cathedral organists never criticise tuning directly. They will ask the singers to do something that makes them see the issue and try to address it themselves. They have built up a repertoire of exercises that can help. The other two conductors always use empirical language and point out if a passage is flat, without explicitly saying how to correct it. Two of the directors say that appearing relaxed themselves is important. The Director of Music uses a string quartet as an example of how professional musicians can produce exceptional performances without a conductor by learning how to listen.

Discussion

The fall in score for this theme of over 14% suggests that it was not successful. The study choir felt that they were asked to do more in a way that they didn't understand after the study. This may reflect the more complex repertoire used towards the end of the term or may indicate that the director over-estimates the level of technical understanding that the singers have. From the interviews, it appears that the conductor tried hard to use indirect techniques, such as encouraging the singers to listen to each other, to address the problems that he saw. This was probably effective, as supported by the increase in the singers' perceived ability. For this Motivation Category, the issue is more likely to be concerned with the way other problems are addressed, possibly by using technical terms that not all singers understood.

Motivation Category 8: Time Pressure

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The director plans the music for each term in advance based on the liturgical requirements, the singers available and repertoire he chooses. Two weeks before each service or concert he reconsiders the planned music and revises it if necessary. He learned in the past that publishing complete concert programmes in advance has a negative effect if he has to drop some items that prove over-ambitious. He now tells the choir what the programme will be two weeks in advance.

During the Study

The director managed the rehearsal time carefully. Changes to the schedule happened, but they were explained in advance and seemed sensible. The choir started rehearsing difficult works several weeks in advance. Nothing had to be dropped because the choir failed to learn it in time. It was noticeable that the concert music was not published at the start of the term, but nobody complained.

Survey Score

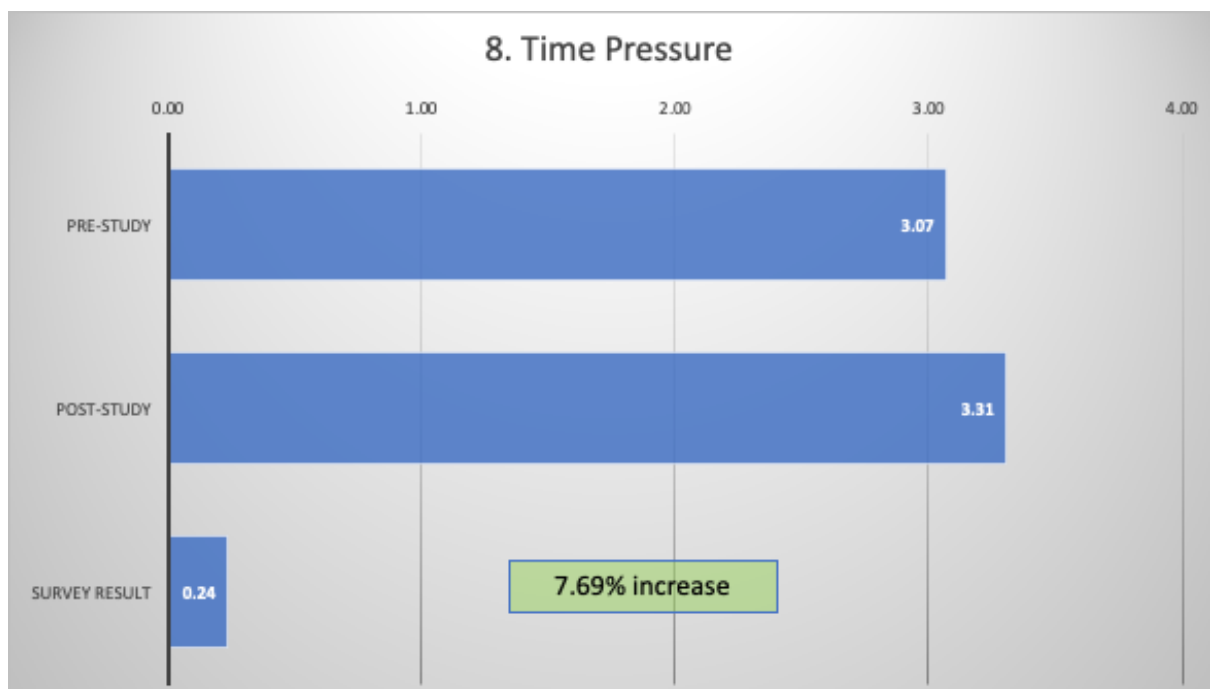


Figure 15 - 8. Time pressure study

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The same term in 2022 suffered from the effects of time pressure and some singers left, so the director was very conscious about the need to manage time more tightly. He put a lot of work into the plan for the term and used this to plan each rehearsal in detail, including what order to practice the pieces in. He also took care not to

schedule multiple complex pieces in the same service. He felt that this term went much more smoothly and felt less rushed. No major changes were needed to the repertoire.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

All the conductors work to a plan that is prepared before the start of the season. There is some flexibility in the Cathedral Music List, but it is published and changing anything will affect morale and reputation, so they try to avoid it. The Choral Society must perform the work they have chosen. Sometimes this means that they have no choice but to perform a work for which they feel under-rehearsed, in which case the director tells those who don't know it to mime. His view is that the audience have come with goodwill and want the choir to succeed. All the directors take a pragmatic approach and will make changes if they are essential but minimise the chance of that by planning ahead. None of them mentioned the stress for the choir of learning too much music in too little time. The Cathedral Music Director considers that it is his responsibility to manage the overall time pressure.

Discussion

The increase in score of 7.6% indicates that the singers felt less time pressure following the study. The steps taken by the director seem sensible and pragmatic and appeared to have an effect. Although time pressure can sometimes improve musical standards, it can have a negative impact on morale (Austin, 1988). Overall, this technique appears to be moderately successful.

Motivation Category 9: Opportunities to Perform

The director always arranges additional performances for the choir each term, usually a concert and a visit to sing a service at a church in the diocese. This term, he has arranged a further concert at Eaton Hall Chapel.

During the Study

The additional concert at Eaton Hall was cancelled, but the conductor arranged additional performing opportunities at the Chester Contemporary Arts Festival and carol-singing at houses in the Cathedral Close. There was also an extra church visit to North Wales and a concert in St Werburgh's Catholic Church.

Survey Score



Figure 16 - 9. Opportunities to Perform survey

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The director was disappointed that the visit to Eaton Hall was cancelled because that could have been a different experience for the singers, but there were still more additional performance opportunities than usual this term. The project with Chester Contemporary Arts was a new experience for everyone concerned and seen as a great success, but it used up a significant amount of the choir's rehearsal time. He will continue to arrange additional performances in the future.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

The main way for all choirs to perform outside the normal routine is in concerts in external venues. Church visits round the diocese were mentioned by all the Cathedral organists. The Director of Music and the former Oxford college choir leader both stressed that worship is the core reason for the choirs' existence and must take priority, which left little time or money to arrange additional events. Carol-singing was a popular activity. Connection with the local community through external events was important to the Oxford director and Choral Society conductor. The Cathedral organists plan to raise awareness in local schools by running events for schoolchildren to watch and sing with the choir.

Discussion

The score increased by over 13% indicating that this technique worked well. As well as being enjoyable for their own sake, external performances engage with a wider audience than the choir usually reaches which raises their sense of value and importance.

Motivation Category 10: Elitism

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The conductor is aware of the danger of elitism in an auditioned choir that aims for high standards. He tries to make every singer feel welcome by showing he understands their strengths and weaknesses and values them. An advantage of auditions is that every singer knows they have been selected. Sometimes singers can intimidate others by saying something unguarded. He believes this is unintentional. He tries to fight the idea of elitism by setting an example with his attitude and careful use of language, avoiding any obscure technical terms.

During the Study

The conductor set the tone of the practices to be inclusive and was careful to avoid intimidating language. If any of the singers said something that could offend or upset another singer, he spoke to them privately after the rehearsal. When one of the singers was struggling with vocal strain during the long Thursday practices, he modified the initial warm-up to be less taxing.

Survey Score

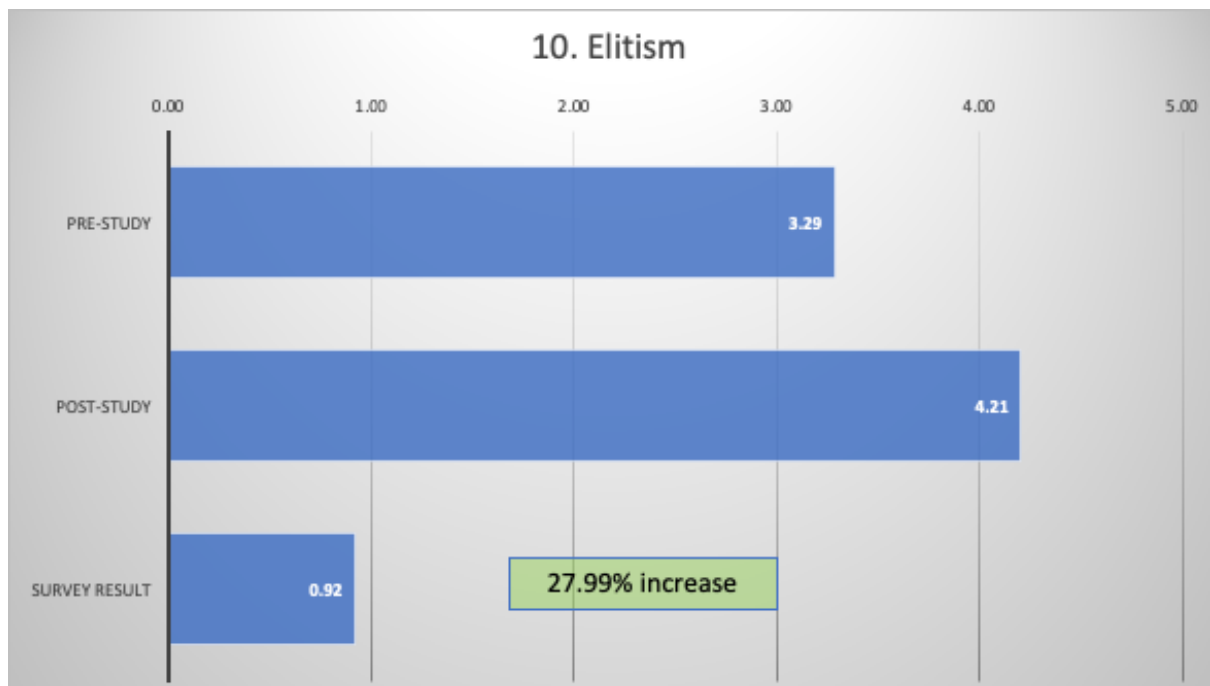


Figure 17 - 10. Elitism survey

Post-Study Interview **Appendix J p139*

The director is not certain that no elitism happens because he can't hear every conversation that goes on, but he hasn't noticed anything. If he did, he likes to think he would intervene. He is aware of individuals who feel self-conscious about their voice and tries to be supportive. He is not aware of anyone being criticised for the way they sing. He feels that the atmosphere in the choir is much more inclusive and less elitist than when he started conducting them.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding **Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127*

There were few common themes between the interviewees concerning elitism. Each perceived the risk from different sources. For the sturdy group, any elitism appeared to be accidental and was quickly dealt with. For the junior choristers in the Cathedral

Choir, there will always be petty jealousies and rivalry, especially concerning who is picked for solos. When the parents get involved, it can be very unpleasant. It appears to be a common problem with many Cathedral choirs. The Oxford college conductor made a distinction between “elite” and “elitist”, explaining that the standard required to get into the choir was set high, but everyone was considered equal in the choir. He also made efforts to help those who failed the audition to understand what they needed to do to succeed later. The challenge for the Choral Society director was the wide variation in what new singers expected from a non-auditioned choir, especially now community, pop and rock choirs are widespread, and the Choral Society repertoire and ethos is quite different. None of the conductors felt that deliberate elitism occurred in their choirs.

Discussion

An increase in score of over 25% suggests that the technique was particularly effective. The director’s approach of setting the tone of the practices as inclusive and respectful appears to have made the singers feel more valued. The result suggests that there may have been some elitist behaviour in the past that the director has now eliminated.

Motivation Category 11: Musical Experience

Pre-study interview *Appendix I p128

The conductor is aware of the musical background of some in the choir, either because they have told him, or have requested absences because of another musical commitment. He recognises that he only has partial information, and that his perception is likely to be skewed by the more vocal singers. The choir does not

take musical background into account when recruiting new members, which is largely by word-of-mouth.

During the Study

There was no formal request from the conductor for the singers to tell him about their musical experience, but the survey questionnaire gave them the opportunity to mention it if they felt it was important, and no-one did. At every rehearsal, he made a point of asking one or more singers about their experience of a particular piece, or their opinion on interpretation, liturgy and pronunciation. This helped to create an environment where the singers with musical experience outside the choir felt valued and respected.

Survey Score

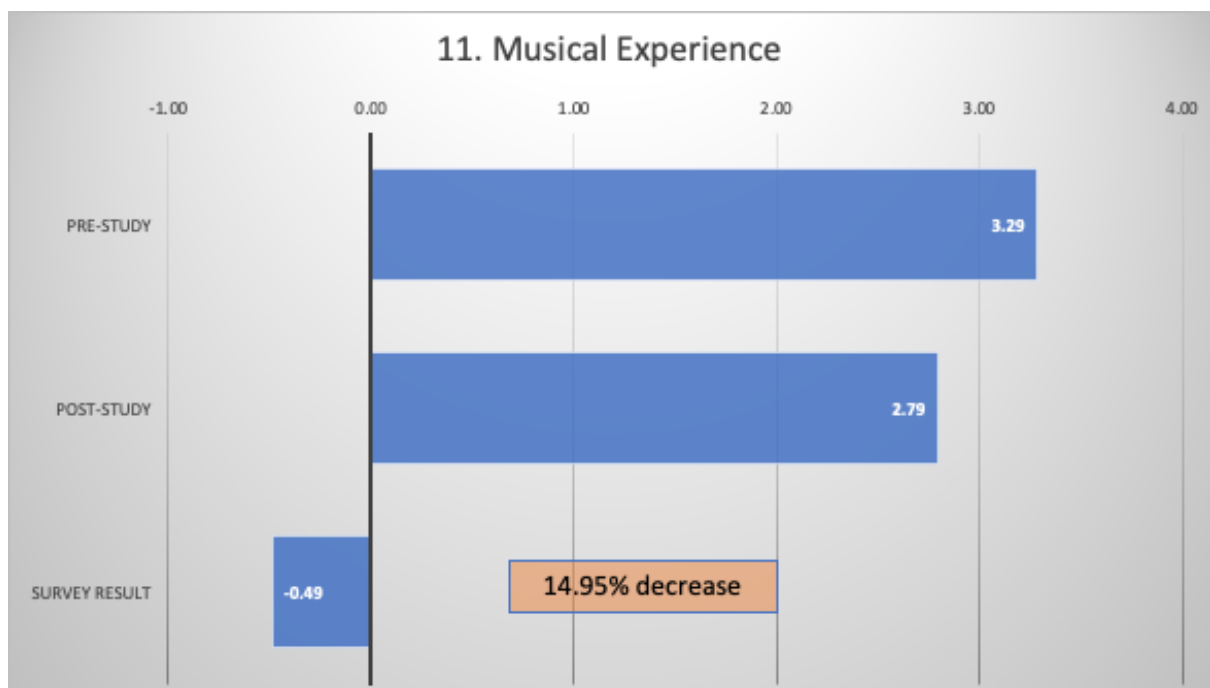


Figure 18 - 11. Musical Experience survey

Post-Study Interview *Appendix J p139

The conductor is aware that the choir members sing in other choirs and play instruments. His hope is that the Nave Choir gives them something extra because it is better funded and resourced with professional leaders, music copies and access to the Cathedral building and organ. As a result, the choir can learn and perform more complex repertoire than a normal church or community choir.

Additional Insights from Interview Coding *Appendix H, I, J, K & L p127

All the directors see their singers doing musical activities outside the choir as positive. It gives the Cathedral Choirs a positive external image and helps develop the singers' musical skills. It also helps the singers understand the unique benefits of singing in a Cathedral Choir. The Lay Clerks are viewed as professional musicians, and it is expected that they will have a musical life outside the Cathedral. The Choristers are at school and activities there are outside the control of the Cathedral Music Department. The Director of Music keeps close links with the schools to manage any potential conflicts. Three of the conductors mentioned that there is not enough traditional singing at state schools to provide potential recruits for either the Cathedral Choirs or the Choral Society.

Discussion

A fall of nearly 15% indicates that this technique did not work. It would appear that many of the singers have musical experience or activity outside the choir of which the director is not aware. This suggests that the technique needs to be strengthened and made more specific.

9) Meeting the Project Aims and Goals

The first aim was to complete a literature review building on earlier research and expanding on each Motivation Category. This was a useful exercise. The focus that came from concentrating on specific themes uncovered recent relevant research that helped refine the Motivation Category definitions into elements that were likely to be valuable to choir singers and could be measured in the study.

The next aim was to develop a set of practical techniques that a choir leader could use that would improve motivation in each Motivation Category area. These emerged naturally from the literature review and were refined by discussion with the conductor of the study choir.

The third aim was to conduct a study to test the Hypothesis. This took place and the effectiveness of each technique was measured. The overall theory was only partially tested by the study. Since the results were different for each theme, it was not possible to relate the themes and techniques directly back to the over-arching theory.

10) Discussion

The two general survey questions concerning the singers' perception of their own ability and their feeling about being in the choir both showed a significant improvement following the study.

The results for individual Intervention Techniques were more mixed, with six showing an improved score and four showing a reduced score.

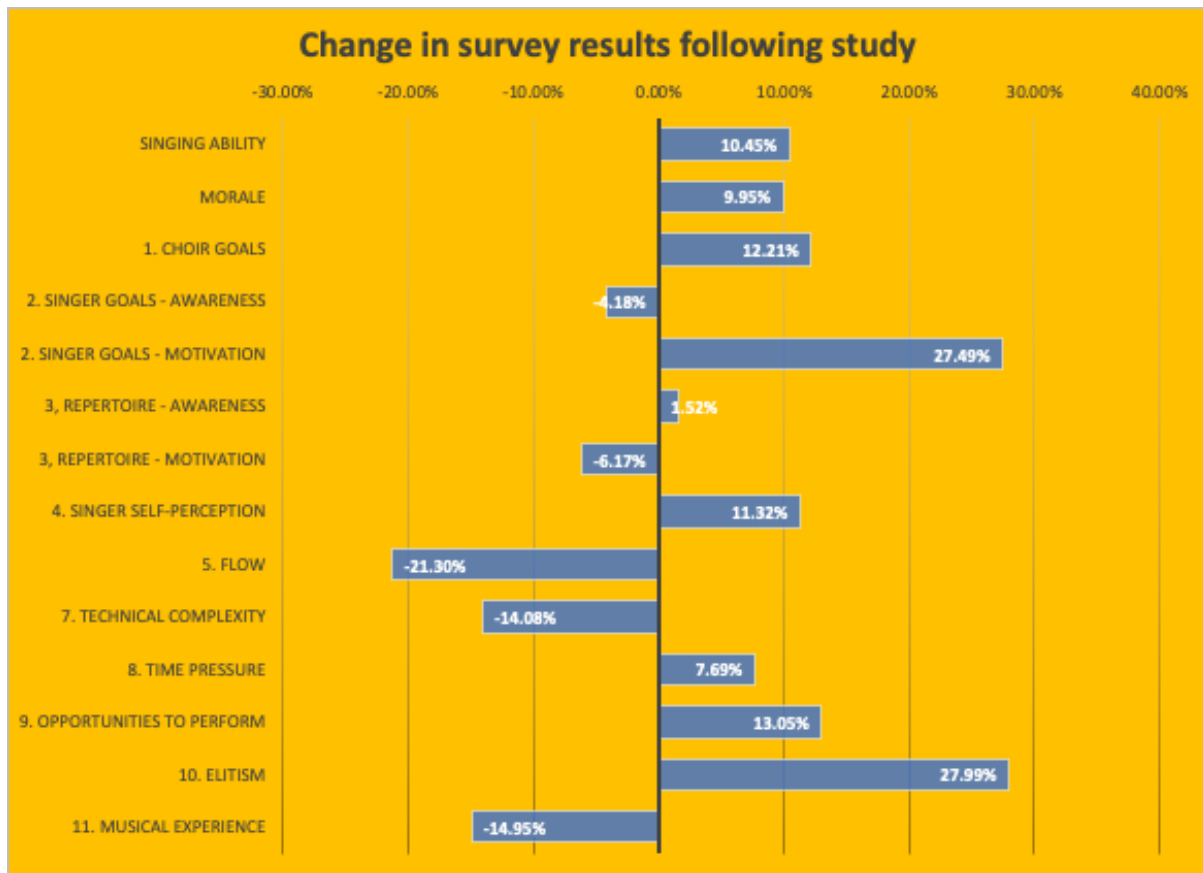


Figure 19 - Survey results by Motivation Category

Overall, the results support the Hypothesis. It is possible that the results would have been stronger if the Intervention Techniques that did not cause an improvement in the questionnaire results were dropped.

The Hypothesis could be modified to only cover the six Motivation Categories that showed a definite positive result. However, each one is supported by earlier studies and the findings of the literature review, and possible explanations for the results emerged during the study and are discussed in *Findings*. In the researcher's opinion, further research that addresses the weaknesses of the current study should be conducted before an alternative hypothesis is adopted. The Hypothesis could also be broadened to include positive consequences for the singing leader that

follow from improved morale, such as retention of singers, improved attainment and more effective recruitment.

The cathedral setting gave the study some advantages. The Nave Choir is a small group with regular practices and services that are run consistently. This means that any changes in the characteristics being measured are likely to have been caused by the Motivation Techniques. Having a second choir singing similar repertoire in the same location with the same conductor meant that there was a natural choice for the control group. The music department is well-funded, meaning that the choir has excellent facilities, a professional conductor and a beautiful, historic building to sing in, which removed a number of external factors that can affect morale for other choirs, such as physical comfort, access to music and unsuitable rehearsal premises. The professionalism and high musical standard maintained by both groups means that none of the singers were distracted by poor musicianship, either from the director or the other singers.

There are some weaknesses in the study that make it difficult to apply the findings more broadly. The sample size was small, with only nine singers in the study group and four in the control group completing the post-study survey, which may lead to conclusions that are invalid for the wider population (Ulitzsch, Lüdtke and Robitzsch, 2021). The cathedral choral environment, ethos and repertoire are very different from those of many other singing groups. All the singers in the control group are paid to sing, which may influence their attitude to the choir (Appelgren *et al.*, 2019). The design and time constraints of the study meant that it was not possible to measure the impact of the improved morale on the retention, musical attainment and recruitment of singers in the choir, which would have made the Hypothesis more

generally applicable to the professional practice of choir leaders and singing teachers.

The literature review led to the selection of the Motivation Techniques, but the practical design and application of them was chosen through discussion with the conductor. This creates a danger that they may only be applicable to the choir they were designed for. It also means that there was an element of coaching of the conductor before the study, which would not be practical if the Motivation Techniques were widely adopted. It is possible that some of the Motivation Techniques that appeared ineffective would produce positive results in a longer study.

Other studies have examined the nature of motivation in specific choirs (Rohwer and Rohwer, 2012), the effect on general well-being of singers (Bailey and Davidson, 2005), and there is a large body of literature on methods of improving motivation in education (Cook and Artino, 2016). The findings of this study are similar in showing that it is possible to positively affect motivation of singers by planned intervention based on Motivation Theory.

The findings of this study differ from other studies in showing that a conductor can introduce specific practices into choir rehearsals that have a positive impact on morale without disrupting the normal operation of the group.

Compared with other studies, the strengths of this study are the development of rehearsal techniques specific to choir directors that can be adopted without major change and the identification of eleven Motivation Categories that can be measured with a simple questionnaire. The main weakness is the lack of similarity between the

study group and the majority of choirs without the same level of resources and support.

A larger-scale study involving multiple choirs of different types could produce clearer results. To make such a study practical, the techniques would need to be narrower and more precise so that a conductor could follow them without the need for discussion.

In summary, the study provides evidence that, by gaining an understanding of some applicable parts of Motivation Theory and paying attention to aspects of their practice where they are relevant, choir directors can have a measurable positive impact on the morale and capability of their singers. Further research could measure the longer-term impact on choir retention, attainment and recruitment, which are important for many singing leaders.

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Appendices

11) Appendix A – UWTSD Ethics Approval

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL

In order for research to result in benefit and minimise risk of harm, it must be conducted ethically. A researcher may not be covered by the University's insurance if ethical approval has not been obtained prior to commencement.

The University follows the OECD Frascati manual definition of **research activity**: "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications". As such this covers activities undertaken by members of staff, postgraduate research students, and both taught postgraduate and undergraduate students working on dissertations/projects.

The individual undertaking the research activity is known as the "principal researcher".

Ethical approval is not required for routine audits, performance reviews, quality assurance studies, testing within normal educational requirements, and literary or artistic criticism.

Please read the notes for guidance before completing ALL sections of the form.

This form must be completed and approved prior to undertaking any research activity. Please see Checklist for details of process for different categories of application.

Delete the Guidance Notes at the end of the form BEFORE submitting your application

SECTION A: About You (Principal Researcher)

1	Full Name:	Kenneth Stephen Fayle			
2	Tick all boxes which apply:	Member of staff:	☐	Honorary research fellow:	☐
3	Undergraduate Student	☐	Taught Postgraduate Student	☒	Postgraduate Research Student
4	Institute/Academic Discipline/Centre:	WAPPAR			
5	Campus:	Carmarthen			
6	E-mail address:	kfayle@icloud.com			
7	Contact Telephone Number:	07711058835			
For students:					
8	Student Number:	20288833			
9	Programme of Study:	MA in Professional Practice (Voice Pedagogy)			
10	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Julie Crossman/ Debbie Winter			

SECTION B: Approval for Research Activity

1	Has the research activity received approval in principle? (please check the Guidance Notes as to the appropriate approval process for different levels of research by different categories of individual)	YES	☒	NO	☐
					Date
2	If Yes, please indicate source of approval (and date where known):	Research Degrees Committee	☐		
3	Approval in principle must be obtained from the relevant source prior to seeking ethical approval	Institute Research Committee	☐		
4		Other (write in) WAPPAR Ethics Board Representative	☒		

SECTION C: Internal and External Ethical Guidance Materials

Please list the core ethical guidance documents that have been referred to during the completion of this form (including any discipline-specific codes of research ethics, and also any specific ethical guidance relating to the proposed methodology). Please tick to confirm that your research proposal adheres to these codes and guidelines.	
1	UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice ☒
2	UWTSD Research Data Management Policy ☒
3	☐

SECTION D: External Collaborative Research Activity

1	Does the research activity involve collaborators outside of the University?	YES	☐	NO	☒	
2	If Yes, please provide the name of the external organisation and name and contact details for the main contact person and confirmation this person has consented to their personal data being shared as part of this collaboration.					
3	Institution					
4	Contact person name					
5	Contact person e-mail address					
6	Has this individual consented to sharing their details on this form?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
7	Are you in receipt of a KESS scholarship?	YES	☐	NO	☐	
8	Is your research externally funded	YES	☐	NO	☐	
9	Are you specifically employed to undertake this research in either a paid or voluntary capacity?	Voluntary	YES	☐	NO	☐
10		Employed	YES	☐	NO	☐
11	Is the research being undertaken within an existing UWTSD Athrofa Professional Learning Partnership (APLP)	If YES then the permission question below does not need to be answered.	YES	☐	NO	☐
12	Permission to undertake the research has been provided by the partner organisation	(If YES attach copy) (If NO the application cannot continue)	YES	☐	NO	☐

Where research activity is carried out in collaboration with an external organisation

13	Does this organisation have its own ethics approval system?	YES	☐	NO	☐
14	If Yes, please attach a copy of any final approval (or interim approval) from the organisation				

SECTION E: Details of Research Activity

1	Indicative title:	Effect of Singing Teacher and Choir Leader Interventions on Singers' Morale and Attainment		
2	Proposed start date:	10/7/23	Proposed end date:	1/3/24
3	Introduction to the Research (maximum 300 words) Ensure that you write for a <u>Non-Specialist Audience</u> when outlining your response to the three points below: • Purpose of Research Activity • Proposed Research Question • Aims of Research Activity • Objectives of Research Activity Demonstrate, briefly, how <u>Existing Research</u> has informed the proposed activity and explain • What the research activity will add to the body of knowledge • How it addresses an area of importance.			
4	Purpose of Research Activity To develop a set of techniques singing leaders can use to raise and maintain the morale of the singers in their care. Research suggests that attention to the motivation of singers will directly influence recruitment, retention and musical attainment and may indirectly improve their health and well-being. The research purpose is to contribute to current research, investigating the hypothesis that by using a specified set of techniques and practices a singing leader can positively affect the motivation of their singers with improvements in the direct and indirect factors listed above.			
5	Research Question What techniques might a singing leader use to increase the motivation and morale of their singers? Can such interventions measurably improve recruitment, retention, attainment and well-being?			
6	Aims of Research Activity • Consolidate relevant motivation theory information applicable to singing leaders • Conduct a mixed method study collecting qualitative data about participant's motivation and feelings with quantitative data relating to recruitment, retention, attainment, health and well-being • Identify practical techniques to be used by singing leaders • Increase my own knowledge and expertise in using such techniques in my professional practice • Create a handbook of motivation techniques for use by singing teachers and choir directors in their professional practice that is practical and based on established motivation theory from the field of Music Psychology.			
7	Objectives of Research Activity • Consult other experienced singing teachers and choir directors about their use of motivation tools and techniques in their practice • Consult singers about their own motivation to sing and how their experience of singing is affected by the actions of their singing leader			

	• Measure the effect of motivation interventions on the motivation, achievement and well-being of singers • Extract themes from the data relevant to the research question and use a recursive analysis method to test the hypothesis • Develop my own skills as a practitioner and teacher of the techniques studied
8	Proposed methods (maximum 600 words) Provide a brief summary of all the methods that may be used in the research activity, making it clear what specific techniques may be used. If methods other than those listed in this section are deemed appropriate later, additional ethical approval for those methods will be needed.
9	This is a mixed method project. I will select a set of techniques for use in singing lessons and choir rehearsals that are designed to increase the motivation of the singers. I will collect views on motivation in a singing context from a group of singing leaders and a broader group of singers. I will select a group of singers to test the effect of these techniques and measure their motivation at the start and end of the process, together with other indirect consequences such as musical attainment and well-being. Methods: 1. Literature Review I will conduct a narrative literature review to collect a set of tools and techniques applicable to singing teaching and choral singing 2. Questionnaire I will use an initial set of closed questions to collect a set of quantitative data on how singers perceive their own motivation, the effect of the behaviour of their singing leader, and what role they think motivation plays in their singing experience. There will also be a small number of more open questions to allow participants to give more detailed answers. 3. Interviews Based on analysis of the questionnaire results, I will select potential participants and seek their agreement to be interviewed individually. These interviews will have a common structure to allow me to record the responses in a way that will allow me to analyze the quantitative results. The record will be made by me on a structured form during the interview and shared with the participant. 4. Group Interviews I will arrange group interviews with the participants to explore the earlier results in more depth and identify themes where there is a broad consensus. I will take notes during the session and facilitate the discussion as appropriate. 5. Focus Group If time allows, I will recruit a focus group from the participants to discuss a particular barrier to singing and suggest potential ways to address it. 6. Field Study I will select two groups of singers, one from my own practice to test the motivation techniques on, and a similar group from a professional colleague's practice as a control group. I will issue a questionnaire to both groups designed to assess the level of motivation, musical standard, and well-being at the start of the study and use the same questionnaire at the end of the study. Considerations will be taken to ensure validity of comparison.

10	Location of research activity Identify all locations where research activity will take place.
11	Questionnaires will be sent by email or using an internet survey tool. Interviews will either take place in the singers' normal lesson or rehearsal venue or via Zoom. Group interviews will take place in the hall where I normally hold chamber choir rehearsals, and participants may ask to join by Zoom. The field study will be conducted in the normal teaching and rehearsal spaces used by the singers involved.
12	Research activity outside of the UK If research activity will take place overseas, you are responsible for ensuring that local ethical considerations are complied with and that the relevant permissions are sought. Specify any local guidelines (e.g. from local professional associations/learned societies/universities) that exist and whether these involve any ethical stipulations beyond those usual in the UK (provide details of any licenses or permissions required). Also specify whether there are any specific ethical issues raised by the local context in which the research activity is taking place, for example, particular cultural and/or legal sensitivities or vulnerabilities of participants.
13	NA

14	Use of documentation not in the public domain: Are any documents NOT publicly available?	NO	☒
		YES	☐
15	(this box should expand as you type)		

SECTION F: Scope of Research Activity

1	Will the research activity include:	YES	NO
2	Use of a questionnaire or similar research instrument?	☒	☐
3	Use of interviews?	☒	☐
4	Use of diaries?	☒	☐
5	Participant observation with their knowledge?	☒	☐
6	Participant observation without their knowledge?	☐	☒
7	Use of video or audio recording?	☒	☐
8	Access to personal or confidential information without the participants' specific consent?	☐	☒
9	Administration of any questions, test stimuli, presentation that may be experienced as physically, mentally or emotionally harmful / offensive?	☐	☒
10	Performance of any acts which may cause embarrassment or affect self-esteem?	☐	☒
11	Investigation of participants involved in illegal activities?	☐	☒
12	Use of procedures that involve deception?	☐	☒
13	Administration of any substance, agent or placebo?	☐	☒
14	Working with live vertebrate animals?	☐	☒
15	Other primary data collection methods, please explain in this box For example, 'focus groups'. Please indicate the type of data collection method(s) in this box and tick the accompany box.	☒	☐

16	Details of any other primary data collection method: Focus Groups with written notes taken by the researcher		
(this box should expand as you type)			

If NO to every question, then the research activity is (ethically) low risk and **may** be exempt from **some** of the following sections (please refer to Guidance Notes).

If YES to any question, then no research activity should be undertaken until full ethical approval has been obtained.

SECTION G: Intended Participants

1	Who are the intended participants:	YES	NO
2	Students or staff at the University?	☐	☒
3	Adults (over the age of 18 and competent to give consent)?	☒	☐
4	Vulnerable adults?	☐	☒
5	Children and Young People under the age of 18? (Consent from Parent, Carer or Guardian will be required)	☐	☒
6	Prisoners?	☐	☒
7	Young offenders?	☐	☒
8	Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator or a gatekeeper?	☐	☒
9	People engaged in illegal activities?	☐	☒
10	Others (please identify specifically any group who may be unable to give consent) please indicate here and tick the appropriate box.	☐	☒
11	Other – please indicate here: (this box should expand as you type)		

12	Participant numbers and source Provide an estimate of the expected number of participants. How will you identify participants and how will they be recruited?	
13	How many participants are expected?	Up to 80 questionnaire recipients including singers and up to 5 singing leaders. One focus group with 8-10 participants. One or two interviews with singing leaders.
14	Who will the participants be?	Singing pupils and choir members in my own practice and those of a professional colleague.
15	How will you identify the participants?	I will ask my pupils individually if they would like to participate and will ask for volunteers from the choirs at a regular practice. I will approach several professional colleagues (singing teachers and choir leaders) to identify students for the control group proposed.

16	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
17	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	☒	☐	☐
18	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	☒	☐	☐
19	Will you obtain written consent for participation?	☒	☐	☐
20	Will you explain to participants that refusal to participate in the research will not affect their treatment or education (if relevant)?	☒	☐	☐
21	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed?	☒	☐	☐
22	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	☒	☐	☐
23	With questionnaires, will you give participants the option of omitting questions they do not want to answer?	☒	☐	☐
24	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	☒	☐	☐
25	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation, in a way appropriate to the type of research undertaken?	☒	☐	☐
26	If NO to any of above questions, please give an explanation			
27				

28	Information for participants:	YES	NO	N/A
29	Will participants be paid?	☐	☒	☐
30	Is specialist electrical or other equipment to be used with participants?	☐	☒	☐
31	Are there any financial or other interests to the investigator or University arising from this study?	☐	☒	☐
32	Will the research activity involve deliberately misleading participants in any way, or the partial or full concealment of the specific study aims?	☐	☒	☐
33	If YES to any question, please provide full details			
34	NA			

SECTION H: Anticipated Risks

1	Outline any anticipated risks that may adversely affect any of the participants, the researchers and/or the University, and the steps that will be taken to address them.		
	If you have completed a full risk assessment (for example as required by a laboratory, or external research collaborator) you may append that to this form.		
2	Full risk assessment completed and appended?	Yes	☐
		No	☒
3	Risks to participants For example: emotional distress, financial disclosure, physical harm, transfer of personal data, sensitive organisational information		
4	Risk to Participant: Some singers see singing as very personal. There may be emotional reactions during the interviews.	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to Participant</i> I will mitigate this risk by using the same methods I would use in a singing lesson, such as distraction and moving the discussion to a different topic, reassuring the participant that they don't need to talk about anything distressing and that their responses are confidential.	

	In the group interviews, participants may react to each other in a way that causes distress. The participants may have unrealistic expectations of the research outcome. As an experienced singer, teacher and choir director there is a risk of researcher bias in which topics I select for the questionnaire. Participants may be tempted to say what they think I want to hear because of my role as a teacher or conductor	If this happens, I will take charge of the discussion as a facilitator and steer it to a safer topic, or terminate the session if necessary. I will mitigate this by being clear on the scope and limitations of the research in all documentation and at the start of each session. I will seek advice from my tutor and other researchers on the questionnaire design. I will make all participants aware of this risk and explain why the research depends on unmotivated answers		
5	If research activity may include sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use) or issues likely to disclose information requiring further action (e.g. criminal activity), give details of the procedures to deal with these issues, including any support/advice (e.g. helpline numbers) to be offered to participants. Note that where applicable, consent procedures should make it clear that if something potentially or actually illegal is discovered in the course of a project, it may need to be disclosed to the proper authorities			
	NA			
6	Risks to investigator For example: personal safety, physical harm, emotional distress, risk of accusation of harm/impropriety, conflict of interest			
	Risk to Investigator: There is a risk of emotional distress during interviews if the discussion strays into difficult emotional areas or a participant becomes angry or aggressive There is a risk that focus group discussions may encroach on sensitive areas for the participants or myself concerning moral or religious beliefs and cause offence or distress.	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to Investigator:</i> I will take care to monitor the mood of the participant and redirect the discussion if I become concerned. If necessary, I will seek advice or counselling If this happens, I will steer the discussion onto another topic and remind the group to respect each other's sincerely held beliefs.		
7	University/institutional risks For example: adverse publicity, financial loss, data protection			
	Risk to University: As I will be recording personal information about the participants, there is a risk to the University of a breach of data protection law	<i>How will you mitigate the Risk to University:</i> This will be mitigated by all data being coded to ensure anonymity and securely stored as described in Section J		
8	Disclosure and Barring Service			
9	If the research activity involves children or vulnerable adults, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate must be obtained before any contact with such participants.	YES	NO	N/A
10	Does your research require you to hold a current DBS Certificate?	☐	☒	☐

SECTION I: Feedback, Consent and Confidentiality

1	Feedback What de-briefing and feedback will be provided to participants, how will this be done and when? I will provide my email contact details to the participants and offer them a copy of my final report to read should they wish.
2	Informed consent Describe the arrangements to inform potential participants, before providing consent, of what is involved in participating. Describe the arrangements for participants to provide full consent before data collection begins. If gaining consent in this way is inappropriate, explain how consent will be obtained and recorded in accordance with prevailing data protection legislation. I will create a consent form explaining the scope and details of the research to be emailed to each participant and ask them to reply confirming consent before collecting any data.
3	Confidentiality / Anonymity Set out how anonymity of participants and confidentiality will be ensured in any outputs. If anonymity is not being offered, explain why this is the case. All completed questionnaires and individual interview notes will be treated as confidential. Where this information is used for further discussion during the research, or in the report, I will ensure that no personal data is included and that no individual can be identified.

SECTION J: Data Protection and Storage

In completing this section refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and the extensive resources on the University's Research Data Management web pages (<http://uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/>).

1	Does the research activity involve personal data (as defined by the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 "GDPR" and the Data Protection Act 2018 "DPA")?	YES	NO
	<i>"Personal data" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject'). An identifiable natural person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.</i>	☒	☐
2	If YES, provide a description of the data and explain why this data needs to be collected: Personal data that will be collected includes the email addresses and names of participants and the emailed consent forms		
3	Does it involve special category data (as defined by the GDPR)?	YES	NO
	<i>"Special category data" means sensitive personal data consisting of information as to the data subjects' – (a) racial or ethnic origin, (b) political opinions, (c) religious beliefs or other beliefs of a similar nature, (d) membership of a trade union (within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992), (e) physical or mental health or condition, (f) sexual life, (g) genetics, (h) biometric data (as used for ID purposes),</i>	☐	☒
4	If YES, provide a description of the special category data and explain why this data needs to be collected: NA		

5	Will the research activity involve storing personal data and/or special category data on one of the following:	YES	NO
6	Manual files (i.e. in paper form)?	☒	☐
7	University computers?	☐	☒
8	Private company computers?	☐	☒
9	Home or other personal computers?	☐	☒
10	Laptop computers/ CDs/ Portable disk-drives/ memory sticks?	☒	☐
11	"Cloud" storage or websites?	☒	☐
12	Other – specify:	☐	☒
13	For all stored data, explain the measures in place to ensure the security of the data collected, data confidentiality, including details of password protection, encryption, anonymisation and pseudonymisation:		
	All data will be kept in password protected cloud storage on the my Office 365 system which will not be shared. Audio/visual data will be transcribed and would be shown to participants to check accuracy of reporting. Manual files will be shredded following completion of the project.		
14	All Data Storage		
15	Will the research activity involve any of the following activities:	YES	NO
16	Electronic transfer of data in any form?	☒	☐
17	Sharing of data with others at the University?	☐	☒
18	Sharing of data with other organisations?	☐	☒
19	Export of data outside the European Union or importing of data from outside the UK?	☐	☒
20	Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, emails or telephone numbers?	☒	☐
21	Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals?	☐	☒
22	Use of data management system?	☐	☒
23	Data archiving?	☐	☒
24	If YES to any question, please provide full details, explaining how this will be conducted in accordance with the GDPR and DPA (and/or any international equivalent):		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected cloud storage on my Office 365 system which will not be shared. All data transfers will be encrypted and password protected. All participants will be given a unique identifier to ensure confidentiality and this list will be kept securely in the password protected folder. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted. In accordance with the DPA2018, participants will have the right to ask to see what data is held relating to them, and this data will be deleted immediately if the participant requests this, in which case the data will not be used in the project.		
25	List all who will have access to the data generated by the research activity:		

	Only the principal researcher		
26	List who will have control of, and act as custodian(s) for, data generated by the research activity:		
	Only the principal researcher		
27	Give details of data storage arrangements, including security measures in place to protect the data, where data will be stored, how long for, and in what form. Will data be archived – if so how and if not why not.		
	All data will be encrypted and kept in password protected cloud storage on my Office 365 system which will not be shared. The data will be stored until the completion of the project and then deleted.		
28	Please indicate if your data will be stored in the UWTSD Research Data Repository (see https://researchdata.uwtsd.ac.uk/). If so please explain. <i>(Most relevant to academic staff)</i>		
	NA		
29	Confirm that you have read the UWTSD guidance on data management (see https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/research-data-management/)	YES NO	☒ ☐
30	Confirm that you are aware that you need to keep all data until after your research has completed or the end of your funding	YES NO	☒ ☐

SECTION K: Declaration

31	The information which I have provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I have attempted to identify any risks and issues related to the research activity and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.		
	In submitting this application I hereby confirm that I undertake to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice which is published on the website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/research/research-ethics/		
	Signature of applicant:	Ken Fayle	Date: 8/6/2023

For STUDENT Submissions:

32	Director of Studies/Supervisor:	Laura James	Date: 3.7.23
33	Signature:	Laura James	

For STAFF Submissions:

34	Academic Director/ Assistant Dean:		Date:
35	Signature:		

Checklist: Please complete the checklist below to ensure that you have completed the form according to the guidelines and attached any required documentation:

☒	I have read the guidance notes supplied before completing the form.
☒	I have completed ALL RELEVANT sections of the form in full.
☒	I confirm that the research activity has received approval in principle

☐	I have attached a copy of final/interim approval from external organisation (where appropriate)
☐	I have attached a full risk assessment (and have NOT completed Section H of this form) (where appropriate) ONLY TICK IF YOU HAVE ATTACHED A FULL RISK ASSESSMENT
☒	I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the above named research activity will meet the University's Research Ethics and Integrity Code of Practice.
☒	I understand that before commencing data collection all documents aimed at respondents (including information sheets, consent forms, questionnaires, interview schedules etc.) must be confirmed by the DoS/Supervisor, module tutor or Academic Director.
☒	I have deleted the guidance notes before submitting the PG2 for consideration

RESEARCH STUDENTS AND STAFF ONLY

All communications relating to this application during its processing must be in writing and emailed to pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk, with the title 'Ethical Approval' followed by your name. You will be informed of the outcome of your claim by email; therefore it is important that you check your University and personal email accounts regularly.

STUDENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE OR TAUGHT MASTERS PROGRAMMES should submit this form (and receive the outcome) via systems explained to you by the supervisor/module leader.

This form is available electronically from the Academic Office web pages:

<https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/academic-office/appendices-and-forms/>

Application Process

All staff research projects and all research students must submit the Ethical Approval Form to the **University Research Ethics Committee** via the Academic Office (pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk). Staff research directly in relation to personal study for taught undergraduate or Masters programmes should be submitted via the Institute procedures explained below.

Taught masters and taught undergraduate research Ethical Approval Forms are considered **within Institutes**. Institutes will provide details of the specific processes for this. Where the Ethical issues within any single ethical application are of particular concern the Institute will refer these to the University Research Ethics Committee. Any student activity that involves the collection of primary data needs to undergo Ethical approval, this includes assignment work as well as dissertations.
that are relevant to your research.

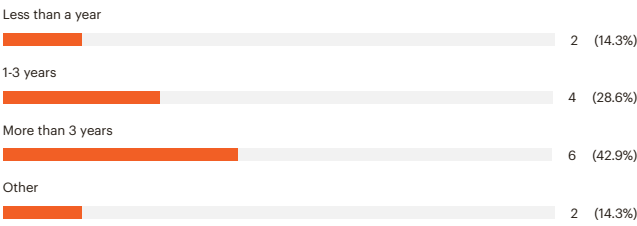
12) Appendix B – Pre-study Survey, Study Group

Effect of Choir Leader Interventions on Singers' Morale and Attainment

All Responses Question 1: How long have you been a member of the choir? Question 2: How would you describe your singing ability? Question 3: What singing ability do you feel in

Question 1 has 14 answers (Radio Buttons)

“How long have you been a member of the choir?”



Open text responses to "other":

Unknown contact said:
"-3years

10 year break

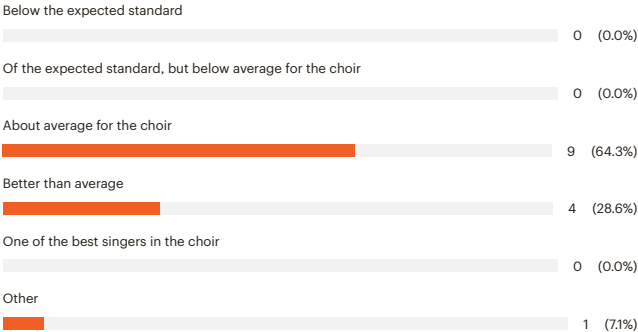
-5.5 years "

Unknown contact said:
"In excess of 11 years"

Feedback

Question 2 has 14 answers (Radio Buttons)

“Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability? ”

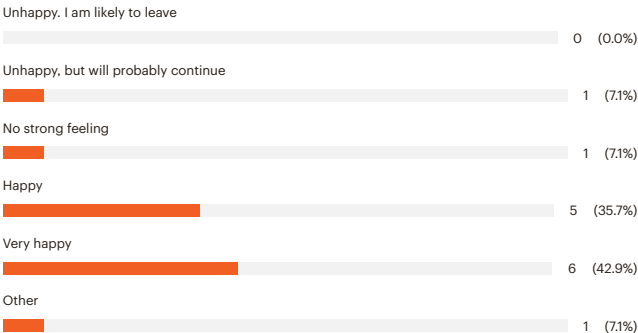


Open text responses to "other":

Unknown contact said:
"Slightly better than average"

Question 3 has 14 answers (Radio Buttons)

“What is your current feeling about being member of the choir?”



Open text responses to "other":

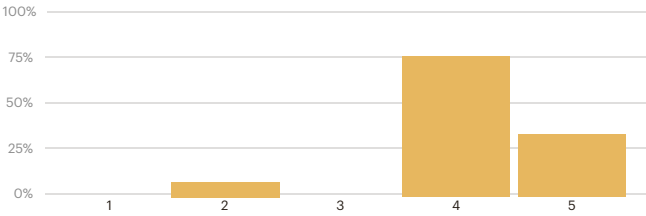
Unknown contact said:
"Musically, very happy

Socially, quite uneasy. Closest to "Unhappy, but will probably continue""

Question 4 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.1



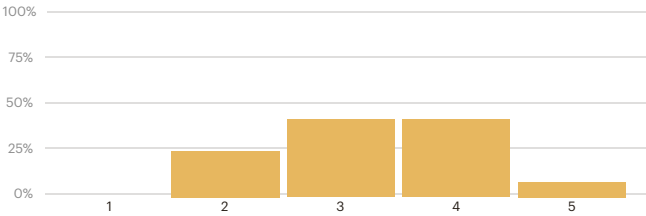
“How well do you understand the director’s plan for the choir this term? ”



Question 5 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.3



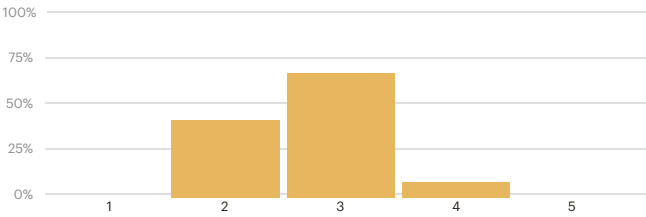
“Do you feel the director is aware of your personal goals and reasons for singing in the choir?”



Question 6 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 2.7



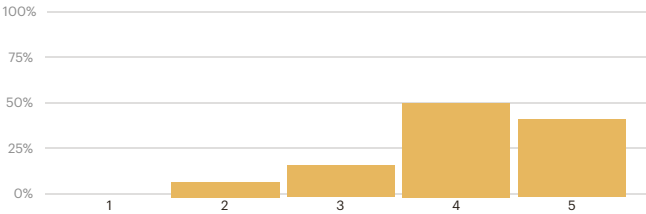
“To what extent do you feel the director takes your personal goals and reasons for singing into account?”



Question 7 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.1



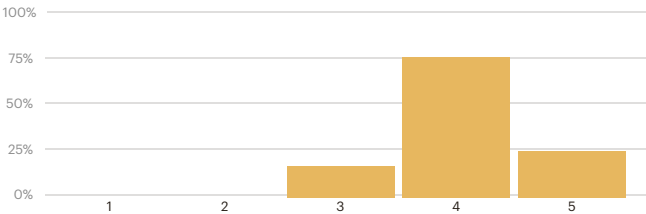
“Do you understand the reasons behind the choice of repertoire?”



Question 8 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.1



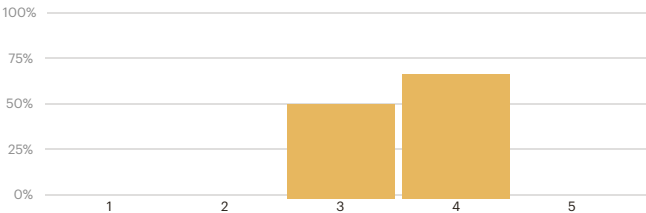
“How do you feel about the choice of repertoire?”



Question 9 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.6



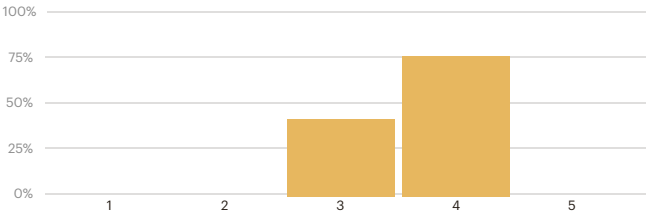
“How does your experience in the choir make you feel about your ability as a singer?”



Question 10 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.6



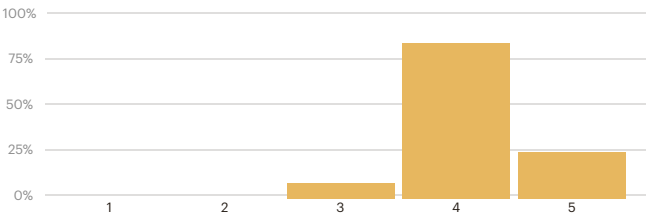
“When you are singing in the choir, how often do you feel completely happy, that everything is going right?”



Question 11 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.1



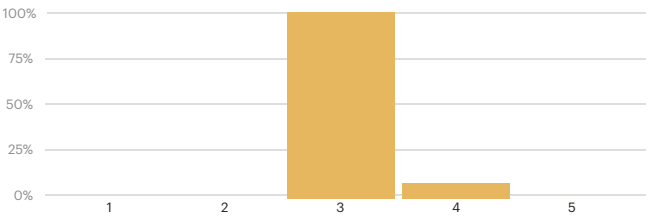
“How often do you feel you are being asked to change something about the way you sing without understanding how to do it? ”



Question 12 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.1



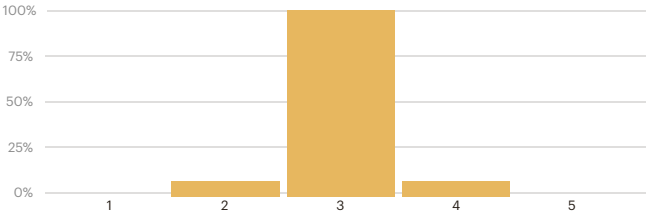
“Do you feel there is enough time given to learn the music, either during rehearsals or in your own time?”



Question 13 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.0



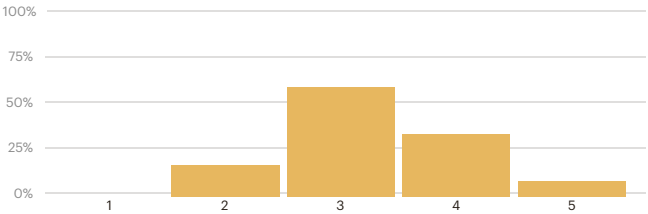
“Outside the regular services, do you feel that the choir have enough additional opportunities to perform in public? ”



Question 14 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.3



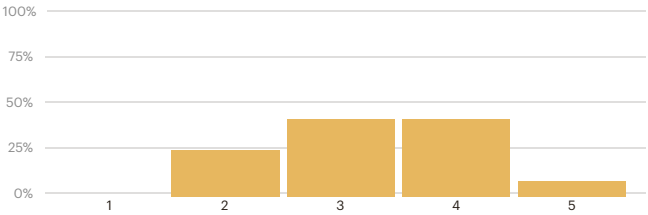
“How does the way other singers in the choir talk and act make you feel about your contribution? ”



Question 15 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.3



“To what extent is the director aware of your musical background and activities outside the choir? ”



Question 16 has 14 answers (Open Text)

“Is there anything you would like to comment on that affects your motivation to sing in the choir?”

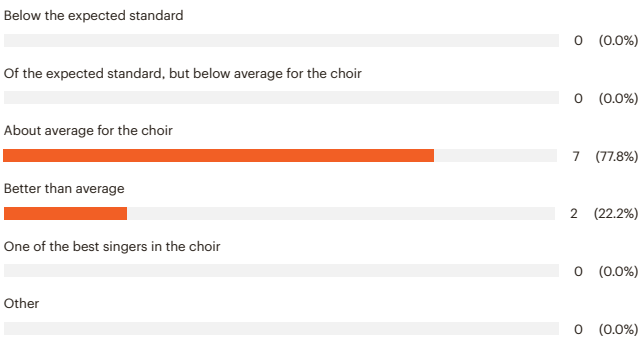
13) Appendix C – Post-study Survey, Study Group

Nave Choir Exit Questionnaire

[All Responses](#) Question 1: Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability? Question 2: What is your current feeling about being member of the choir? Question 3: How would you describe your understanding of the choir's mission?

Question 1 has 9 answers (Radio Buttons)

“Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability?”

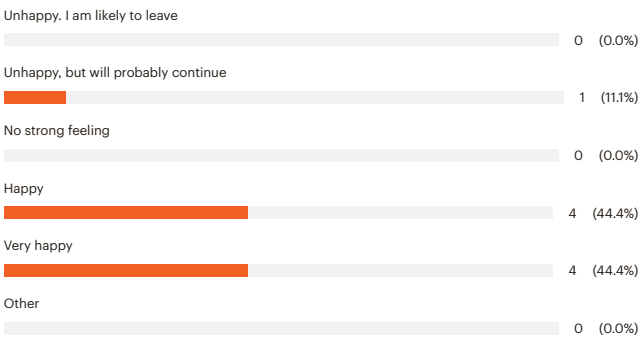


Open text responses to "other":

No responses yet

Question 2 has 9 answers (Radio Buttons)

“What is your current feeling about being member of the choir?”



Open text responses to "other":

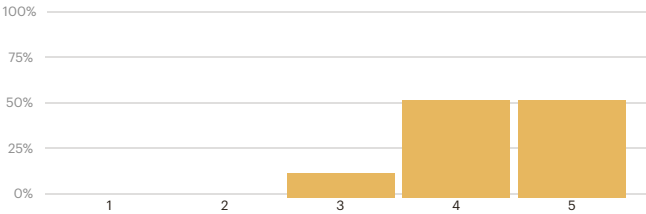
No responses yet

Feedback

Question 3 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3



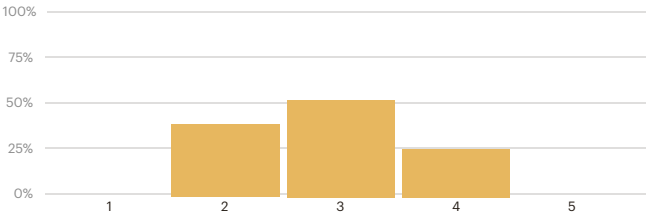
“How well did you understand the director’s plan for the choir this term?”



Question 4 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 2.9



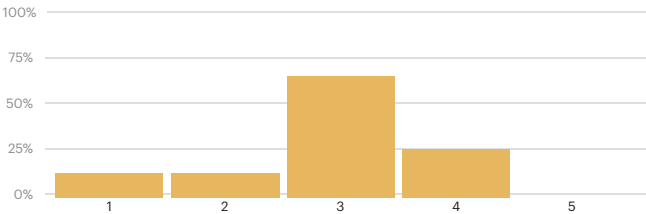
“Do you feel the director is aware of your personal goals and reasons for singing in the choir?”



Question 5 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 2.9



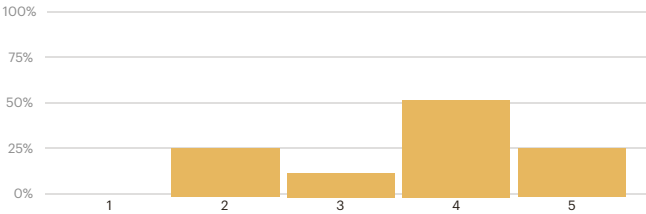
“To what extent do you feel the director takes your personal goals and reasons for singing into account?”



Question 6 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.7



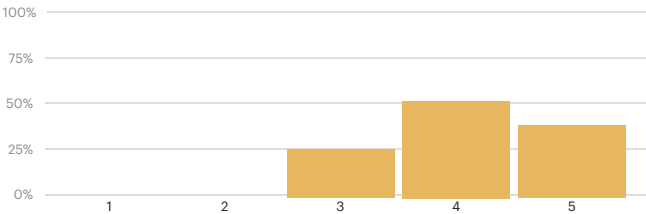
“Do you understand the reasons behind the choice of repertoire?”



Question 7 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.1



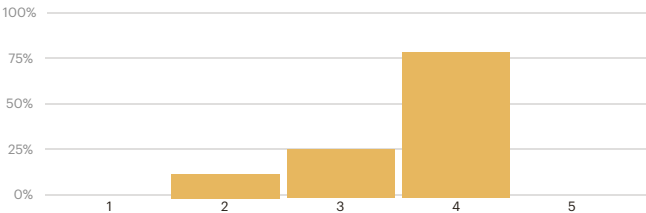
“How do you feel about the choice of repertoire?”



Question 8 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.6



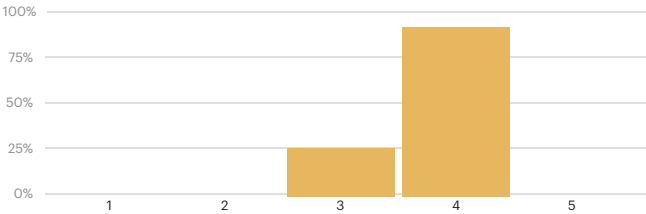
“How does your experience in the choir make you feel about your ability as a singer?”



Question 9 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.8



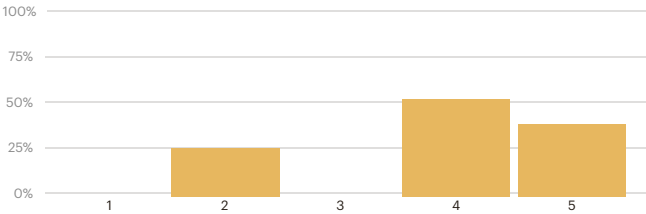
“When you are singing in the choir, how often do you feel completely happy, that everything is going right?”



Question 10 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.9



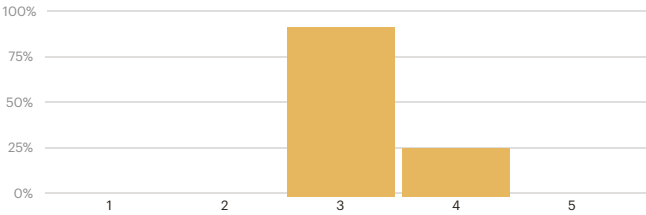
“How often do you feel you are being asked to change something about the way you sing without understanding how to do it? ”



Question 11 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.2



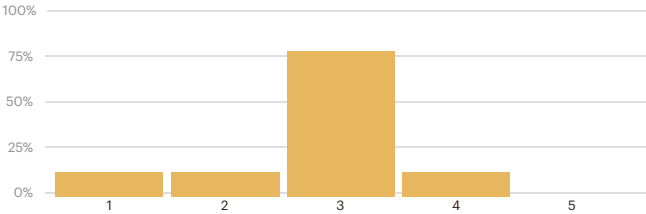
“Do you feel there is enough time given to learn the music, either during rehearsals or in your own time?”



Question 12 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 2.8



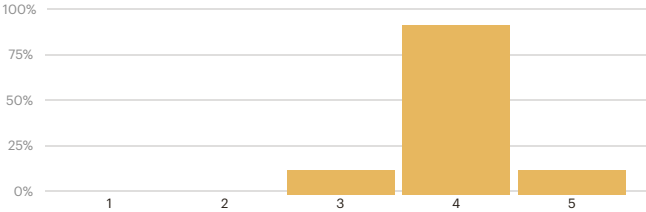
“Outside the regular services, do you feel that the choir have enough additional opportunities to perform in public? ”



Question 13 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.0



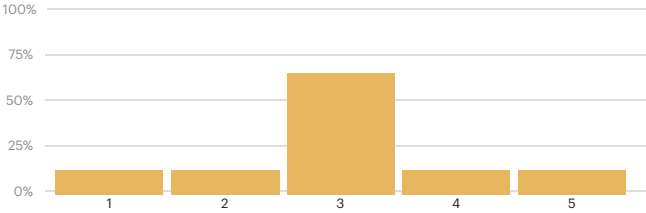
“How does the way other singers in the choir talk and act make you feel about your contribution? ”



Question 14 has 9 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.0



“To what extent is the director aware of your musical background and activities outside the choir? ”



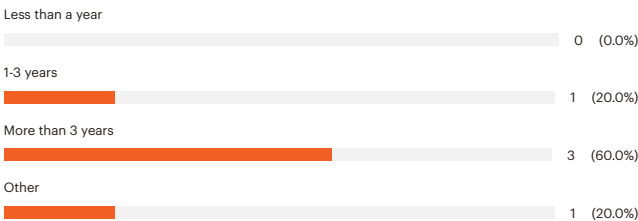
14) Appendix D – Pre-study Survey, Control Group

Effect of Choir Leader Interventions on Singers’
Morale and Attainment (Lay Clerks)

[All Responses](#) Question 1: How long have you been a member of the choir? Question 2: Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability? Question 3: What singing ability do you feel you have?

Question 1 has 5 answers (Radio Buttons)

“How long have you been a member of the choir?”

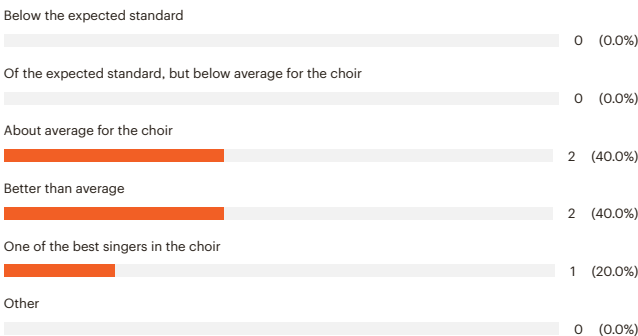


Open text responses to "other":

Unknown contact said:
"about 15 years"

Question 2 has 5 answers (Radio Buttons)

“Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability? ”



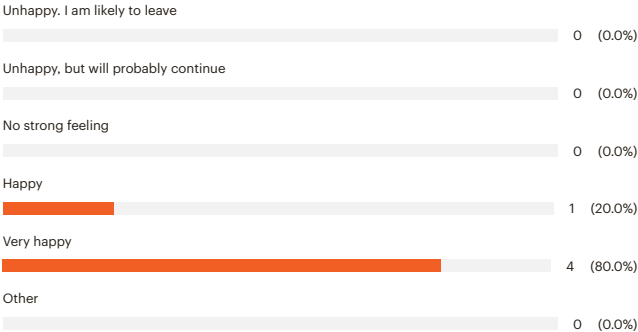
Open text responses to "other":

No responses yet

Feedback

Question 3 has 5 answers (Radio Buttons)

“What is your current feeling about being member of the choir?”



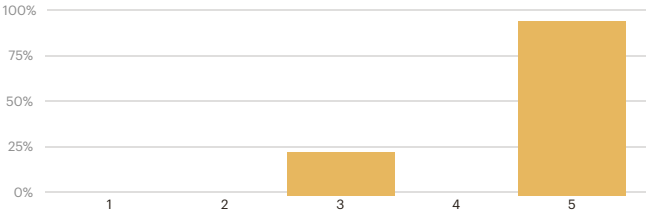
Open text responses to "other":

No responses yet

Question 4 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.6



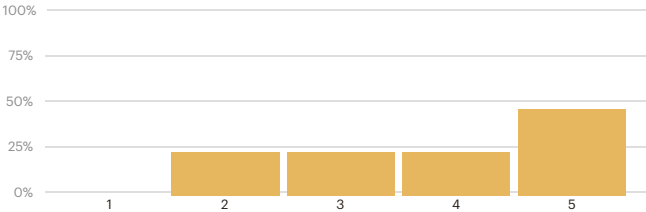
“How well do you understand the director’s plan for the choir this term? ”



Question 5 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.8



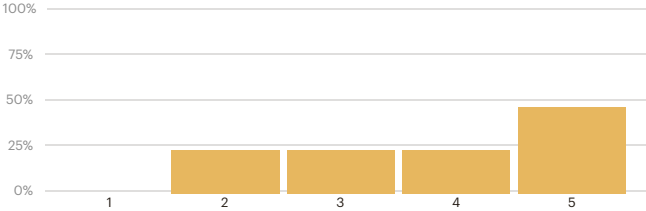
“Do you feel the director is aware of your personal goals and reasons for singing in the choir?”



Question 6 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.8



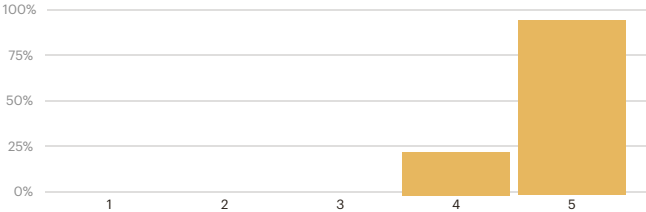
“To what extent do you feel the director takes your personal goals and reasons for singing into account?”



Question 7 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.8



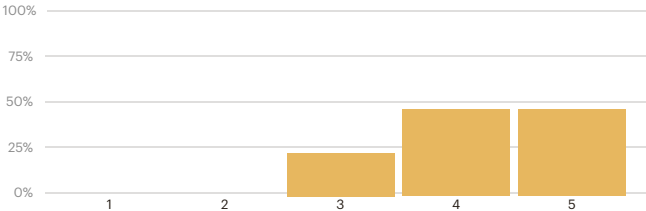
“Do you understand the reasons behind the choice of repertoire? ”



Question 8 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.2



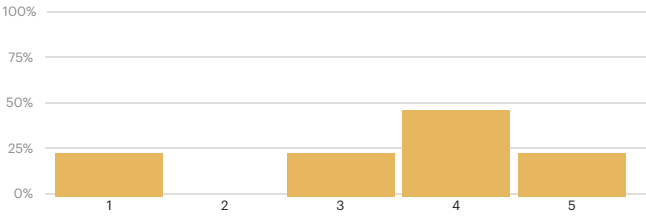
“How do you feel about the choice of repertoire?”



Question 9 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.4



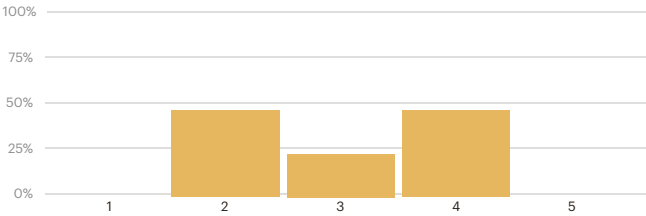
“How does your experience in the choir make you feel about your ability as a singer?”



Question 10 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.0



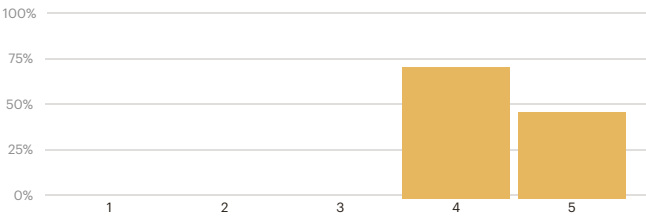
“When you are singing in the choir, how often do you feel completely happy, that everything is going right?”



Question 11 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.4



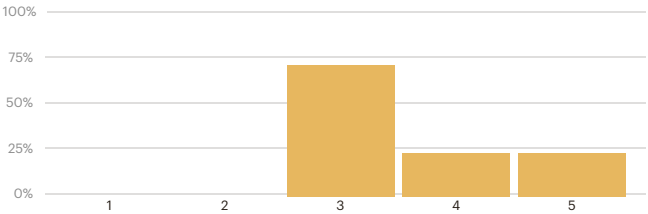
“How often do you feel you are being asked to change something about the way you sing without understanding how to do it? ”



Question 12 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.6



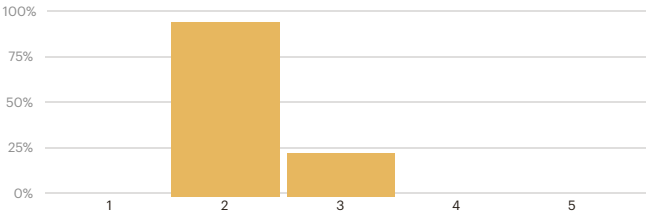
“Do you feel there is enough time given to learn the music, either during rehearsals or in your own time?”



Question 13 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 2.2



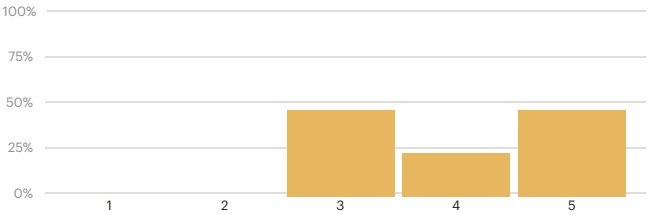
“Outside the regular services, do you feel that the choir have enough additional opportunities to perform in public?”



Question 14 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.0



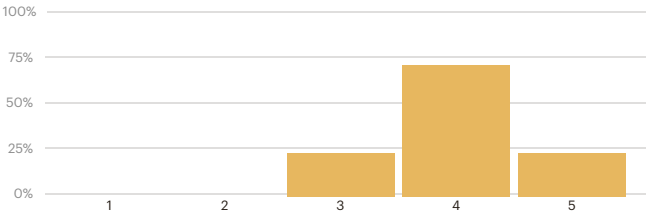
“How does the way other singers in the choir talk and act make you feel about your contribution?”



Question 15 has 5 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.0



“To what extent is the director aware of your musical background and activities outside the choir? ”



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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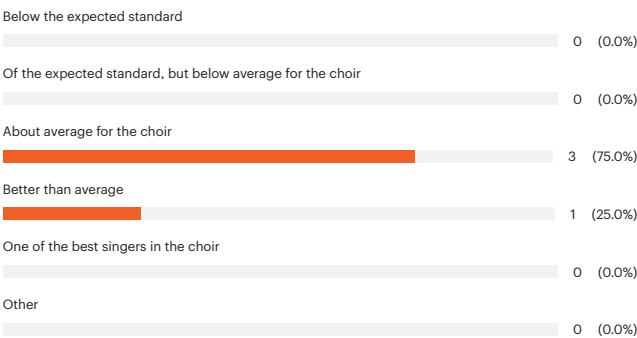
15) **Appendix E – Post-study Survey, Control Group**

Effect of Choir Leader Interventions on Singers’
Morale and Attainment (Lay Clerks - Exit)

[All Responses](#) Question 1: Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability? Questions 2: What is your current feeling about being member of the choir? > it feeling about being member of the choir

Question 1 has 4 answers (Radio Buttons)

“Within the choir, how would you assess your singing ability?”

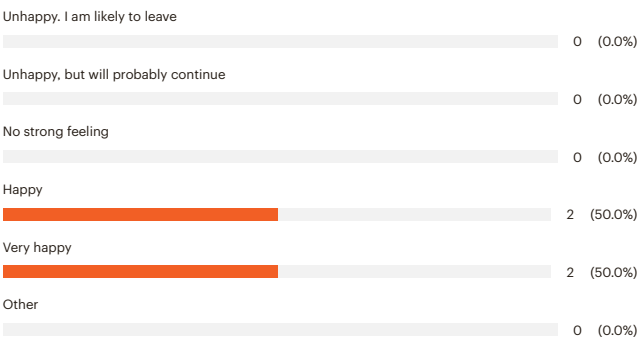


Open text responses to "other":

No responses yet

Question 2 has 4 answers (Radio Buttons)

“What is your current feeling about being member of the choir?”



Open text responses to "other":

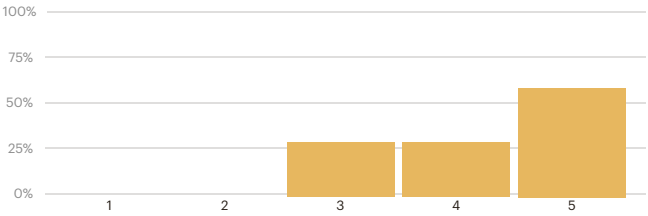
No responses yet

Feedback

Question 3 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3



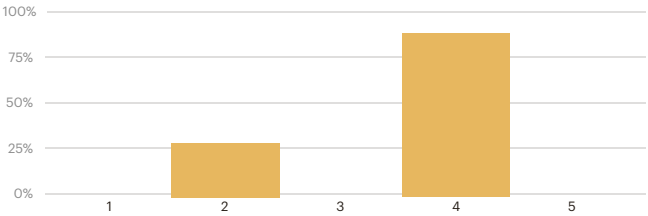
“How well did you understand the director’s plan for the choir this term?”



Question 4 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.5



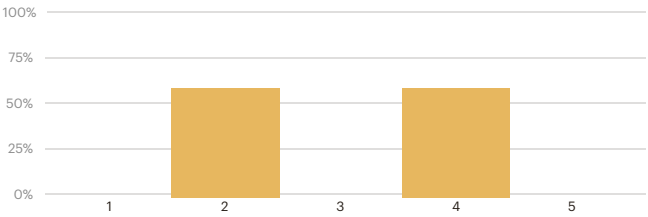
“Do you feel the director is aware of your personal goals and reasons for singing in the choir?”



Question 5 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.0



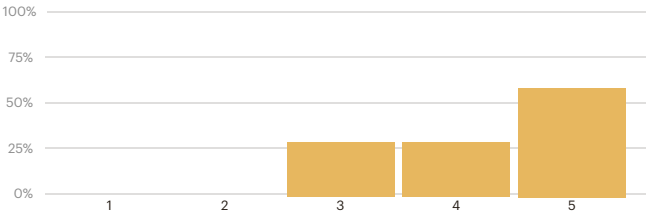
“To what extent do you feel the director takes your personal goals and reasons for singing into account?”



Question 6 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3



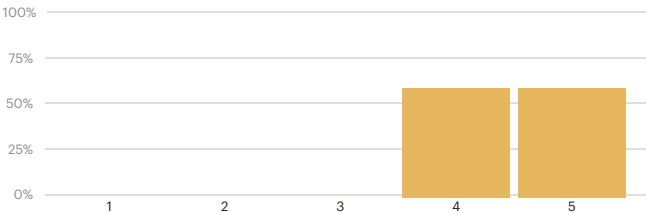
“Do you understand the reasons behind the choice of repertoire?”



Question 7 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.5



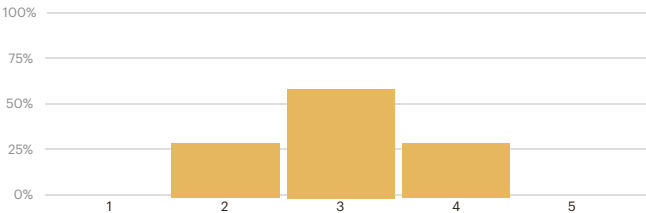
“How do you feel about the choice of repertoire?”



Question 8 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.0



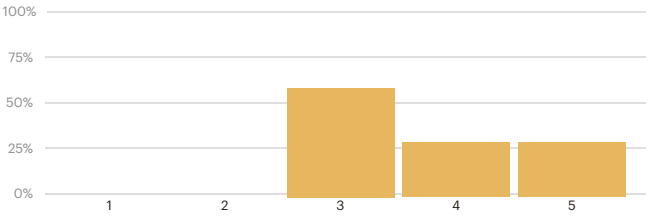
“How does your experience in the choir make you feel about your ability as a singer?”



Question 9 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.8



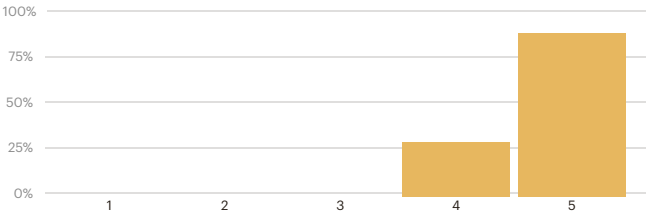
“When you are singing in the choir, how often do you feel completely happy, that everything is going right?”



Question 10 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.8



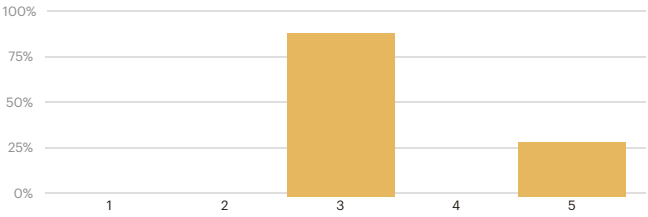
“How often do you feel you are being asked to change something about the way you sing without understanding how to do it? ”



Question 11 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.5



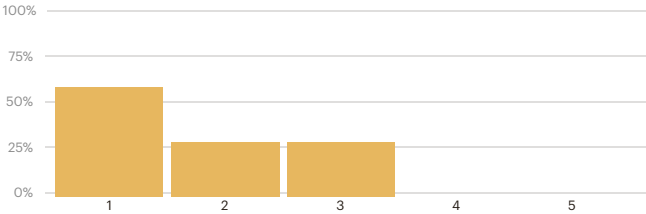
“Do you feel there is enough time given to learn the music, either during rehearsals or in your own time?”



Question 12 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 1.8



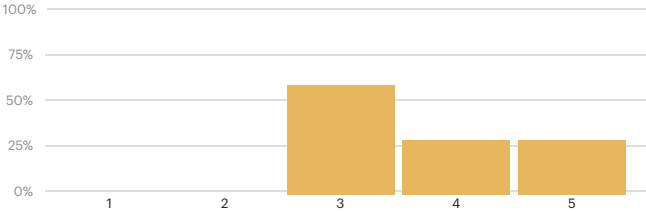
“Outside the regular services, do you feel that the choir have enough additional opportunities to perform in public? ”



Question 13 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.8



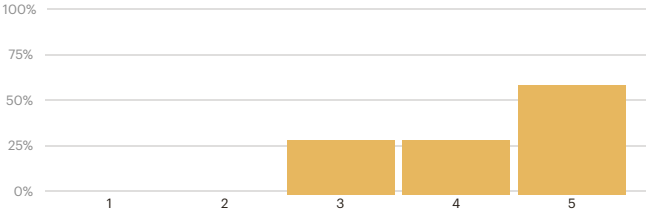
“How does the way other singers in the choir talk and act make you feel about your contribution? ”



Question 14 has 4 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3



“To what extent is the director aware of your musical background and activities outside the choir? ”



16) **Appendix F – Normalised Survey Result Calculation**

1. Calculate a predicted post-study result for the study group from the change in the control group:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Predicted Result} &= (\text{Study Group pre-study score}) \\ &\quad \times (\text{Control Group post-study score}) \\ &\quad / (\text{Control Group pre-study score}) \end{aligned}$$

2. Subtract the actual Study Group post-study score from the Predicted Result to give the increase resulting from the Intervention Techniques:

$$\text{Normalised change} = (\text{Study Group post-study score}) - \text{Predicted Result}$$

3. Express that change as a percentage

$$\text{Normalised \% change} = \text{Normalised change} / (\text{Study Group pre-study score})$$

4. Calculate the Normalised Study Score

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Normalised Study Score} &= (1 + \text{Normalised \% change}) \\ &\quad \times (\text{Study Group pre-study score}) \end{aligned}$$

17) **Appendix G – Interview Questions**

1. Bearing in mind the constraints under which you have to operate, to what extent do you think about the choir members' preferences, opinions and needs when planning the music and events for a season?
2. How aware are you of what goals the individual choir members have in singing in the choir?
3. Do you ever discuss your repertoire choices with the choir? What are your feelings about their views and how much you should consider them?
4. How do you approach correcting mistakes during a practice?
5. Do you sometimes deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, such as singing a particular piece in a resonant place, or at a special occasion?

6. What specific things do you consciously do to motivate the singers? Are these aimed at existing intrinsic desires, such as social interactions, or do you try to instil feelings that complement the choir's aims, such as improving musical standards?
7. How do you help singers work out what to do to fix problems with tuning, tone and so on?
8. How do you handle situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short and there is a risk that the singers may not learn the music in time?
9. Apart from regular services, do you create additional opportunities for the choir to perform in public?
10. Is there a risk of elitism in the choir making new or less experienced singers feel inadequate? How do you address this?
11. Are you aware of the musical background and activities of your singers outside the choir? Are there particular groups or establishments that you use as a source of new recruits?

Motivation Category	Pre-study Interview	Post-Studg Interview	Organist 1	Organist 2	Choral Soc MD	Theme	Mentions
1. Choir Goals	Time pressure	Explaining	Enjoyment	Time pressure	Inclusion	Enjoyment	4
	Resources	Liturgy	Variety	Liturgy	Resources	Time pressure	3
		Enjoyment	Reminders	Inclusion	Time pressure	Inclusion	3
		Inclusion		Breadth	Enjoyment	Variety	3
				Growth	Variety	Resources	2
				Enjoyment		Liturgy	2
				Variety			
2. Singer Goals	Conversations	Social	Unaware	Differences	Unaware	Growth	4
	Enjoyment	Attendance	Solos	Enjoyment	Limitations	Social	3
	Social	Privacy	Limitations	Social	Community	Limitations	2
	Extrovert bias	Resentment	Choir goals	Balance	Growth	Differences	2
	Inclusion	Contribution	Growth	Growth	Social	Balance	2
	Responsibility	Large works				Unaware	2
	Growth	Balance				Enjoyment	2
		Differences					
3. Repertoire	Explain	Solos	Explain	Suggestions	Leadership	Suggestions	5
	Consult	Growth	Suggestions	Leadership	Suggestions	Leadership	4
	Suggestions	Suggestions	Connection	Minority	Consult	Explain	2
	Leadership	Leadership	Season		Limitations	Consult	2
	Elitism	Time pressure					
4. Singer Self-Perception	Rhythm	Positive message	Run through	Positive message	Balance	Selective	3
	Notes	Tuning	Selective	Shared responsibility	Selective	Positive message	3
	Tuning	Motivation	Encourage	Encourage	Enjoyment	Shared responsibility	3
	Sectional	Improvement	Shared responsibility	Enjoyment		Tuning	2
	Repetition	Move on				Run through	2
	Selective					Encourage	2
	Positive message					Enjoyment	2
	Humour						
	Run through						
	Shared responsibility						
5. Flow	Big occasions	Location	Location	Location	Known music	Location	4
	Larger pieces	Special services	Special services	Musicians	Location	Musicians	2
	Combine choirs	Unconducted	Concerts	Congregation		Known music	2
		Known music	Musicians			Larger pieces	2
			Famous names				
			Broadcasts				
			Larger pieces				
6. Intrinsic Motivators	Standards	Reflection	Ownership	Positive	Ownership	Positive	3
	Shared achievement	Thanks	Positive	Enjoyment	Standards	Ownership	3
	Ownership	Positive	Engagement	Shared achievement		Standards	2
			Personality			Shared achievement	2
7. Technical Complexity		Demonstrate	Challenge	Listen	Listen	Listen	4
		Relax	Posture	Emprical	Emprical	Emprical	2
		Scrambling	Support			Relax	2
		Staggering breathing	Relax				
		Think high	Listen				
		Vowel sound	String Quartet				
		Listen					
8. Tine pressure	Plan	Plan	Responsibility	Lot of music	Change rarely	Plan	3
	Revise 2 weeks	Manage complexity	Plan	Pragmatic	Pragmatic	Change rarely	3
	Prioritise music	Rehearsal plan	Change rarely	Time is short	Go ahead	Pragmatic	2
	Build contingency	Change rarely			Under-rehearsed		
	Over-share						
9. Performance opportunity	Church visits	Church visits	Worship	Worship	Carol-singing	Concerts	4
	Concerts	Concerts	Concerts	Concerts	Come and sing	Church visits	3
		One-off events	Church visits	Cost	Community	Worship	2
			Schools	Community		Cost	2
			Tours	Carol-singing		Carol-singing	2
			Cost			Community	2
10. Elitism	High standards	Language	Solos	Oxford image	Niche	Language	2
	Risk	Responsibility	Favouritism	Elite v elitist	Expectation	Unintentional	2
	Unintentional	Unintentional	Parents	Audition	Choir types		
	Set example		Jealousy		Welcoming		
	Language						
	Inclusive						
11. Musical Background	Partial	Something extra	Choristers at school	Oxford network	Lack of state school singing	Positive	4
	Extroverts	Harder repertoire	Aware	Community	Clash with other large choirs	Lack of state school singing	3
	Absences	Better resourced	Lay Clerks solos	Positive	Positive		
	Recruitment disjointed	Positive	Lay Clerks choirs				
		Lack of state school singing	Positive				
			Lack of state school singing				

19) **Appendix I - Pre-Study Interview**

This was conducted with the conductor of the study and control group choirs.

Interviewer 0:03

So these will all be themes you're familiar with. Sure. Okay. And I just want you to say the things that come into your head. Okay? So bearing in mind the constraints under which you have to operate. To what extent do you think about the choir members preferences, opinions and needs when planning the music and events receives.

Director 0:25

So, I tried to get absences as far in advance as I can. And that's really how I start planning the music list. So I start with a set of dates, I have certain rep that I want to do that I think would be good for the choir. And then I kind of have a structure, I fill the music listing as if everyone's there every single rehearsal and service. And then, so that's done by kind of the end of the previous term. And then as I get absences coming in, I might have to tailor what we do for certain services, if that makes sense.

Interviewer 1:08

How aware are you of what goals the individual client members have in singing in the choir?

Director 1:14

I'm aware by well, just through conversations I have with them. So some people will say, you know, I sing, because I enjoy singing, I sing because I enjoy singing. And also, I enjoy having that kind of social connection. And the so it's kind of the onus is more on members of the choir to tell me what they're trying to get out of it. I can kind of guess, that as a choir, they want to improve and sing, you know, more challenging music. And I feel that when we have done challenging music that's gone. Well, like the anthem on Sunday. Yes, it's become, you know, I think they've really enjoyed it and risen to the challenge. So that's, that's the idea that I sort of have.

Interviewer 1:59

Isn't there a danger that the ones who talk to you about what they want are the sort of extroverts who tend to dominate others?

Director 2:05

The narcissists, yes, yeah. There is there is a danger that you kind of tailor the choir to a certain group of people who are the most vocal. So yeah, I think more can be done to gauge with the, you know, the less vocal and the quiet. Yeah, going out to this. It's really about the ones who have been in the choir for years and years and years. Yeah. Well, they're normally the most vocal, are they? Some of them? But yeah, but it's a mix. So yeah, I don't really know I try. And I try and speak to every

member of the choir, each rehearsal and service, even it's just say hello, or goodbye. So yeah, so I try and gauge you know, how they think.

Interviewer 2:47

And do you ever discuss your repertoire choices with the choir? And what are your feelings about their views? And how much you should consider them?

Director 2:56

So while starting this term, based on the exercises, I've discussed the plan at the beginning of term, but before term, I mean, again, it's engaged with the most vocal people. So some people will send me repertoire suggestions. Yes, or, yes, I've got a whole folder in my in my inbox. Sometimes the choir will, you know, very heavily hint that they want to do certain pieces. And in terms of how it influences me, doesn't really, because I feel like I, I don't want the choir to be run by committee below. But then there have been times where pieces have been suggested to be that I have put down because they aligned with what I think the choir should be singing. So it's good.

Interviewer 3:45

How do you approach correcting mistakes during a practice?

Director 3:51

To have just talked about? Yes, yeah. Well, I find that the mistakes really fall into the classic, you know, it's either rhythm notes, or tuning. So I find the first two easier to correct the tuning. So what I normally do is, you know, I will run through a piece and then find the areas that need the most work. And then I normally take it apart and go, you know, pairs of parts or part by parts, or we'll do sectional rehearsals. So that's my, my main approach. I mean, I guess that's learning pieces of correcting things. I mean, a lot of it's kind of repetition. I find that if they can do it right, three times in a row, they're probably going to still get it right. Okay. But it's not just about it's about making them believe that you can get it right as well, because there's a big difference between the rehearsal and the service. So yeah, I think it's about making them it's being less of you know, you've done this role needs to be right, and of kind of being there with them to correct the mistake as well. Right?

Interviewer 4:54

I think, do you make a conscious effort to deliver positive messages as well as the corrections

Director 4:59

Do Yes. Yeah, I try not to. I try not to have overly negative comments in other pieces being an absolute car crash, yes. It's not helpful to get annoyed about it, because I won't fix it. Other times I have such as a car crash, it's normally been using humor to

kind of, you know, yes, yes. to kind of motivate them. You know, I think there has to be a feeling with the voluntary choir that you're, you know, in the trenches with them. Yes. A bit. So I try and use positive reinforcement rather than negative.

Interviewer 5:35

Do you sometimes deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, such as singing a particular piece in a resonant place or at a special occasion?

Director 5:47

And I do, I mean, I try and pick repertoire that the choir knows well, for kind of big occasions. For example, when we did when we've done joint services with Manchester voluntary choir, and I try and pick, you know, bigger rep, which we can't often do here, mainly because we've lacked some companies for the past three years. Because I know that you know, that will give them a good experience. And it's a different feeling singing a lot of pieces like that with a big choir. So I think that's what I tried to join services.

Interviewer 6:21

What specific things do you consciously do to motivate the singers aimed at sort of existing intrinsic desires, such as social interactions? Or do you try and instill feelings that compliment the choirs aims, such as improving musical standards?

Director 6:36

Yeah, I mean, I think I try and communicate them. My aim is to raise the standards of the choir. But I, I want to instil in the choir, that's something that they want as well.

So I have to feel like you know, we're all working together towards a goal, I find that to be the best motivator is to feel like you know, you're not, you're not talking down to them and saying, you know, you

need to reach my standards. And so they're not doing it just to please you there. Yeah. It's like, I didn't get everything right as well. I don't think any conductor that does. So I feel like it's about all of us wanting to reach the same standard together, rather than me being up here and then being down there.

Interviewer 7:22

How do you handle situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short, there's a risk that singers may not learn the music in time.

Director 7:29

Well, normally, I try and plan ahead so that normally, I can see a couple of weeks out if a piece is going to be unmanageable. And then I will normally substitute for something else, what I would normally do in terms of Compline, because it comes from we have, you know, an introit, or Nunc Dimittis and a motet. Yes, if there's not enough time to do all of that, I will normally substitute the Nunc Dimittis. Because I'd rather us focus on you know, the bigger piece or anthem as well. But also what, what I normally do is I used to put down what we'd sing in each concert on a music list. And I've stopped doing that. Because, you know, I drew up what we're going to sing at the start, but it's back in July. And you know, there'll be four or five pieces that we just haven't had time to do. But rather than have that on the, on the schedule, and say, we're not doing that I'm not doing that. I'd rather them not know what we're going to do. And rather than, you know, what we're thinking was always what we're going to say. So it's a bit it's a bit underhand. But then I've had issues in the past where you didn't quite say, Well, you know, it says we're seeing this while we're singing that. Or of course, yes, it's easier to pretend. But you know, that was the battle.

Interviewer 8:42

From regular services, do you create additional opportunities for the choir to perform in public?

Director 8:52

Yes, so I aim to have a concert each term. And I aim to take the choir out into either somewhere else in the diocese or somewhere just to sing somewhere else each term as well. So it's a Tarvin with you know, we're going to start in next term. So yeah, I try and get them to perform in places other than the cathedral. And like the concert at Eaton chapel is example, just getting them out of it.

Interviewer 9:17

Is there a risk of elitism in the choir making new or less experienced singers feeling inadequate.

Director 9:27

I think there's always a risk in an auditioned choir, where you're aiming for what kind of semi professional standard? Yeah, it can be difficult for new members. I think. So, yeah, I think there is I mean, I try and through my language in rehearsals, you know, I don't use the same language with the Nave Choir that I would use with the Lay Clerks for example, or with people that I know have all have a firm musical understanding, because I don't want people to feel left out. You know, I remember When I was Assistant Organist, take a choir rehearsal and saying something about a C sharp major chord tones, C sharp minor. And once upon a time, I don't know what you mean at all. And it's not, you know, it's not helpful to exclude people in that way. Even unintentionally.

Interviewer 10:16

Do you think other choir members tend to exclude people?

Director 10:19

I think some of them, some of them can. I don't think it's intentional. Right? I think it's people trying very high standards, and we're very committed to the quality sometimes lose sight that not everyone is at the same level? Sure, I think I'm sure there are things I can do to address that. I think the main thing I could do is set the example in rehearsals of, you know, what I, what I expect? I just hope everyone follows that. Yes.

Interviewer 10:52

I just wondering if you you get aware when people feel inadequate, or that there's things wrong with their voice?

Director 10:59

I do. I do. I have had conversations with people about that. I think it's just about managing. It was just, it's about managing that you know, about keeping me in the loop of that stuff. Because I know that everyone's voice is different. And in a choir like this, and you have people who maybe are just out of university or singing for 40/50 years. So, you know, as long as I know what's going on. I know that some

people, you know, can't sing all the time. On it, some people get frustrated when things are wrong. You know, I know that things go wrong. Things go wrong with me as well, even on conducting. I think it's about trying to instil a feeling that going wrong is not the end of the world. And actually, you know, there are more right notes than wrong.

Interviewer 11:50

And finally, are you aware of the musical background and activities of your singers outside the choir?

Director 11:57

Yes. Again, it's the more vocal the people that I thought I'm more aware of. Yeah. But I am often aware, like when people send in absences, they will say, you know, actually, I'm, you know, I've got to rehearse for something else that day, or my church choir is doing that. So I genuinely am aware when people have other musical commitments and their musical background, but not not with everyone.

Interviewer 12:23

Other particular groups or establishments that you use as a source of new recruits?

Director 12:30

Not really, at the moment, a lot of it is word of mouth. I mean, I use the cathedral congregation a lot. That's where a lot of them come from. I found a lot of them have been people who have actually moved back to Chester, after a lot of time away. I'd like to use diversity more, but it's too unreliable in terms of time commitment from students. Is it unfortunately, because then they're only here for a certain part. So yeah, that's, that's why I like to have more kind of inroads with recruitment, but at the moment, it's just not not possible.

Interviewer 13:07

Well, those are the questions I got. Great, excellent.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

20) **Appendix J - Post-Study Interview**

This was conducted with the conductor of the study and control group choirs at the end of the study, after the respondents had submitted their post-study questionnaires.

Interviewer 0:02

So the first question is around the setting the goals and organising performances. And what we said was to share the term's plan and the rationale for that plan with the choir. You decided some goals for the term that the singers agree are worthwhile and will make things better. So I know that was the one that everyone spotted that you'd done something different?

Director 0:31

Yes, we did that in the beginning of the term. I'm planning on doing it doing it again this evening. I think that helped, I think, because especially last term was such a long term, it was good just to walk people through it. And to talk to them a bit of us and the music that I was excited about us singing like the Palestrina or the Dove, especially, and about, you know, the rationale for picking certain pieces for certain occasions. Because sometimes people might not make the link between you know, why we're doing a certain piece, especially if they don't have a lot of liturgical knowledge. You know, why we're doing a certain piece now, and why we're

repeating music sometimes. So I thought that helps. So people were a bit more on the inside.

Interviewer 1:17

I agree. I think it did have quite an effect. A few people mentioned it at various stages. What I thought was interesting was that they thought you always did it?

Director

Well, I always thought yes. That's, that's the first.

Interviewer 1:34

So that's that one. And then this question about goals. So as the choir members what their goals are, having seen those results, is there anything that stands out that you think you might change? Or are you relatively comfortable with them?

Director 1:49

And I mean, there's stuff about more weight in terms of just musical or just from the choir's point of it's about motivation, rather than the musical? Yeah, I think, more social events, it's definitely something that's, that's come out to me here. And yes and stuff about this. There's been interesting stuff or comments about attendance, as

well. Yeah. Obviously, you know, I want everyone to be encouraged to be here. But I know that some people can be discouraged. As I am, sometimes when we have a rehearsal when there, yes, not as many people here. I mean, obviously, the majority of time, there's a very good reason when people aren't here. And they are reasons that you can't share with the whole squad. But yeah, that is maybe something worth looking at, like a minimum attendance or something like that, so that people feel a bit more motivated to be here. So people don't feel like they're putting in a lot of efforts. And nothing's happening. Although we're learning things are slower.

Interviewer 2:48

I guess one thing I did with with Frodsham Choral Society about 20 years ago, was that we said, understand people have all sorts of reasons for not attending. But you know, some people resent the fact that some people just turn it when they feel like it. Yeah. So what we did is we assigned a person in each part who was going to collect excuses why people went there. And the idea was that you were, you were allowed to miss three practices during the term without any particular reason, or without doing anything. If you miss more than three, or visit, anytime you went to you were meant to contact your part rep and just say, sorry, I can't make such and such I've got a reason. And if you actually did that, that didn't count as an absence. Okay, so what we said was, no one is to miss more than three, unless they contact their power rep and said they've done something. And that actually hugely increased attendance, even though it was actually meaningless.

Director 3:45

But that was, if I introduced minimum attendance, I think it was, it was increase attendance for a lot of people that I'd have one or two very key people leave the court. Yes. And it's that sort of balance that I don't really want to know.

Interviewer 4:01

And you certainly don't want to publicise the fact that there are one or two people who are so important that they can almost get away with anything.

Director 4:07

Yeah, yeah. I mean, it's Yeah, I mean, yes, I will try not to but yeah, it is that sort of balance, because I'm sure. There are some people who well, I don't know. Yeah, it's it changes. Well,

Interviewer 4:23

I mean, there are some parts, sometimes you're desperately short of a particular part. And you really need to be able to rely on a couple of people to do that.

Director 4:30

Yeah, I do. I think there are some parts where, because they're more in number. I can get away with having fewer people. Yeah. But yeah, I thought you can maybe solve this by having more people in the choir, but more people means more absences. It does. Yes. So I'm not sure what the what the answer is that I mean, going back to kind of goals, if people have asked, you know, whether we can work towards, you know, a bigger piece of music, you know, like spend the term working towards the performance of a big piece. Which is something that I would like to do. Yeah. It just, it just depends on what and what I need to do that piece and all that sort of stuff. But I'd like to maybe do that next time. Okay. But it's, it's difficult to keep the plates spinning of every record for us not to become a Choral Society. It is, you know, spending all always running through everything from beginning to end.

Director 5:25

Yes, yes. And to actually keep our liturgical commitments. Yeah. But I'd like to find a way of balancing both

Interviewer 5:43

Ok. You gave a talk about the repertoire and why you chose it. We did that. Did you explain what the choir will get from it? So the objective to help their singers feel that they're considered in the selection process, but not that they can influence it unnecessarily?

Director 5:58

I'm sure I'd have I can't think of any specific examples. You think? I mean, I've stuffed like, when we sang contemporary music? Yeah. I think I've said it several times, that it's always good for us to, you know, tune to each other. I think when we've done stuff like singing in a scrambled formation, yes. I've tried to emphasise you have to rely on other people for your notes, and not just rely on the organ. So I'd hoped people would realise that I'm doing that to kind of instil more confidence and everyone that you don't need to rely on the organ. Yes, of course, it's been a bit different in that we've had three years basically without a note. So they've already got a pretty good baseline for acapella music. But I think giving I've tried to use a bit more repertoire with solos in, like the Lawes, which we did, yeah. Because I think it's good for people to, to realise that they can do that sort of stuff, solos. Obviously, it's difficult. I try to avoid really any verse anthems or services because it then just becomes about one or two people. And that's fine for the Cathedral Choir, these require verse singing, and it's their job. But I would rather focus on stuff that we can all sing.

Interviewer 7:28

So did you ever discuss your repertoire choices with Have you done this turned into spoken to any people in the choir about people come to you with repertoire suggestions?

Director 7:45

People have come to your repertoire, suggestions. They normally come with suggestions for the next step? Yeah. So I've taken some on board, there are some that I thought I would really like to do that I haven't. That's a piece by Wilkes, that someone really wants to do. And I do really like it. So I'd love to include it. Yeah. But just when I was planning this term, because it's such a short term, there just wasn't a place to fit it in. And I was looking at suggestions I have already from people, and there was just no way of doing it. So I have said no, you know, because I don't want to be enthusiastic about a piece and then just not put it down and with no explanation. No. Because, you know, I know some conductors can be rough towards suggestions.

Interviewer 8:27

I think I think that's what the what the question is about? Yeah. I mean, if you're open to those suggestions

Director 8:32

I'm open to suggestions. Yes. I don't want people to feel like it's a collaborative. No.

Interviewer 8:39

Okay. The next question is about singers perceptions of themselves as a singer. Being a part of their personal identity. So have you made an effort to correct

problems in a way that sort of keeps singers confidence, and their self perception? And the thing about how do you approach correcting mistakes in a practice? Have you done anything differently? Trying to be more positive when talking about stuff like, you know, tone and pitch.

Director 9:04

I tried to focus on how we can improve something. So if something's wrong, it's often you know, tuning. Yeah. Often try and say, here's what we can do to improve it rather than this is what's wrong? Yes. Because I think by saying this, we need to improve it, you know, we're all recognising there's something that could be done better. And just about, you know, then realising that, you know, I don't always have all the answers.

Interviewer 9:34

Yeah, I've noticed that you you're doing things in a in a very sort of thoughtful way. I don't know if that's just because we talked about it and I was just looking for it or,

Director 9:44

I mean, I think I've realised in the past that you know, if you say to singers, you know why you think so flat, you're not good enough to do it. Yes and No, and it's about trying to work out how to, how to stop that and and how to improve it. Really, so

talking about, you know, the vowel sound talking about breath and support. And just give them a bit more confidence that they can do it rather than saying, you know, I'm up here and you're down there. And you know, you'll never reach my standards. It's untrue, obviously, but but I think that's important to keep them motivated.

Interviewer 10:20

Yeah. I mean, do you think that technically, the choir has improved? Things like tuning?

Director 10:26

I think it has since COVID? Yeah. I think we're on an upward trajectory. Yeah. You know, with any Korean company like week to week? Yes. You know, I found that Sunday for Christmas when we all had a cold. Oh, yeah. You know, that. And we did an unaccompanied morning, that was fairly, the chanting was fairly rough. Not so much the Palestrina was in the motets. And that might sometimes be the perfect storm of I remember that. Yeah, perfect storm of, you know, it's a certain piece that we're just having issues with, or maybe that we know too well. And we're too, we're not thinking about it as much. But you know, you just try and make it better for the next time and focus on the positives rather than saying, Well, this has been a complete mess.

Interviewer 11:09

Okay. And then there was this idea of of creating an occasion when the choir were actually just singing something just for the joy of singing it to get a state of flow.

Yeah. Did you do anything like that?

Director 11:23

I didn't manage to do what I wanted this time, right? We were just gonna sing something in the lady chapel. Yeah. But I have tried to get people like them in times where I've asked for quite a scene, something unconducted, yes. Which has been, it's kind of a two birds in one stone, I want them to be listened to each other. I want them to, it's also for me to work out why I can be doing better with conducts them by all to be seen, you know, just focusing on the actual music and not be doggedly watching me listen to each other. And I've tried to do that with pieces that they know well, and that they enjoy singing. So that they can sing for the, for the love of it.

Interviewer 12:00

I did feel that that particularly in the Christmas and Epiphany services, especially that there was a lot of feeling of just sheer enjoyment in the choir.

Director 12:10

There was there was it was really good. I really enjoyed that weekend. Yeah. And you know, and that's another thing about a perfect storm of, you know, music that we

use it that's achievable for us to do really well. And everyone's enjoying it. And, you know, I just think that worked really well. Yes, it did, I think good.

Interviewer 12:32

intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. So the specific things you did or thought about just to try and motivate the choir.

Director 12:46

There were specific things I thought about, and it could be social things, or just complimenting them on particularly good services. Yeah, I mean, after every service, I tried to say, Well done, you do most of the positives, as well as saying, you know, that could have been better. You know, you always have a habit that enables all the time you always sit down after the practice and something goes wrong. You just think you know, what the hell am I going to say afterwards? Normally, by the time you got to the vestibule, you've kind of moderated your, your thoughts of this. So I tried seeing what goes well, I try to always remember to thank everyone who's cancelled or done a solo. And to make sure you know that we're in a positive space for the first rehearsal when the next week. Yes, so that was yeah, that's, that's what I try to do. Every service is focused on the positives, okay.

Interviewer 13:41

Then this is kind of similar to one of the other but there's a lot to do with thinking things like tuning and being just asking the singers to do it, they won't know what to do, unless they are really highly trained singers. So have you consciously thought about that when when you know the tunings wrong, and you want them to do something different about the phrasing in a different way or asking them to

Director 14:06

I haven't. I tried to demonstrate stuff myself. Yes. You know, which, which can, will can cannot be helpful. Sometimes. It's always dangerous. You know, if I have huge anxiety about singing in front of singers, huge anxiety. And you know, if I get it wrong than I often have, then you felt like, you know, it actually doesn't matter. I don't think as long as you get the idea across. Yeah, I think so. Because even if they see you do it wrong, I think oh, I'm gonna do that. Yeah.

Yeah, yeah. I'm trying to think about other things we can do that, you know, immediately try to change how someone is singing. Yeah, so whether it's, you know, staggering, staggering your breathing or just thinking higher on the notes or thinking above the nose or righting the vowel sound. I find that's often been what's helped most. Yes. scrabbling the singers, obviously makes them listen, and also trust their own voice a bit more. Yeah. That's very good. I think for today. That is I tried to do that when we have, you know, enough people. Yeah. And enough time. It's something that I've really tried to do this tour does take time. You're right. Yeah. Well, this time, I've tried to not pare back for rep. Yep. But I haven't introduced so many. So many complicated piece until the end of term because I want us to really

spend time working on stuff rather than it being a week to week being a complicated wrap up. So yeah, we'll see how that goes.

Director 15:38

The next one is actually about time pressure. And so the because you've already said something like this, but but how do you handle situations when rehearsal times are likely to be limited?

Director 15:56

I mean, I tried to look ahead and plan things. Yeah. So you know, like on Sunday, I knew that we were going to have to spend a lot of rehearsal working on processing. Yes. So. And it always takes longer than I thought. It always takes. I've seen some I've always got it wrong. So

Interviewer 16:13

we foolishly said at the start that you've had it all planned.

Director 16:20

Yeah, so I tried to try and plan ahead. So I tried to put as much as Christmas rep in the weekend already. Yep. So that we already sung it. And slot things I just tried to,

you know, prioritise things, and to never have services where every single piece is something really complicated that we have to rehearse in detail. So I always, for every rehearsal, I have a plan of the order and then rehearse things. So that I know that if I run out of time, you know, I can just stop and tell the piece of advice and or even we don't even need to run it. Because we know it.

I don't know if it's because we can't do it constantly but I had a strong feeling this term that we had more time than we have to increase it previously. Yes. Yeah, we have I'm very, very conscious this past term. Because, you know, I'm learning as well, with really been running a Nave Choir since 2020. Right? And, you know, once I remember autumn 22, you know, tweak the summertime go really well, in the autumn term. You know, we've lost a couple of singers. And perhaps some of you may be too ambitious, right. I remember just getting to a crunch point about the middle November and how to change a lot of things. So I tried to avoid doing that. Yeah. Because I don't think that I'm not against injury at all, because the performance has to be the most important thing that lists just sports. But I would rather not be changing week's worth of music. Next. I don't think that has motivation. No.sends an odd message.

Director 17:50

This one's about opportunities to perform. Did you create some extra performance opportunities?

Director 18:02

Well, I did but it didn't come to fruition. But I did organise that concert in the Duke's chapel, yes. Which which fell through because something to do with Shelter at the end. So I'm always on the lookout, like, you know what we discussed Tarvin. The idea is always to do you know, a service somewhere out of the cathedral? And I can tell you, Christmas, and the concerts of each term, so we did the contemporary Arts thing. Oh, of course. Yeah. Which I think people got, I think Chester Contemporary got more out of that than we did. But also we were getting paid for it. Okay. That's a sort of an unusual balance of what was required. Because money is not the deciding factor. But, you know, and also the rehearsal that took us more time to look at other stuff like that. So it was an interesting experience. I think it was it went better than people expected. It did. And Chester Contemporary absolutely loved it. Good. You know, and I think it's good for people to be exposed to different types of music making. Yeah, and a totally different conductor. And, you know, because I don't get that at the moment.

Interviewer 19:24

Then this question about elitism. Have you done anything specifically, to? Have you noticed any elitism? I suppose, because

Director 19:34

I haven't noticed. I don't know. Because I don't hear all the conversations. No. I haven't noticed anything. And if I had, I would have liked to think I would have done

something about it. Yeah. But I don't know. I don't know whether other members can feel like there's a past

History. Some I mean, I don't think so. No, I think some people are a bit self conscious about their voice. But that's a different thing. Yeah. I don't think anybody picks on someone because they're not singing very well.

No, I would think not. I mean, I think in terms of how I talked about piece of music, and it's always good to not dumb it down. But you know, there are some terms that I don't use, because I know that it's not useful because not everyone will understand. I know if I say the term "hemiola" Yeah, you know, it's it's a really useful way of getting a point across. But not everyone knows what it means. I'd rather people who are often much cleverer than me will feel stupid. They don't know what I'm talking about. So you've got to always, you know, cast the net wider coping with stuff like that. Yeah. But I don't know whether other people. I mean, there's there was nothing in here. I think there's something about elitism. No. So I would hope people don't feel that way. I've heard anecdotally that the Nave Choir used to be quite "cliquey", but it has got better even since I've worked here has got better. I'm quite keen to keep it that way. Yeah.

Interviewer 21:10

Okay. And the final one was about singers who have musical background in other areas. Are you aware of what people do? Do you talk about it?

Director 21:21

Yeah, well, obviously, people sing in choirs, people, instrumentalists, so, you know, I want them to feel like they're getting something extra from the Nave choir. Whether that's, you know, if they're singing in a church choir, you know, we'll probably be doing more complicated repertoire here. Yeah. Well, that does sound sort of elitist. Or, you know, but then a choir is better supported. Yes. better resourced. So I like to think that they're getting something here in addition to I think the way it was is where they were singing something on Sunday evening immediately that they can sing in a church choir in the morning. And come here. Yes. So I would hope they get something extra.

Director 22:04

Well, that's it. Is there. Anything you want to add?

Director 22:06

I don't think so.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

21) **Appendix K – Organist 1 Interview**

This was conducted with the Organist and Master of the Choristers, Chester Cathedral, who is head of the Music Department.

Interviewer 0:00

All right. All right. Thank you for doing this. I'll run through the questions in order, take as long or as short as you want to answer them. I think most of it is stuff we've talked about before anyway. But this is a sort of standalone academic exercise. So feel free to repeat stuff you've said before, if it's relevant. Okay. First one is, bearing in mind the constraints under which you have to operate, to what extent do you think about choir members preferences, opinions and needs when planning the music and events for a season?

Organist 1 0:33

Quite a lot? I'm often asked, Can we do that piece? Again? I've heard this piece, can we do this piece? So even the choristers will ask to do certain pieces again. And the lay clerks certainly will. So I do try and take into consideration their wishes, because it makes for, you know, a happy choir, and they know that they're being listened to. And if I like a particular piece that they happen to like, then of course, I'm going to want to do it anyway. And occasionally, I will simply forget that we've done a particular piece and it's dropped out of the repertoire, and someone will remind me.

So I find that I find it a healthy thing if people want to, I won't, can't always promise it, but I will take it into consideration. If someone suggests something. Yes, absolutely.

Interviewer 1:21

No one said that before. That's I guess how it should be? How aware are you of what goals individual choir members have in singing in the choir?

Organist 1 1:34

Their own individual goals. Basically, I'm not too aware of that. Either with the choristers or the Lay Clerks. Again, they might come to me and say, in time, I'd like to tackle a certain solo, or I'd like to tackle a certain solo within an ensemble, you know, in some verse work in an anthem or, or a Mag/Nunc. I'm quite aware of their limitations if you like, and I want to, I know, there are horses for courses. Personally, there's some organ music that I wouldn't feel comfortable tackling. And there are some pieces for the choir that, you know, with all the best will in the world, we'd need to do an awful lot of it for them to become very fluent reading that sort of music. But I try and I try and take some consideration as to what their goals are. But it's not an overriding consideration. Without that sounding mean, it does tell me that it's really a question about how aware of you what their goals are rather than what do you do about it? I'm not particularly aware of, of what their goals are in the choristers are all part of a team, as you know. And so they're all striving for the very same thing really. And to a certain extent, you can say that about the lay clerks because they know

what's required of them because they're professional and because they're paid. So, no, I'm more aware of, of the team wanting to achieve this, rather than individuals.

Interviewer 3:07

I suppose that makes sense. Do you ever discuss your repertoire choices with the choir? And what are your feelings about their views and how much you should consider them?

Organist 1 3:19

I wouldn't say I discussed the choices before I publish the termly timetable. I don't consult and say Would it be alright if I put this down? But then we've touched on that in question one with them saying, Can we do this?

Interviewer 3:33

So once you've published it and made the choices, do you ever sort of talk about why you've chosen?

Organist 1 3:37

Oh, absolutely. We're doing a piece on Sunday afternoon by Kenneth Leighton and this was this was a piece we haven't done for a long time. And I think it was one of

the tenors who said to me We haven't done Leighton for a long time. So I said right, well, I'll put it within the timetable and plan accordingly in order for us to run up to them. Now that piece has a Chester connection because it was written for someone who was an assistant here in the 60s before he went to St. John's Cambridge for a spell and he was a very very highly regarded organist. But he sadly he there was a tragic accident. He was appointed organist at Norwich cathedral. And in 1970 he was driving back from a recital at the Abbey back home to Southport where his parents were and he was killed in a in a car accident outright so this particular piece was written in memory of him. It was commissioned by the Cathedral Organist Association in his memory so at the top of the piece it says In memory of him so of course I'm going to automatically say to the choir do you do know there is a Chester connection with this and that's why the piece happens to have that quiet mournful and elgiac theme running through it, which it has, you know, it's very, it's quite, it's quite a spooky setting. There's something about it that that is quite ethereal. So I will talk about the choices I've made because of the season we're in. And I will talk about the seasons with a chorister. Sometimes they're aware of what season they're in, sometimes they're not, and why we're doing particular pieces? Yes.

Unknown Speaker 5:15

How do you approach correcting mistakes during the practice?

Organist 1 5:18

what I tend to do is allow a piece to run. I mean, if you're talking about a rehearsal before, Evensong, for example, when the full choir is assembled, I tend to run a piece, and then go back and start correcting. Because inevitably, there are going to be things that are wrong. And then to a certain extent, you can expect them to be right later on. So in the context of rehearsal, if something goes wrong, or there's a mistake, or hands go up all being well, and I'll know that they know they've made a mistake, if they don't do that, and then I've got to rethink and tell myself, I must go back over that bit. If we're learning something from scratch, like a new piece with the choristers, and it's the first ever rehearsal of it, I will say to them, don't be afraid to sing out, because we are learning a piece for the first time, and you won't be sight reading it, I'd rather you sang out and made mistakes within the context of a rehearsal. And then I can put it right. That's why we rehearse, of course, we're going to be mistakes. And I also say to them, that a rehearsal is also for me, and I will make mistakes, you know, when you're conducting these for the first time, or, or you've got an ensemble, like a band or orchestra in front of you, then the rehearsal is also for the conductor, not just for the choir. So that's, that's about that. My thoughts about that? Yeah,

Interviewer 6:45

Thank you. Do you sometimes deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, such as singing a particular piece in a resonant place? Or to special occasion? Oh,

Organist 1 6:57

yes, of course. I mean, a long time ago, I was, I've been asked many times if we can do Messiah or a portion of it because we haven't done it for a long time. So of course, we leading up to that occasion, which will be next month when we do part one, okay, we're doing part one, and the Hallelujah chorus. So that is something that we can easily do within the context of the term and learn that, of course, I'd like to do the whole of it, but it's just not possible at the moment. There are many there have been concerts in the past that we've done with professional orchestras when Steven Layton came to conduct the choir in in two concerts with the London Sinfonia. Alright. And we did one of those in 2013, and one in 2016. And so I try and talk to the choirs, particularly with the choristers as in what what a privilege it is to sing with a professional orchestra, and what you can expect, and it's great for us to work towards something like that, and then to see their faces when they hear an instrument that might not have heard before, if they're still standing behind a battery of brassware for doing Rutter, Gloria or something like that, and all that percussion. You know, their face has really come alive. So I try and encourage them to look forward to something and have a sense of achievement. In the end when they do do something as larger scale as that and it happens with broadcasts. I took the choristers to Blackburn Cathedral in 2018, I suppose last year 2022. And their acoustic is fantastic. So I say to them, you wait till you hear the acoustic in Blackburn because it's much better than we've got in Chester. And we went to Hereford in May. And I'd forgotten what a good acoustic Hereford was ever. So it's a fabulous acoustic. So as soon as we started singing, that again, I could see it on the faces because they could hear what they were doing coming back at them. And so they all

sort of thought all that sounds great in this building, you know, so, yes, you know, excellent.

Interviewer 9:01

Okay. What specific things do you consciously do to motivate the singers? These are aimed at existing intrinsic desire, such as social interactions? Or do you try and instil feelings that complement the client's aims such as improving musical standards?

Organist 1 9:17

All of that, all of that, I mean, when the choristers walk through the door, or the Lay Clerks walk through the door, I try and engage them socially. Say what sort of day you've had all the rest of it. Within a context of a rehearsal, I've learned an awful lot over, you know, 30 odd years, and how perhaps, to approach things and perhaps how not to and I try and engender a positive atmosphere throughout because anything negative is destructive, is too hard work but it doesn't help. And usually if there is a problem, or if they are not able to achieve what you'd like to achieve, it's down to me primarily. So it's down to my planning and I try and be encouraging all the time. And if someone isn't bothering, then I will, you know, bring them up on it. But I'll just say it within the context of the rehearsal saying, everyone is trying ultimately, to reach this goal, you're not helping. And I think sometimes can it's down to sheer force of personality really in front of the choir, how things go. And I try and absorb any anxieties that the singers might have, and turn it around and make it positive. Because people do get nervous. I get nervous in front of a choir. Am I doing

the best job I can. But ultimately, I say to them, if you're doing your best, and that's all I can ask for. Does that answer your question? Yes, there was something else I wanted to say, but can't remember what it was to read the question again, go on.

Interviewer 10:48

Okay. What specific things do you consciously do to motivate the singers? Are these aimed at existing intrinsic desires, such as social interactions? Or do you try to instill, feel instill feelings that complement the choirs aims, such as improving musical standards?

Organist 1 11:03

I mean, I always strive to improve musical standards. I mean, that's what we achieve all the time. And I find that I'm learning all the time. I remember a question that Christopher Robinson asked me his interview once for a job, and he said, What would you like to improve about yourself? And I said, Well, we're, we're constantly just trying to improve on everything that we do, and gain more knowledge and how to improve it. And you're never going to get the perfect performance. But you're gonna get jolly close to it sometimes and be absolutely thrilled with it. Absolutely thrilled with it. So I think, basically, that that answers your question.

Interviewer 11:36

Thank you. How do you help singers work out what to do to fix problems with things like tuning tones, so on things when it's not obvious exactly what she should do about it? Yeah,

Organist 1 11:46

I mean, that it's always a challenge with so many singers in a room. And when you're trying to get them basically all to do the same thing, in terms of dynamics, contrasts, and all the rest of it. And everyone's very different when it comes to singing. You're dealing with different sizes of people, ages and all the rest of it. So I try and encourage obviously, the usual, very good posture and support. And try to be as relaxed as you can, when you're producing your sound and keep your ribcage still keep your shoulders relaxed, there's everything hanging naturally. Don't lock your knees, I sometimes find that a lot of errors, or a lot of tuning problems can be achieved by just asking the singers to listen more, just to listen a bit more. I try and give the example with a string quartet to acquire because a string quartet they're never conducted are they they're always playing. And they're always it's all done by watching and listening. And I find that I can ask the same of the choir and they understand that and certain singers will look over to the to the counterpart on the other side, tenors will look at tenors at a peak at a certain moment in a piece and try and get it better together. Whereas I might sort of do refereeing in the middle. So I think, overall, to ask the singers to listen, is one of the best things you can ask of any choir?

Interviewer 13:15

How do you handle situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short? And there's a risk that the singers may not learn the music in time?

Organist 1 13:23

Well, I don't think I can say that we've never learned the music in time. Because if that's my if that's my fault, if we haven't learned it in time. So I plan with the aim of obviously having to learn it in time before a service. So it's my fault. If we haven't done that. If there is a problem, and I know that it's simply not going to be ready, then I'll change it. The timetable I produce every term is a wish list. Okay. But having said that, we will do 97% of the music that I've chosen. Otherwise, I'll just say no, we're not able to do that yet. And that's not your fault. I mean, it's, it's it's a fault of mine, but it's only because, you know, I want my expectations perhaps a bit too high. We've got enough to do doing this or whatever. If that makes sense.

Interviewer 14:13

Yes, it does. Yes. Apart from regular services, do you create additional opportunities for the choir to perform in public?

Organist 1 14:21

Yes. Obviously, what we do is the worship and that's very, very important. And all of that is in public and even more so because it's streamed, but we'll generally do one or two concerts a term or we'll take the choir out to the diocese and sing in other churches within the diocese, which is a very important thing to do. To see the cathedral present within the diocese, I mean, we haven't done all that much since COVID. It has to be said but we're looking into with Dan into expanding all of that and going into schools and getting the schools here in order to experience the Cathedral Choir in its own setting, and to join in with the Cathedral Choir and sing with them. By and large, of course, we sing our concerts within the cathedral. But we'll also tour as I don't need to tell you yes. But that's a very expensive undertaking we do as much as that as we can possibly afford to do is take the choir away.

XX Interviewer 15:22

Is there a risk of elitism in the choir making new or less experienced singers feel inadequate? And if so, how do you address it?

Organist 1 15:33

elitist Oh, well, I mean, you can get everyone equitably happens in all walks of life, you can get sort of petty jealousies with within choirs. I mean, I have to say that generally, that's tends to be knocked down to the children as such, but more down to a parental influence, but it the best way I can. So yes, but I try and choose purely from a musical point of view who is best for whatever solo or ensemble work that has to be that way. It's never about favoritism, it's about the best person for the job. And I

said that I referred to that earlier, because I think there are horses for courses and a certain chorister that will do a Tallis or a given anthem better than they do something like Stanford in G solo. So I think there are certain things that do things in a certain way and do them better than others. And I always try and make it as fair as I possibly can. But anything like that. And it's very rarely that it happens. Unfortunately, it does. But I will address it directly with the parents generally, because it generally comes from them if there is an issue. But yes, I mean, it's it's, it's it's, I find it very frustrating. And in fact, I was in London last week on a cathedral organist Association Conference, and the subject of dealing with that sort of thing came up as part of the whole committee. But it's a funny part of life, isn't it? There are petty jealousies and annoyances like that, when you're all you're trying to do is make the very best of the music you can within worship or within a concert. I'm pretty fair, I think when it comes to that, I'd like to think I am anyway. And I always refer to it to Alex or Dan and talk to them about it or say, Who do you think is the best person for this particular thing? I got it wrong. We all make mistakes. Okay?

XX Interviewer 17:33

And are you aware of the musical background and activities of your singers outside the choir, and other particular groups or establishments that you use as a source of new recruits?

Organist 1 17:43

Inevitably, with the choristers, it's going to be schools, and what they are doing in schools, it's easier with the private schools to have a more cathedral style tradition of worship, because they seem to understand that better than the state schools, there's very little proper music making that goes on at state schools. And you know that, so I am aware of what does or doesn't go on within within schools or within other choirs. I mean, occasionally, a parent will come to me and ask if their son or daughter can sing as part of a group that is singing at a wedding or a funeral. And that's fine. The Lay Clerks will take on certain amount of solo work. And some Lay Clerks even run their own choirs and have their own ambitions. Yeah. And so you, you're aware of what they do. Some, some are professionals in other capacities, so they have time to be a part of another choir, or do solo singing. So yeah, I tried to be aware of what they're doing outside the context of the cathedral. And generally, it doesn't affect what we do here. Right, if anything, it will help it. And if we take, if we have a chorister, who has been invited to sing in a concert, providing it doesn't clash with what we do here, then it can only be a good reflection on the Cathedral and the work that we do here that they've been asked that, you know, so and so is from the Cathedral Choir. I think singing for us today. So I think I think it's a positive thing.

Interviewer 19:15

That was the final question. Thank you very much.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

22) **Appendix L – Organist 2 Interview**

This was conducted with the Head of Music Outreach and Assistant Organist at the Cathedral who had recently joined the department after running the choir at Worcester College, Oxford.

Interviewer 0:02

Okay, so I'm gonna run through these questions in order, and tell me how they strike you. So the first one is bearing in mind the constraints under which you have to operate. To what extent do you think about the choir members preferences, opinions and needs when planning the music and events for a season?

Organist 2 0:20

So far I'm saying this from Oxford perspective, I don't know give you another interesting sort of different perspective there was running that choir in Oxford, and with the college, I mean, we have three very short terms, three, eight week terms. And you kind of have to scale the whole church year down, you do Christmas at the end of November. So everything is crazy, you have to do everything at double speed, basically. And everyone has sort of things they want to do, and you have you think you have to do but when you only have eight weeks, you actually also need a very quick turnaround to actually learn things and rehearse things. So I think there's a real trade off between getting that breadth, which is what you really want for the

interest. And sorry, good is different thing. It's good for everyone. It's interesting, it's fun. But then I think that with that came the expectation that people really had to work correctly and turn up knowing what they were doing. Say you give out the music for weekend stuff. But then again, that happens to the terms, people had weeks worth of music at work. So the explanation is they kind of they, they knew the dance. I mean, it never really worked quite that way in practice, of course, but you gave people those opportunities to learn as much as possible. So that we can say, well, actually, yes, literally, this space of this week, really, from all sides, all sides, All Souls, Remembrance, that actually we're only a week away from Christmas. So actually, we're cramming everything right down.

Interviewer 1:45

It sounds like you didn't really have any luxury of choice to think withing those parameters.

Organist 2 1:50

So I tried to get as much right in as possible for services a week, and it's 32 minutes, it's still doable. And you just accept the fact that yes, you'll only be able to do one or two of different types of pieces, perhaps but over the course of the year, you do build that up. So I think it was really the fact that it was shrunk down to this microcosm made for a really unique way of doing it, which, for example, right here in the cathedral, where we're doing services every day, that's very different, we have entire whole weeks of we will be doing reverence for over a week now, if it was like in

terms of our ads. Whereas back in Oxford, it'll be one service, and you've maybe got three or four items in it, therefore, to try and cram as much as you possibly could in and get as much variety that people want to hear. And so it's just really intensified the pace.

Interviewer 2:45

How aware, are you aware you have what goals the individual choir members had in singing in the choir?

Organist 2 2:57

I think it was sort of hard to necessarily know, because you have a choir of 24 students. And they, you know, some people are, people are doing it for very different reasons. Some people are really experienced, they do it because it's part of their studies, pretty much that study as part of their degree almost, then there's people who do other subjects who are reading, biology and stuff who would do it for fun. Therefore, people had very different things they wanted to get out of it. I think, in that sort of college atmosphere, there was sort of the social aspect of it was really important. And that was kind of common ground for everyone. Musically, I think people are very different. Some people turn up and have a nice time other people wanted to really, really knuckle down. And I think it's the director, it was the kind of job to try and find that middle ground. While sort of still actually tried to go in and take the direction you wanted to do. Bearing in mind all those kind of different

reasons, which is hard to kind of pin down he sounds like he wants to do that he wants to do that.

Interviewer 3:58

Yes, of course. Were you aware of who wanted to do what generally?

Organist 2 4:02

Yes. Again, because you're the person that's gonna turn up, not really knowing what's going on. But yeah, sure to stop like asking everybody. Yeah, sense of the sort of temperature of the room. But not necessarily everybody's individual opinions, especially when you don't have that much time. I think that the scale is trying to gauge that temperature and move with it.

Interviewer 4:25

Okay. Did you ever discuss your repertoire choices with the choir? What's your feelings about their views and how much you should consider?

Organist 2 4:36

I always sort of said, If anyone ever has an attractive suggestion, door's always open. Basically, always send them in. And I'll do my best to say what I think. I think

people need that. Of course, at the end of the day, it was me that chose music. But I do try and create a culture where people would say, Oh, can we do this or have you? Yeah, that's, this is a really nice piece and you say, oh, yeah, we could squeeze that in then or You know, I'd love to do that. But it's just too much of this. So can we squeeze it in another point? Yeah. To be honest, actually, not many people took me up on it, you know, again, that'd be sort of two or three people that would say, all the time. Can we do this? You don't have to be the organist. A lot of the singers, again, some of them will just be happy to set up and just do whatever was given to them. Yes.

Unknown Speaker 5:22

Okay. How do you approach correcting mistakes during practice?

Organist 2 5:31

positive, constructive criticism if that's the best way? I mean, there's no point where good to people for the sake of it. But you've got to your job as a director is to improve things. So to find a way of saying, oh, that's, that's doable. I often like to say it, let's double check that. You say, look, also show I haven't been clear. Let's just double check that. Just framing it in a positive light. And then sure if it goes wrong three times in a row, let's get let's fix this. But I think it just tried to keep that atmosphere of actually everyone is trying to improve it.

Interviewer 6:12

As well, as well as correcting themselves. Do you ever say anything just positive?
Just for the sake of it, especially working with choirs?

Organist 2 6:17

I think that's really important. Yeah. Because kids do react to things quite emotionally, a lot of the time. Especially that are kind of old. So just so do adults. Yeah. Well, kids, kids don't necessarily express it in the in the way that you think your job when you're working with kids is to try and manage that, because that's often what they have, they present it as they are, they will just swing from Oh, happy as Larry. So both of those sort of five or six intermediate stages, which an adult could sort of will try and express because maybe not. So they'll just swing and you sort of try and get that again, try. And so I think working with you, again, the reason they're there is because they enjoy it. And that's a workshop, but they're there because they enjoy it. They're not doing so you've got to foster that environment where they can definitely enjoy it. So yeah, encouragement is definitely the idea. Okay, good.

Interviewer 7:20

Did you sometimes deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, such as singing a particular piece in a resonant place? Or it's a special occasion? Yeah, I think

Organist 2 7:32

the general ethos is to that's that's just sort of what every service concert rehearsal should should be a positive experience. I'm, I always used to say, to the choir was, you know, doing different pieces that worked really well. There's a really kind of small chapel list of a really resonant acoustic because it had a false dome in the ceiling. So you can get quite a lot out of it. And singing really good music nice politically for example, in there worked really well. I was I was of course it of course, we're doing it's a good piece. And we don't have time to do the bad stuff. We only got so I think yeah, and just try to organize every now and then a little special thing where I think yeah, remember, we did a lot about it's been a refuge, we got to trumpeter it as well, which is a small building actually was ridiculous. It was a really fun occasion. And it's moments like that. It's really why I'm doing versus the kind of service where yeah, it all goes very well. But there's kind of three people in the congregation. It's a Monday night, anything. I think you've got to get people those kind of little moments where I think that was really cool.

Interviewer 8:40

What specific things did you consciously do to motivate the singers, these aimed at existing intrinsic desire, such as social interactions? Or do you try and instil feelings that complement the choirs aims, such as improving musical standards?

Organist 2 9:04

Yeah, I think the idea of improving the experience that sort of ties into bits whilst making everything that you do is got to be something that contributes positively to what the choir is there for, and what the people are there to get out of it. Because at the end of the day, people don't like it. Well, that that sort of applies, whether it's choristers, volunteer singers, students or professionals at the end of the day, they no one's ever forced it to be. So I think that's, yeah, that that idea of, you've got to what you're doing is there to make someone's day better. And even if that can be that can be a tiny little thing. And again, lots of positive encouragement. But one thing that goes really well, that hasn't necessarily gone well before. But you sort of rework it over them in this way, or just one thing you went away or it could be a massive thing, like a kind of big special thing that equally working towards that. still, every time there's a sense of achievement, okay, good.

Interviewer 10:05

How do you help singers work out what to do to fix problems with tuning tone and so on.

Organist 2 10:11

I think I try and explain it quite empirically. So, again, especially when you're working with choristers, you can dress things up and say things in foreign language to get them to be creative and things. But when if you're trying, if fundamentally, they're

singing about the Scripture, you have to say, That's too sharp, can you say it louder? Can you try and listen to what you're doing? And bring that down? Here's a look at can you compare what you're and do that empirically? That's that's, that's that that has to be empirical things like that. And I'd say, can we kind of more flowery language where you're trying to create a mood or something to say on this piece now, and it still swells to that point, and it's fantastic and Aurora or something. But if something's fundamentally too sharp or flat, I think you just zoom in and say, Okay, now listen, yeah, altos versus basis travels versus space, can we just actually, that's too wide? Can we try and just listen? And fit you actually fix that? Based on what you can hear? And most of the time that works? Because people who say,

Interviewer 11:18

Okay, now, that's the purpose of that question. Thank you. How do you handle situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short. And there's a risk that the singers may not learn the music in time,

Organist 2 11:28

you've got to sort of pick your battles. This was always a problem. Really, I think it's a problem that everyone faces, because at the end of the day, it all is one. And also, we have such a high turnover of music. You would, there were certain things that you could really above but after the first couple of weeks, you know there's a house and stuff, you wouldn't necessarily rehearse too much because people can get into if they went wrong, people kind of learn over the course of a few weeks, how to fix

them. And you accept that part of the process. Yeah, the year on year, the choir changes, and therefore, that's part of the rhythm of the year. And again, I think at the Cathedral, again, it's a high kind of venue and rehearsals anything shorter. Yes, that's kind of 20 minutes for the full choir a weekday. And again, with a net, it's down in the store, there's not much time, actually, you've got to prioritize what you're doing. And actually what was most practical for me to do? What can I make the most difference of something downstairs, upstairs, that is on the company, for example, what's the point you knew you could be using that time to do something that's actually that you couldn't have done? Something with the organ or kind of something involves timing with the narrative. But you're really otherwise you'll end up with that kind of moment where it's yes, we've got five minutes from the beginning.

Interviewer 12:50

Okay. Apart from regular services, did you create additional opportunities for the choir to performing public?

Organist 2 12:57

Yes, back to when we I tried to. I mean, the primary purpose of that quarter was the regular rhythm of services. But concerts were sort of on my radar. Coming out of COVID, it was a bit tricky. The budget was basically nil. The college was quite anxious with regard to regulation. So we had to kind of set aside that a lot of it was quite internal, but kind of events for the college within the government. And sort of by the time we got to the summer, it was easier kind of concepts in the gardens with

madrigals are down by the lake, some of the things like that. And sort of, because it was part of a college community, things like carol-singing, Christmas, actually a kind of Christmas dinners. I think that really helped the people in the choir sort of get that sense of belonging. And this is actually just a college choir. It's part of this community where you'll be singing all these services. But actually, now we're bringing this music to the entire community in a different way. And I think that sort of enhanced that sense of belonging by doing those kind of internal things, and yeah, concerts that elsewhere are a great thing to do. But I think that that was sort of the unique bonus we have by being sort of within that kind of fairly close community.

Interviewer 14:14

Something a bit different from the one exactly. Okay. What's the risk of elitism in the quarter, making new or less experienced singers feel inadequate? And if so, how did you address it?

Organist 2 14:28

That there's this sort of tricky balance, isn't that between being elite and being elitist? Which is, it's a sort of a image problem that Oxford struggled with for a long time and will always continue to struggle with it. Because at the end of the day, it's an elite institution. There's sort of this idea of access and breaking down barriers. I think it's just your job as someone who is sort of running acquire within that framework is to show people that yes, they can do it and it's okay to make mistakes because actually, at the end of the day as a university, it's a place for people to go to learn

more But actually, the students, if everything went right all the time, you wouldn't need to rehearse anything, or we wouldn't be there at all, because you'd know how to do it straightaway. And you've come back to learn. And yes, you've got a brain, you can you can get this might be something that you've never done before. But you can kind of process information. Actually, once you've done it. You see that? And you can make those connections and see that actually, oh, yeah, this is starting to make sense, like they do when they're sort of applied to the Property Sheet. So they're right there. So it's for the academic stuff. In that university context, that was quite a nice way of saying, this is just another word, another side of that course. Yeah, I mean, that sort of great. elitism versus Elite is sort of problem that anywhere that sort of selective is going to have Yes. And it was audition choir. So you'll be able to say, well, yes, you would audition people, I think, actually, we can't quite take you. But you can say, well, so maybe next year, yeah. Because something that we can maybe work in your sight reading. In the meantime, you know, we were quite a, we're quite, there's quite a lot of services or a heightening of repertoire. Maybe actually, you want to spend a year singing in a choir that was a little bit less to sort of build up your confidence, and suggest a few places that might do that. And so I remember the next year, actually, if you think you're sort of ready to go up to do it, a choir has a larger commitment. And that's something you want to do, then yet, we haven't always happy to hear you again. So you had to kind of be quite delicate with that. But I think people generally understood that. Because most people, I think it had that self awareness to know that their work lives up to it, they've gone into a climate of doing four sentences a week with different music every single time. And they weren't quite they would have had a bad time and probably have left with. Whereas if you can actually direct them just to get and then build up that confidence.

And then within a year, then actually, actually, now I can do this. And then they have a good time for the kind of two three years rather than falling at the first hurdle.

Interviewer 17:07

Last question. Were you aware of the musical background and activities of your singers outside the choir? And whether particular groups or establishments that you used as a source of new recruits?

Organist 2 17:21

Yes, Oxford was a very sort of connected place. Everyone knew everybody else's business. So yeah, people were very good. I'd tell them I'm doing this recital with a couple of friends or something. You want to come along and meet the same girl kind of group of people? Because everyone went to each other's. And that was part of a kind of support of a community, which was a nice thing. I think, yeah, groups, they were kind of acapella groups that a lot of things in the choir were involved with.

Some people do kind of solo stuff. And I mean, there was sort of network sort of online, he has a Facebook group, I think is in Oxford, it was called It was basically a kind of a community of 1000s of members. And just kind of, and most of it was kind of last minute sort of needed, needed that kind of request, but other content, which again, I think was quite a nice way of everyone kind of helped each other out.

Because everybody knew eventually it will come back, but you need to be helps out. Yes. So that was quite a nice thing. And most of the time that went quite well. It was quite a lot of cross pollination in that regard.

Interviewer 18:29

So were people in your choir part of that community as well? Yeah. And again,

Organist 2 18:35

we use sort of sometimes, sometimes they get the best result regularly opposed to sort of helping either dep. Or if you might get any old person, you might sort of did say, well, actually, just check in with me if you're going to do that, because we did have a dep process but you know, that they tried to. Yeah, you tried to get someone on a Sunday evening who's never going to be easy. But, again, there's enough people knew other people that there was this kind of network of support, but that across the kind of 20 or 30 different choirs that were most people before you know, you actually made another connection.

Interviewer 19:17

That's great. That's the last of the questions.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

23) **Appendix M – Choral Society Conductor Interview**

This interview was with the conductor of Frodsham and District Choral Society, a non-auditioned choir of about eighty singers.

Interviewer 0:00

So I'm asking these questions, just just saying what comes into your head? No. No particular they're not. They're not that deep either. Okay, first one is bearing in mind the constraints under which you have to operate. To what extent do you think about the choir members preferences, opinions and needs and planning the music and events for Season?

Choral Society MD 0:21

That's central. There are lots of, I know, choir conductors I've worked with before, who often want to do pieces that are their ambitions. They're not, they don't take into consideration the core of what you've got. I know what I've got is a monolithic community choir, who have aspirations to sing some of the big works, which they've done remarkably well over a long period of time. And that comes down to their dedication and good directors. What it comes down to. But yes, I mean, planning this year, for example. We asked the choir, are there any pieces that you've done in the past you'd like to revisit? And they suggested to my huge surprise, Everlasting Light, Goodall. I think they forgot how hard it was. And of course, when we did it last time,

we had about 12 weeks. This time, we have nine, and it's not all the same. So that was a sort of learning journey. But to be fair, I mean, the dedication within the group to actually go away and listen to YouTube clips. Rehearse with it has been really heartening. But yes, I mean, apart from a bit of a blip in the Christmas program, next concert is going to be Haydn. So I'm going back to the core heartland. They love singing. I'm surprised. No one said it yet. I'm waiting for it. But it's a long time since we did Messiah. If actually, if we do it in 24/25, it could actually be 10 years. It was 2015. And then COVID happened. So yeah, I mean, although I do get why we're doing the Nelson mass, there are so many other great Haydn masses? Well, yes. But that's easiest to get home. And it's what we weren't going to do for the 50th anniversary concert, which didn't happen. So yes, I we do ask people regularly to tell us what works, what doesn't work, what pieces they may have come across. And this of course, then get to the issue of you've got lots of individuals in the group. Lots of very individual likes and dislikes. I mean, I know there are some people somebody actually came to me at the end of rehearsal last night, and said, of Serenity. That Piece is amazing. Really lovely. And I know I also had some beginning of the rehearsal because I've taken out an important piece because really, it's still beyond their ability. There are some people who love to sing it but I thought another double choir piece would be too much. I get complaints about why we take out a really, really good piece that we all know for something that the audience will be baffled by. Just said, not everybody knows it. I know you may have some get 20 million times, but you're not representative of the choir as a whole. And when we build things like Lux Aumque by Whitaker and McMillan's Radiant Dawn they can ask you to keep doing it. Yes. audiences love it. So you know.

Interviewer 4:31

How aware are you of what goals the individual choir members have been singing in the choir?

Choral Society MD 4:42

Maybe I wish I knew more about that. I think there's a limit to the number of people you can completely understand. Well, it's a bigger thing. We're an aging choir, all these sorts of choirs are. And I think coming out and doing some music has been an important thing, as well. But it's the social thing that people go. It's more, it's more social. And sometimes you just have to realize, I mean, social satisfaction is a goal in its own right. And I think a lot of people are coming for that. You know, we have people. We have people at the age extremes. And we've got a tenor who's 90 had his 90th birthday. We've had issues with memory, problems, outsiders all sorts of things. And it's very difficult for mine, I tend to go well, look, we help as far as we can. Because getting these people out into community and into something regular is so important, too. It's only if there's a horrendous problem that we might then say, you're very welcome to come to rehearsals do come through. It might be better if you don't sing in the chorus. And that sometimes happens with people. I mean, I've got more now, people who need for six, more actually, length of work is now beginning to take into consideration because we've I had almost a front row of people who sat down. Because I mean, Brahms Requiem is just fixing, in terms of singing, as physicality, but you're standing for most of the 60 minutes. I'm not going to work through the water might die in an hour. So yes, I think people coming because I think

finally socially, they love seeing they know, they're like a bit challenge. But no, individuals come and talk to you. But I don't know everybody's view.

Interviewer 7:27

Do you ever discuss your repertoire choices with the choir? What are your feelings about your views? And how much you should consider them?

Choral Society MD 7:40

Well, yes, actually no. Directing require is a benign dictatorship. Yes. I do want to know what they're like. I'd like to know which pieces work well for them and vote. And we regularly do surveys of that. We regularly do surveys of pieces they would like to do. And I know that they'll always come up with pieces that I am not going to do. For example.

They may have done it was 50 years ago. Yes. They never did it with me. I think when it was a larger choir. And of course what they tend to forget they're now 50 years old.

But yes, I do a lot of ideas from what I do. I discuss it with with the committee, obviously. And that's for that force view. Again, by and large, they're willing to go on one thing. I suppose I'm now developing a track record of, well, this works, this might be a bit of a challenge. Are you willing to take it on? Let people listen to things for YouTube. I really have an open door policy for the client to suggest things which you know, will go away and when it's been suggested taking it off and making it forward

to going back and saying, Look, I've listened to the piece. It really is wonderful, but I'm not quite sure we've got the reserves all the time. You know, when we look at the construction, yeah.

Interviewer 9:48

How do you approach correcting mistakes during a practice?

Choral Society MD 9:56

It's a balance isn't it? It's a battle Do I have any, and I've worked with conductors, who basically, don't take prisoners and who aren't going to go on until you get it right. But there is a law of diminishing returns. And you've got to be able to choose what you've done as much as you can this week. Before, if you keep doing it, they're going to switch off, and it becomes a chore. And then they don't like it and to be inclined, on the night, don't want to go to a concert where you don't know if 50% of the notes will be inaccurate. That's so good. So it's a case of we work with something. And sometimes we suggest, you know, maybe let's go and have a look, we always tell them what's available on websites. Have a look at that. I often say these are the movements that are the trickiest. As soon as I can. I'm gonna get them into rehearsal, and you will. Yes. So that's sort of what we tend to do. That's where we go, but yes, it's a balance.

Interviewer 11:35

Do you sometimes deliberately set up a situation to give the choir a very positive experience, which is singing a particular piece or read in a resonant place? Or a special occasion?

Choral Society MD 11:49

Where it was always looking for special occasions? Can you find your restaurant important? St. Lawrence is only Community Center even better.

Interviewer 12:12

The old Methodist Church used to be good before they turned it into flats.

Choral Society MD 12:19

Yes, I mean, the rest of the space would be. But yes, no. You do the stick and carrot approach. And quite often you have said on what should we sing? You've worked really hard this session. Let's finish with somebody in like, they tend to forget it's been awful. But okay, yes. They go home. Thank you. I really like that. Trying to end on a positive. Yeah.

Interviewer 12:48

What specific things do you consciously do to motivate the singers aim to take existing intrinsic desires, such as social interactions? Or do you try and instill feelings that compliment the choirs aims like improving musical standards?

Choral Society MD 13:08

I think I think the way you present yourself to the choir I think I've said this to choirs, that you they're giving your Monday nights and missing something else to come and do this thing. And that is a real force for me that they want to do it. So I've got to be pleasant. I've got to be encouraging. I've got to make appalling jokes as often as possible. But make them feel as though they're really having a flow and I really appreciate it and they're making it useful and particularly in the end, you tend to do it sincerely as well. You know, you're saying tenors, you really really hit that that a natural It was lovely, unbridled. And again, you sometimes on the other hand, or say Oh, should we have another go at? It was a bit south of pitch you know? And, and you know, you're joining them alone. But you can I think the conductor's you've got to be careful not to get inside their own heads. Not not fret over the fact that the bases are not getting that interval. You pick it up you practising it, you highlight it to them. And that's when they might, they might want to circle and have a look at. Because that's that's an issue. And we have an issue in society last night, where the basses have to start one section, actually quite high level she's they were seeing something that leads to fear. And we've had to stop and say no, no. Could you just listen to the next page if you want to go for? So yeah, I think that's what you need to do a lot from from the front. Yes.

Interviewer 15:49

How do you help singers work out what to do to fix problems with tuning, tone, etc?

Choral Society MD 16:01

So this is the director's backdrop. When you say to a section and I know I've done it horribly flat, you're telling them what they probably already know. It's not helpful, because it actually makes them. Yes. So what you've got to do is say, Okay, let's let's admit, at work that was flat. Let's think about how we approach it. Things like you say silly things like raise your eyebrows. Can you try some form of God? It's very strange. But again, there was an occasion on Monday night, where and it was tenors where they were coming down in very narrow interval. And it was going quite so you ended up saying, Look, I noticed someone countering what could you come down? It's going up. Trying to keep it as white as we can, trying to keep the step as narrow as you can. And let's try it tends to fix it occasionally.

Interviewer 17:27

How would you handle situations when rehearsal time is likely to be short? And there's a risk that the singers may not learn the music in time?

Choral Society MD 17:34

I'm in it. And then again, the program has lots of tried and trusted favorites.

Yes, yes. So what I do is be open with them about which the pieces are which will require most time. Make sure use the ones they think they know. Well, and you can get away with. Let them sing popular ones. But could you say to them that these are the pieces I said last night to them? Look, there are five pieces, ideally walkthroughs. And then create what is right.

It's not difficult. But it's it's the way it's on the page that they can't follow it easily. I said bring your pencil. Do your own copy, like align your thinking? Yes. I mean, the first week we did it. After 20 minutes, I thought, What are you doing? And I thought it'll be better next time. But it still was 25 minutes on Monday, but it was a lot better. You know, I wasn't thinking I've got to change the program. It's a pity because it's the title of the concert. I did say, hey, look, folks, got to be in the program. Whatever you do, it's got to be better. So yes, I mean, you. You make them aware where they've got to work. Do you try to let them know that you're giving them sufficient time? You're also trying to get into that juggling. And sometimes there'll be some pieces. You know, they're going into concert. They're feeling a little under rehearsed. You've just got to say, look as long as you keep going, if you really don't know it, open your mouth. Don't say, it's like the chickens on The Muppet Show. look as though you're singling to the audience by and large. They want to hear the choir. So, you know, don't put yourself under more pressure than you need to.

Interviewer 20:51

Apart from your regular concerts. Do you create additional opportunities for the choir to perform in public?

Choral Society MD 21:01

I'm trying to I mean, like the come and sing days. Meet other people I know we imply nonpayment. Here nobody's mentioned. I wasn't going to raise public singing Christmas carols at Tesco. I don't regard those taking ourselves out. You know, it's not good. But you know, we have we're in the past have done all people's homes. Yes. Do bit of carol-singing then. Yeah, we're always missing out on opportunities. I mean, I know we've already started talking about festival in the park. Right. Okay. It's not, it's not a good fit for us. Singing outside is hard work. Yeah, it's very hard. And of course, they've got the rock choir. Oh, yes. Look, do that sort of thing. Yes. I love it to cracking takes and it's wonderful. Nobody wants to hear from a dentist. So, yes, we try and take heart. But I think we've got to choose what we do. Right.

Interviewer 22:40

Is there a risk of elitism in the choir making new or less experienced singers feel inadequate? And if so, how do you address it?

Choral Society MD 22:53

Oh, God, we've just had an example. Really? Yeah. I was thinking again, that thing that members do. They try and encourage other people to come and join. And this chap face came to our concert. Loved it. Look what we did. And then joined us to leave within weeks

because the expectations I had, and a lot of work trying more or less. Yeah, we're so we actually I'm used to seeing someone see if I have to do. Yeah. Right. And that's how I learned it. I don't really I've got lots of people in the choir. But we manage to massage through. But yes, I mean will lead to something. It's hard. But if you're not singing, pop, pop standards or classics. Then, if you're going to do height the most. There's other things it automatically sets the bar. Yes. Only people who want to feel they will latch on lightly. They've heard the news, they like to sing it will come along. I use the word niche rather than elitist. elitist about what we do on the stack Since we're not The Sixteen and we're not even trying to be, but I know how much joy, they get into performing a word like Mozart Requiem.

And they feel they've had achieved so much. Not sharing music with other people enjoying themselves. How can that be an interest? Interesting questions came from in some choirs. The people who were already there, like they're there because they're special. And someone new coming in is made to feel small. No, I mean, I mean, I hope you found this as well. But Frodsham is an extremely friendly society. It's very welcoming, very welcoming. It's very good. I mean, I have had others, I got about half a dozen friends to come in and sing. I did okay, with the committee first, because I know getting people coming in. Yes. can pull off something which backs up? Yes, yes. The sort of people? you know, it's support. Yes, it is. And, you know, all the people that came, I mean, I laid it out very carefully that, you know, this is an annual subscription. People are paying to to cart if you're coming to help us with this. It will be nice if you made a voluntary contribution about, okay, so people get very happy birthday is fortunate. Right. So, you know, that wasn't anybody's back. So they were paying to be there. But absolutely nothing. And you know, some, some people came back and told Jenny came back and sang another one thing, right. And

it will take much of another twist to get into college thinking behind the screen. So yes. I don't think we have that problem. I mean, our special. We're all special. Okay,

Interviewer 27:20

The last one, are you aware of the musical background and activities of your singers outside the choir? And other particularly groups or establishments that you use as a source of new recruits?

Choral Society MD 27:34

Well, you had a big problem. Yes, I'm aware that some people sing in choirs and the impact when half the membership does Hartford Choral Society, you stick with it?

Yes. There's always been a lot of people who want to go. In fact the leader is now playing for us. He's moved to a better date. Good man. And he was doing selections with Messiah. Yes. And I just encouraged. I said, look, we've got to go support him, come and do it, I went along into the six weeks as well, just to support him because he's supporting us. And I think that's going to develop. So yeah, I mean, and people coming tell me, because I know one of my tenors is showing up. I want to come and do this at Hartford, because I'm going down to the Royal Albert Hall to sing Messiah with 1000s. Yes, yeah. He came back and said, it's not a patch on Hartford, there were just too many people. I didn't I didn't tell him before he went. But you raised the other big point. And I don't know what the answer is. It's recruitment. Where do we get relatively young singers? You know, unless you're attached to an institution that

has security, music in schools. Singing seems to have disappeared in secondary schools. It's a really real, real issue.

I mean, I know for certain, we've got the most money for the theater, musical department. And they get these lands in the mid teens living in musical framework, and it's astonishing and it's really good. So you're gonna put the choir on? They'll turn up. So I don't know what to choose. We know. Singing doesn't happen in secondary also used to hope it's still happening in juniors.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>

24) Appendix M – Study Choir Goals Survey

Nave Choir Goals Survey

[All Responses](#)

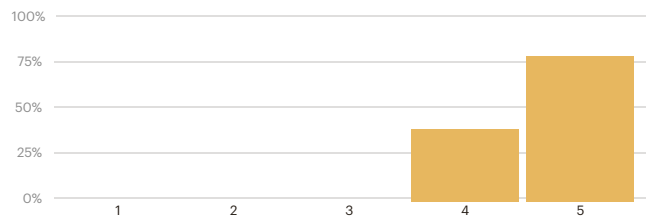
Question 1: How important is it that the singers are auditioned?

Question 2: How important is it that the choir is run by a professional musician?

Question 1 has 15 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.7



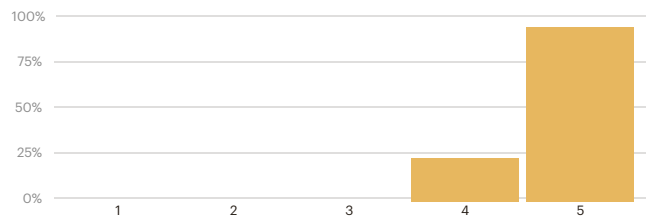
“How important is it that the singers are auditioned?”



Question 2 has 15 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.8



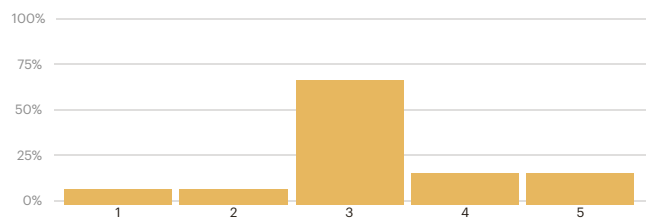
“How important is it that the choir is run by a professional musician?”



Question 3 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.2



“How important is it that the members are not professional singers?”

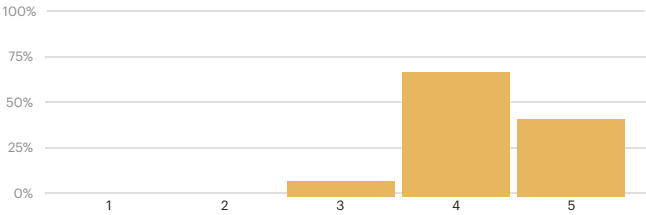


Feedback

Question 4 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3



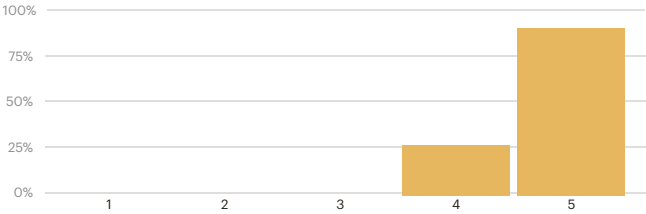
“How important is the choice of repertoire to you? ”



Question 5 has 13 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.8



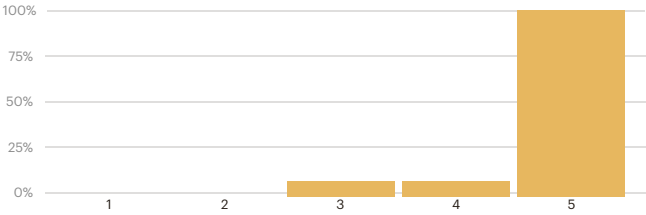
“How important is it to maintain and improve the musical standard of the choir?”



Question 6 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.8



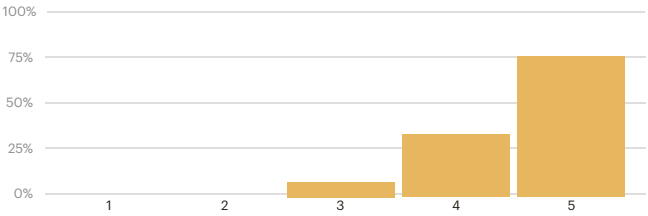
“How important is it to you to improve your own singing skills? ”



Question 7 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.6



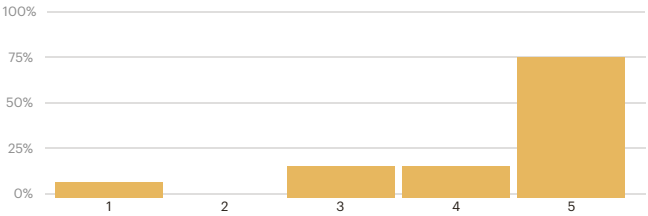
“How important is it that the choir is based at and sings in the Cathedral? ”



Question 8 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.3



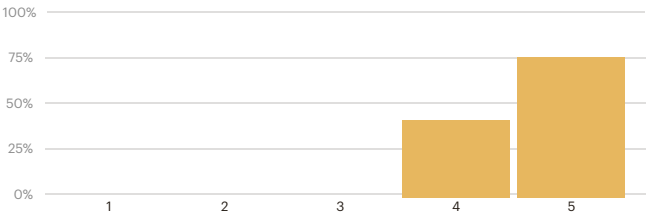
“How important is the history and tradition of the Cathedral and the choir to you? ”



Question 9 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 4.6



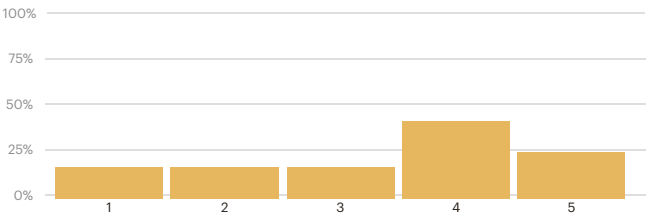
“How important to you is the feeling of belonging and loyalty to the choir? ”



Question 10 has 14 answers (Range) Avg rating: 3.4



“How important is the social side of the choir? ”



Question 11 has 8 answers (Open Text)

“Is there anything else you would like to add?”

Unknown contact said:

"No"

Unknown contact said:

"I think that if we want to maintain and improve the musical standard of the choir, that we as members must support the choir director in our commitment in regular attendance at rehearsals and services.

"

Unknown contact said:

"It might be pertinent to include an option to discuss the importance of faith in a choir which sings in a cathedral. Whilst appreciating the fact that some choir members choose to sing with the Naves because they enjoy the type of music which we sing, but to some of us it is primarily an opportunity to help lead musical worship and to enhance that worship by using our God-given talent... Hopefully our efforts are a blessing to those in the congregation as they gather to worship. Just saying!!"

Unknown contact said:

"Although choir members are voluntary, there should be a minimum attendance required per term to be able to continue singing. It is frustrating having to continue going over pieces that people have missed learning in rehearsal.

There should be a requirement to learn easier items at home which would enable more time to be taken over more complex pieces during rehearsal."

Unknown contact said:

"It is very important to me that our singing is to support the faith and liturgy of worship in the cathedral - it's why I joined in the first place and why I continue to sing with the choir."

25) Appendix N – Participant Information Sheet



Information Sheet

The Effect of Choir Leader Technique on Singers' Morale and Attainment

I am a student of UWTSD reading for a MA in Vocal Pedagogy. You are being invited to take part in a field study as part of my research. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the study is being undertaken and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. I can be contacted at kfayle@icloud.com. Thank you for considering this.

The aim of the study is to investigate the effect of specific rehearsal techniques on the motivation and associated benefits of singers in a choir. The study will take place from 1 September to 31 December 2023.

You have been chosen because you sing in the Nave Choir or are a Lay Clerk at Chester Cathedral. There will be a maximum of 40 participants.

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire at the start and end of the study. The questionnaire will have 18 questions and will take around 20 minutes to complete. During the study, rehearsals will continue as normal and you should not notice anything different. The Lay Clerks are being asked to complete the questionnaires to act as a control group with which to compare the Nave Choir responses. They are not part of the study.

For some people, singing is a very personal experience and it can feel uncomfortable to talk about it in front of others. All information will be treated confidentially and anonymously. You can withdraw from the study at any stage and your questionnaire responses will be deleted.

For ethical reasons, there is no financial reward for the study. No external funding is being provided for the study.

If, for any reason, you need to make a complaint, this can be made to my course supervisor who will ensure it is handled appropriately.

All information which is collected about you and is included in the study report will be anonymised so that you cannot be recognised from it.

The results of the study will be summarised in a report that will be shared with the University and Cathedral Music Department. All participants will be able to request a copy from me.

If you need further information, please contact me at kfayle@icloud.com

Thank you for considering taking part in the study.

Ken Fayle
MA Student, University of Wales, Trinity Saint David

18 September 2023

26) Appendix O – Chester Cathedral Consent



Philip Rushforth
Organist and Master of the Choristers
9 Abbey Square
Chester CH1 2HU
01244 500974
philip.rushforth@chestercathedral.com
www.chestercathedral.com

26th February, 2024

To: UWTSD

From: Philip Rushforth, Organist and Master of the Choristers, Chester Cathedral

*The Effect of Choir Leader Technique on Singers' Morale and Attainment - Ken Fayle
reading for a MA in Vocal Pedagogy*

I can confirm that Ken Fayle, as part of his research for the degree above, undertook a field study involving the Lay Clerks of Chester Cathedral Choir and the Chester Cathedral Nave Choir. Alexander Lanigan-Palotai (director of the Nave Choir) and Philip Rushforth (Organist and Master of the Choristers, Chester Cathedral) were also interviewed about their thoughts and approaches on singers' morale and attainment in the context of a rehearsal situation.

This study was conducted with my permission as head of the Cathedral Music Department.

27) Appendix P – Consent Confirmation Process (redacted)

The following email was sent by the study group director to all potential participants, together with the information sheet. Only those who gave consent were given the link to the questionnaire, which was anonymous. Not everyone who was given the link chose to complete the questionnaire. Since everyone had attended a talk from the researcher about the study and had received a copy of the Information Sheet, they were deemed to have given implied consent by completing the online survey.

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Research project information sheet
Date: 19 September 2023 at 11:31
To: Undisclosed recipients; 



Hello all,

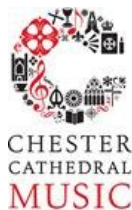
Attached is the information sheet for Ken's MA research project for you to have a read of. If you are happy to answer the questionnaire and take part in this project, please email Ken at kfayle@icloud.com and paste the following text. Ken will then send you the questionnaire.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

I agree to take part in the study.

Best wishes,



[REDACTED]
Sub-Organist
9 Abbey Square
Chester CH1 2HU
01244 500956
www.chestercathedral.com

Information
Sheet 1.2.docx
[49 KB](#)

28) Appendix Q – Presentation Slides

THE EFFECT OF CHOIR LEADER INTERVENTIONS ON SINGERS' MORALE AND ATTAINMENT

Ken Fayle

Student Number 2028833

28 February 2024

Module BMPF7010

INTRODUCTION

- About me
- The research topic
- Purpose, aims and objectives
- What to expect

Singers



Why do we sing?

What do we want?

Conductors



What do I want?

What can I do?

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Narrative Literature Review
- Builds on and develops an earlier literature review¹
- Examines Motivation Theory as it relates to singing
 - Established branch of Psychology²
 - Why people do things
 - What makes them succeed
 - Widely used in Education³ and Business⁴
 - Some studies for instrumentalists and professionals
 - Self-determination theory⁵
 - Attribution theory⁶
 - Gap in literature for choirs and singing students, which the study aims to address
 - "A vast array of theoretical perspectives that are relatively disjointed"⁷



1. (Fayle, 2023)
2. (Wigfield and Koenka, 2020)
3. (Evans, 2015)
4. (Derfler-Rozin and Pitesa, 2021)
5. (Azharabu et al., 2021)
6. (Stauffer, 2018)
7. (Evans, 2015, p. 65)

11 INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES FOR CONDUCTORS

Opportunities to Perform

Choir Goals⁸

Singer Goals

Time Pressure

Repertoire

Flow⁹

Singer Self-Perception¹¹

Elitism

Intrinsic Motivators¹⁰

Musical Experience

Technical Complexity¹²

8. (Caliga, 2020)
9. (Theorell et al., 2023)
10. (Pendergast, 2023)
11. (Juan-Morera et al., 2023)
12. (Gupta, Li and Goto, 2022)

METHODS

- Constructivist/Pragmatist lens¹³
- Mixed methods
 - Qualitative data from interviews¹⁴
 - Quantitative data from surveys¹⁵
- Interviews coded
 - In vivo coding with 3 passes¹⁶
 - Structured around 11 techniques
- Surveys
 - Self-directed questionnaires using 5-point Likert scale¹⁷
 - Compared means¹⁸
 - Normalised results



- 13. (Sundin and Johannisson, 2005)
- 14. (Opdenakker, 2004)
- 15. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2017)
- 16. (Saldana, 2016)
- 17. (Allen and Seaman, 2007)
- 18. (Norman, 2010)

STUDY PHASES

Study Phases

1. Literature Review produced 11 Intervention Techniques
2. Selected Study Choir and Control Group
3. Pre-study interview with Study Choir Conductor
4. Pre-study survey to set baseline
5. Field study using Intervention Techniques
6. Interviews with three other conductors
7. Post-study survey to measure changes
8. Post-study interview with Study Choir Conductor



FIELD STUDY CHESTER CATHEDRAL CHOIRS



Cathedral Music Department

- Three full-time organists
- Two choirs
- Both sing services every week

Study Group – Nave Choir

- Auditioned volunteer choir

Control Group – Cathedral Choir Lay Clerks

- Professional singers

Same conductor, venue and repertoire

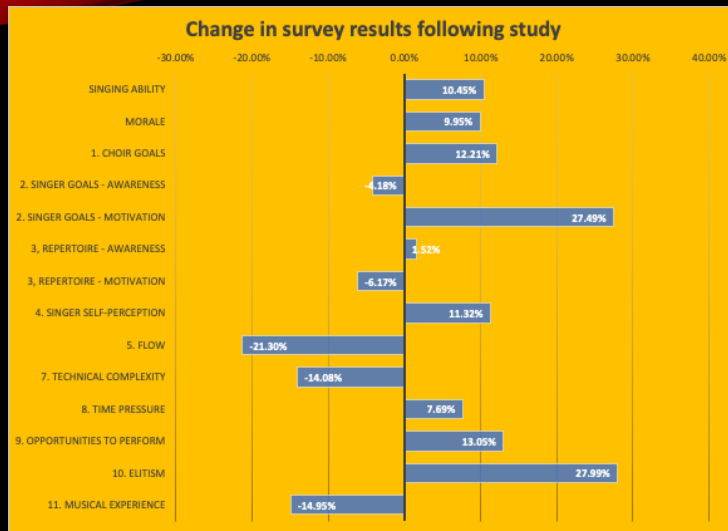
ETHICS

- The study passed the UWTSD Ethical Review
- The participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks and provided informed consent before participating
- Data privacy concerns
 - Interview transcripts and Survey responses
 - Redacted to remove data that might identify respondent or others
 - Anonymous
 - Data stored securely according to GDPR¹⁹
- Agreed to exclude children
- Consulted closely with conductor throughout to ensure techniques did no damage
- Concern about choir members who didn't participate in surveys



¹⁹. (Laybats and Davies, 2018)

FINDINGS



Motivation Category	Topic	Mentions
3. Repertoire	Suggestions	5
1. Choir Goals	Enjoyment	4
2. Singer Goals	Growth	4
2. Singer Goals	Leadership	4
5. Flow	Location	4
7. Technical Complexity	Listen	4
9. Performance opportunity	Concerts	4
11. Musical Background	Positive	4
11. Musical Background	Time pressure	3
11. Musical Background	Inclusion	3
11. Musical Background	Variety	3
11. Musical Background	Social	3
4. Singer Self-Perception	Selective	3
4. Singer Self-Perception	Positive message	3
4. Singer Self-Perception	Shared responsibility	3
6. Intrinsic Motivators	Positive	3
6. Intrinsic Motivators	Ownership	3
8. Time pressure	Plan	3
8. Time pressure	Change rarely	3
8. Time pressure	Church visits	3
8. Time pressure	Lack of state school singing	3

INTERVIEW CODING

"Mentions" records in how many of the five interviews the theme was raised by the conductor

Used during analysis of survey results for each Intervention Technique

In vivo coding used to extract themes from the vocabulary used during the interviews²⁰

"I do try and take into consideration their wishes, because it makes for, you know, a happy choir, and they know that they're being listened to"

20. (Khamung, Miller and Hsu, 2022)

ANALYSIS

- The general survey results supported the Hypothesis
- Results could have been stronger without the Intervention Techniques that produced a negative result
 - Repertoire, Flow, Technical Complexity, Musical Experience
 - Interviews suggest these may be starting to work, but need more time
- Flow is critical and underestimated by conductors
 - Core mechanism enabling life satisfaction, positivity, emotional connection while making music²¹
 - Something good that just happens, "a perfect storm of, you know, music that we use it that's achievable for us to do really well"
- Technical Complexity needs guarding against²²
- Recognising Singer Goals and fighting Elitism were very effective

21. (Koehler et al., 2021)
22. (Radu-Giurgiu, 2023)

•(Ulitzsch, Lütke and Robitzsch, 2021)
•(Appelgren et al., 2019)
•(Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013)

LIMITATIONS

- Small sample size²³
- Cathedral choir not typical
- Professional singers in control group²⁴
- Only time to measure motivation, not impact
 - Retention, attainment, recruitment
- Intervention Techniques designed for study choir may not be generally applicable
- Insider research bias²⁵



23. (Ulitzsch, Lütke and Robitzsch, 2021)
24. (Appelgren et al., 2019)
25. (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Further research
 - Large-scale study
 - Focus group of experienced conductors to refine Intervention Techniques
 - Include different choir types
 - Chamber group
 - Choral Society
 - Community Choir
 - Singing for Health Choir

IMPACT

- The study choir has benefitted from the study
 - Improved confidence and singing ability
 - Increased motivation
- The interviewees have acquired some understanding of Motivation Theory as it applies to their practice
- The study conductor has a new set of techniques he can use with any choir
- Prior research suggests this will improve retention, attainment and recruitment over time²⁶
- Concepts explored are relevant to all singing leaders
- Eventually, it could help get more people singing
 - Benefits for professional practices
 - General health and well-being benefits for society²⁷



26. (Fayle, 2023)
27. (Yi and Kim, 2023)

CONCLUSION

- Focus on motivation can bring measurable benefits to a choir
- Potential for future research
- Possibility to build a 'Motivation Toolkit' for singing leaders
 - Introduction to Motivation Theory
 - Set of techniques to select and use
 - Access to survey
 - Collect more responses over time to build large body of evidence
- Everybody had fun!



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