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Independent Study - Module 5 (BMPF7013G)

Investigating motivational theories: Can a deeper understanding of motivational theories help a choir leader create strategies to retain and recruit new members?

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Part 1: The Portfolio

Introduction and rationale

A choir is usually an organised group of 12 or more singers (Moore, 2013). Choirs can vary in size and purpose, but all aim to produce beautiful music through rehearsal and performance (Redman, 2016). Singing within a choir is a widely accessible, cost-effective way to improve physical and mental health, combat loneliness and increase self-esteem (Launey & Pearce, 2015). Within my workplace practice, I direct a choir as a vocal lead for a local authority music service. I am keen to increase membership within the choir and develop strategies to motivate people to sing throughout the local area. Motivation is a psychological construct with many theological perspectives that describe the process that initiates and maintains goal-orientated activities (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023). Motivation is a crucial area of investigation for music educators to understand why someone may take up an instrument and how to help them persist through challenges (Evans, 2015). Practical applications of motivation theories within a choir rehearsal may inspire and engage choir members and attract new members (Redman, 2016). Research on motivation within academic education aims to explain why students act in specific ways and how this affects their performance (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023). Within music education research, there needs to be a consensus on the best perspective to utilise within rehearsals and lessons (Evans, 2015). However, research has shown that Self-Determination theory (Evans & Liu, 2019), Self-Efficacy (Ritchie & Williamon, 2011), Attribution theory (Adams, 2020; Schatt, 2011) and Expectancy-Value theory (Philips & Weiss, 2016) have been beneficial frameworks within a musical environment and will be studied more thoroughly throughout the assignment and applied to a choral context (Sanguinetti, 2023). Within my rationale for this study, I will first investigate how the pandemic and cost of living crisis may have affected choir numbers, leading to a need to reassess strategies to motivate people to sing. I will then explore why singing in a group should be encouraged and the physical and mental health benefits.

Reasons choir numbers may have lowered

COVID-19 Pandemic

The last three years have been challenging for expanding and recruiting members for some choirs due to the pandemic and the cost of living crisis (Hughes, 2022). Within my role as a Vocal Lead I inherited a Junior Choir in 2021. Membership has lessened post-pandemic, and I am currently working to increase participation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, singing was considered a dangerous activity that would considerably increase the virus's spread (Rinn, 2023). Choirs ceased face-to-face rehearsals during 2020 and 2021, and many opted for virtual choir sessions as an alternative (Rinn, 2023). Daffern et al. (2021) asked virtual choir

members for their views on online rehearsals. The results showed a shared dislike of the inability to hear the other choir members due to the latency, as only the group facilitator could be unmuted (Daffern et al., 2021). Other frustrations with online rehearsals included needing the personal skill to use the technology, not having the needed equipment or internet connection, finding space at home to take the rehearsal and screen fatigue (Daffern et al., 2021).

However, some members had a positive experience with online choir rehearsals, finding them more accessible and economically feasible due to no travel costs (Daffern et al., 2021). Online rehearsals and performances also allowed the opportunity to be part of large-scale projects with other singers (Daffern et al., 2021). Due to the current nature of this question, more scholarly research needs to be conducted on the pandemic's effect on choral membership. However, research conducted by the Chorus Connection in Feb 2022 discovered that many choir leaders were dealing with a decline in members post-pandemic (Hughes, 2022). Within the study, 622 Choir leaders out of 905 stated their choir had become smaller than pre-pandemic levels (Hughes, 2022). Choir leaders attributed this to health concerns, economic challenges and re-establishment of priorities (Hughes, 2022). It was also stated that fundraising had been difficult to achieve during the pandemic, and audience participation rates had lowered (Hughes, 2022). Willis (2023) explains how the Military WAGS choir is looking for new members after a decline during the pandemic and a lack of new singers. Many choir members felt hesitant to return to choral rehearsals once restrictions were lifted and may have lost the habit of attending rehearsals (Willis, 2023). Draper and Dingle (2021) found in their qualitative questionnaire research that whilst face-to-face rehearsals provided the most psychological benefits, most members were still committed to online rehearsals. Some choirs attracted more members during the pandemic, and others were created to be purely virtual (Daffern et al., 2021). Anna Lapwood, a conductor at Pembroke College, created an NHS virtual choir to help increase morale, with over 300 people signing up (Murray, 2020). Other NHS virtual choirs also successfully helped reduce stress levels and helped create a feeling of togetherness for NHS staff during the pandemic (Murray, 2020). It may be reasonable to consider that some choirs, dependent on members' commitment to online sessions or availability of online rehearsals, will continue to focus on recruiting and motivating current members in this post-pandemic era.

Cost of living crisis

According to the Office of National Statistics (2022), 89% of adults have felt their cost of living increase, saying the increase in food and energy were the main issues. 57% of those affected by the cost of living crisis stated they were cutting back on non-essentials (Office of National Statistics, 2022). 42% of those affected aim to reduce unnecessary trips to save money on fuel (Office of National Statistics, 2022). These statistics indicate that many adults will reassess their priorities and may reconsider choir membership costs. This reassessment of priorities is further illustrated by a report from London Youth Choirs, which showed that 31% of parents

considered extracurricular activities, including choirs, non-essential and an area to cut back on (Zahid, 2023). The report also showed that since 2005, cultural funding has also decreased by 46%, which may have created more difficulties for choral organisations (Zahid, 2023).

Reducing membership costs may help people engage with choral singing. However, a report from Music Mark (2023) states that Music Hubs and Services need to increase the cost of ensembles and lessons to cover the cost of inflation. These increased costs to already stretched families and schools may lead to children and young people being unable to access high-quality musical ensembles and tuition (Music Mark, 2023). For adults, choir membership fees and sacrificing time they could be working may be essential factors when committing to a choir. Choirs often rely upon concerts to attract new members and raise their profiles. As of summer 2023, The Audience Agency (2023) has found that 42% of people feel worse off than before the pandemic. The number of people attending less cultural and art events also increased from 32% in Feb 2023 to 42% in July 2023 (The Audience Agency, 2023). Further research would be beneficial to establish if lower choir membership is a common issue across the UK following the pandemic and cost of living crisis. Action could involve talking to other local choir leaders and asking if they have seen the same issues and what they have done to increase membership.

Benefits of singing in a choir

The physical and mental health benefits

The benefits of singing in a choir have been an exciting area of recent research (Lonsdale & Day, 2020; Davies et al., 2023) and provide a clear rationale for exploring the need to motivate and encourage participation. Throughout history, being part of a group has been needed for survival (Weinstein et al., 2016). However, being part of a group can also bring conflict and challenges (Launey et al., 2015). Groups are usually created to serve a purpose; they may create a product, establish standards, communicate knowledge, perform arts and create institutions (Forsyth, 2023). We may belong to various groups throughout our lifetimes, such as ethnicity, gender, religion, political identity and hobbies (Hogg et al., 2008). Motivation to be part of a group is central to our human experience, and being part of a group can satisfy a need to belong (Hogg et al., 2008), help individuals develop a feeling of self-worth and identify and gain skills and understanding through social comparison (Forsyth, 2023). Physical symmetry, such as marching in time with others or singing, can increase cooperative behaviours within groups where conflict may occur (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016). For example, breathing is synchronised whilst singing, resulting in a lower heart rate and health benefits such as lower blood pressure and stress reduction (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016). This physical symmetry can also lead to a feeling of belonging and shared goals (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016).

Regular rehearsals allow members to form an additional social support group (Dingle et al., 2012). Belonging to various social groups has improved mental health and well-being during

life transitions such as career change (Dingle et al., 2012). Clift et al.'s (2010) qualitative study interviewing 600 choristers found a majority view of choral singing having a beneficial psychological impact and an increase in general well-being. Children's mental health has declined in the last decade (Young Minds, 2023), and singing may provide an opportunity to relieve stress, create stronger relationships and increase self-esteem and confidence (Davies et al., 2023). Davies et al. (2023) found in their mixed method study monitoring primary school-aged students participating in singing sessions an increased feeling of mental well-being and an enhanced feeling of togetherness from working towards a common goal. Choral singers have reported higher well-being than solo singers (Lonsdale & Day, 2020). However, other group activities, such as orchestras and team sports, have also been demonstrated to be as beneficial as choral singing on well-being (Lonsdale & Day, 2020). Potentially indicating that any activity which involves being part of a group which offers the opportunity to improve a particular skill can improve well-being (Lonsdale & Day, 2020)

Both qualitative and quantitative research studies have reported the physical and mental health benefits of choral singing of all ages for both professionals and amateurs (Dingle et al., 2012; Weinstein et al., 2016; Fancourt, 2016). Group singing can increase the pain thresholds and sense of well-being for members due to the release of endorphins (Weinstein et al., 2016). Endorphins are part of a group of chemical compounds found in the brain; they are responsible for pain relief, similar to the effect of morphine and for feelings of pleasure (Law & Martin, 2020). Endorphins are released during activities that initiate social bonding and synchronised muscular activity (Peace et al., 2015). Weinstein et al. (2016) suggest this may be due to music-making, laughter and social interaction within a choral rehearsal. Dunbar et al. (2012) found, through research participants taking pain threshold tests, that the release of endorphins was higher in active music-making than solely listening to the music. Group singing has been found to have a greater impact on reducing stress than solo singing (Schladt et al., 2017). Saliva assessed from solo and choral singers showed that singing in a choir showed lower cortisol and oxytocin levels than solo singers, associated with reduced stress levels (Schladt et al., 2017). Fancourt et al. (2016) study assessing the effect of singing on cancer patients and their carers found that singing can improve immune function and relieve feelings of stress. After a 70-minute choir rehearsal, participant's saliva had a lower stress hormone cortisol level and increased cytokine levels (proteins crucial in immune function) (Fancourt et al., 2016). Kruetz et al. (2003) found an increase in immunoglobulin A (sIgA), a protein considered the first line of defence against respiratory infections, in the saliva of amateur choir singers after a rehearsal. Singing in a group setting has been used to help people with respiratory conditions such as COPD and asthma (Goldenburg, 2018). Deep breathing and increased control of the respiratory system involved in singing have increased pulmonary function in people with lung conditions (Goldenburg, 2018). Group singing is cognitively stimulating, and familiar songs have been demonstrated to unlock memories for people with dementia (Launey & Pearce, 2015; Osman et al., 2016). Singing may also improve speaking abilities for individuals with Parkinson's, Autism, stuttering and aphasia (Wan et al.,

2010). Active music-making places additional demands on the nervous system and can help create stronger and alternative pathways in the brain to connect auditory and motor functions for people suffering from neurological conditions (Wan et al., 2010). From the literature studied, it can be concluded that singing is a beneficial activity for multiple groups and demographics and should be encouraged.

Learning and developmental aims

My primary aim is to understand and critically investigate motivational theories and relate them to joining a choir and membership retention. This understanding will subsequently lead to the following:

- A deeper understanding of why people may join a choir and the barriers they may face.
- An evaluation of how a deeper understanding of motivational theories may affect my strategies as a choir leader.
- Practical steps I can take to improve retention within a choir and improve motivation to join.

Expected learning outcomes

- To gain a detailed understanding of creating a literature review and develop relevant academic study skills.
- Critically reflect upon my learning and gain new perspectives on the broader issues that may have affected my study.
- To identify potential research gaps which may lead to future study.

Gantt Chart



Literature review process

Reviewing literature involves systematically examining relevant research (Efron & Ravid, 2014). To ensure that literature is collected and analysed most efficiently, a clear goal of what the literature review aims to achieve is crucial (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016). Reading peer-reviewed and referenced books such as *The Cambridge Handbook of Motivational Learning* by Renninger and Hidi (2019) and articles from the Open University provided background understanding and a broad understanding of motivational theories. When I began my search, it was necessary to highlight key themes and issues that would be used within the UWTSD library and Google Scholar (Oliver, 2012). The following key themes and words were used in my search for the research question:

- Motivation to join a choir or group
- Barriers to joining a choir or group
- Motivational theories and choral singing
- Developing an interest

Using Boolean operators (and, or and not) helped to narrow or widen the search (Oliver, 2012) (See Fig.1, pp.8).

Fig.1 Boolean operators (Machi & Ecvoy, 2022).

OPERATOR	TOPIC SEARCH	DESCRIPTOR USE
<i>and</i>	Narrows	Links descriptors
<i>not</i>	Excludes	Qualifies descriptors
<i>or</i>	Broadens	Adds descriptors

My original aim was to complete a stand-alone narrative review that provided a broad overview of the current knowledge of linking motivational theories with choir membership and retention (Efron & Ravid, 2014). However, I found only a few articles after a preliminary search of the available literature and research on motivational theories within a choral context. Due to the lack of studies on choral singing, I broadened my search to include motivational theories used in vocal studios and general music education and then related them to the choir-setting (Oliver, 2012). From my study, motivational theories found to be beneficial within music education were Self-Determination theory (Evans & Liu, 2019), Self-Efficacy (Ritchie & Williamon, 2011), Attribution theory (Adams, 2020; Schatt, 2011) and Expectancy-Value theory (Philips & Weiss, 2016). Key articles found researching and discussing motivational theories within a choir included Pendergest (2022) which applies Expectancy-Value theory and Self-Determination theory to a choral context and Peterson (2002), who discusses Attribution theory in detail concerning singers. Sanguinetti's (2023) journal article also provides practical strategies within the general music classroom to increase motivation using SDT, which I then applied to a choral context for this study. Royo's (2014) PhD thesis examines how low self-efficacy can lower the motivation of undergraduate singers. Zelenak (2020) also promotes increasing students' self-efficacy within a musical context to increase motivation and performance.

Given the time frame of this study and the vast amount of literature available, I will be unable to complete an exhaustive search. However, I will aim to read a variety of literature from varied sources which will help decrease bias (Greetham, 2020). The Key to writing my literature review is understanding that it is not an opportunity to prove an argument, provide a mirror to current literature or demonstrate my own beliefs and assumptions (Efron & Ravid, 2014). Instead, I aim to provide contrasting perspectives and identify the practical implications of theories and ideas (Randolph, 2009). Due to the nature of the research question, this project will be multi-disciplinary across motivational psychology, music education, vocal pedagogy and potentially others. Relevant literature has been found in *The Journal of Voice*, *Journal of General Music Education*, *Music Educators Journal* and *The Psychology of Music*. Therefore, a methodological approach that accepts various epistemological and ontological views is necessary to find the most practical solutions to the complex research question (Pabel et al.,

2021). I will apply a pragmatic mixed methods approach of including qualitative and quantitative studies in my literature review. Pragmatism is strongly associated with a mixed methods approach and prioritises finding the most practical solution to answering a research question, regardless of philosophical views and assumptions (Pabel et al., 2021).

Stamers' (2009) large quantitative research on 515 choral students' perspectives on effective motivational practices collected data via a Likert-type scale survey (Stamer, 2009). Wilson's (2011) mixed-method study reveals insight into the motivational factors people feel to join a community choir. Within the study, qualitative data was collected via open-ended questions, and participants were then selected to partake in questionnaires consisting of closed questions to produce quantitative data (Wilson, 2011). Hendry et al.'s (2022) qualitative study highlights the psychological motivations for joining a choir using semi-structured interviews that encourage participants to give unrestricted descriptions of their reasons for joining a choir. A mixed-methods approach to exploring research will help create a complete overview and draw from the strengths of both research techniques (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

A hierarchy of evidence will be needed when selecting literature on the internet (Machi & Ecvo, 2022). Authentic, verified and correctly cited content must form most of my review (Machi & Ecvo, 2022; Aveyard, 2014). The UTWSD online library will be my central search database due to measures in place to ensure high-quality, verified literature is only included (Machi & Ecvo, 2022). Grey literature can be broadly described as material that has not been published; examples used within this study are Ph.D. theses, reports, newsletters, and blogs (Oliver, 2012). When selecting literature, peer-reviewed published literature will hold preference due to findings being checked and verified by impartial academics (Oliver, 2012). However, not all relevant and up-to-date research will be found in published and peer-reviewed journals and therefore grey literature will also be included (Hempel, 2020). Blog websites have been valuable in showing other choir members' experiences; this direct and up-to-date information from choral directors found in grey literature can give ethnographical input. For example, Carrol's (2022) blog, *Chorus Connection*, suggests practical ways to increase membership within a choir and their perspectives on the barriers singers may face to join. Additionally, to increase my basic understanding, I found it beneficial to read medically reviewed articles explaining motivation theories in simple terms, such as the website [verywellmind.com](https://www.verywellmind.com). Bias and an inability to verify the content and author may be important considerations when using grey literature (Oliver, 2012). Another difficulty when searching for grey literature is the inability to recreate a search (Hempel, 2020). Results can change due to location and search history, which may affect subjectivity and bias within the review (Hempel, 2020). The number of times a piece of work has been cited can also indicate the influence of the literature (Oliver, 2012). In addition to online search engines, other search methods may be needed to ensure relevant research is noticed (Aveyard, 2014). Additional searching techniques may include looking in reference lists of critical articles and searching for other works by respected authors in the field (Aveyard, 2014).

Once the literature has been selected, it must be organised, and the research's methodology must be highlighted (Randolph, 2009). Creating a reference list and referencing notes as I work will help keep track of literature and avoid later confusion. Using online software tools such as RefWorks and Mendeley will simplify the process and save time (Machi & McEvoy, 2022). It will be essential to become very familiar with the literature selected for review and re-read it to ensure understanding and to re-establish relevance (Aveyard, 2014). After collecting the research, I will critically evaluate research studies and theories to reveal gaps in the current research (Efron & Ravid, 2014; Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016).

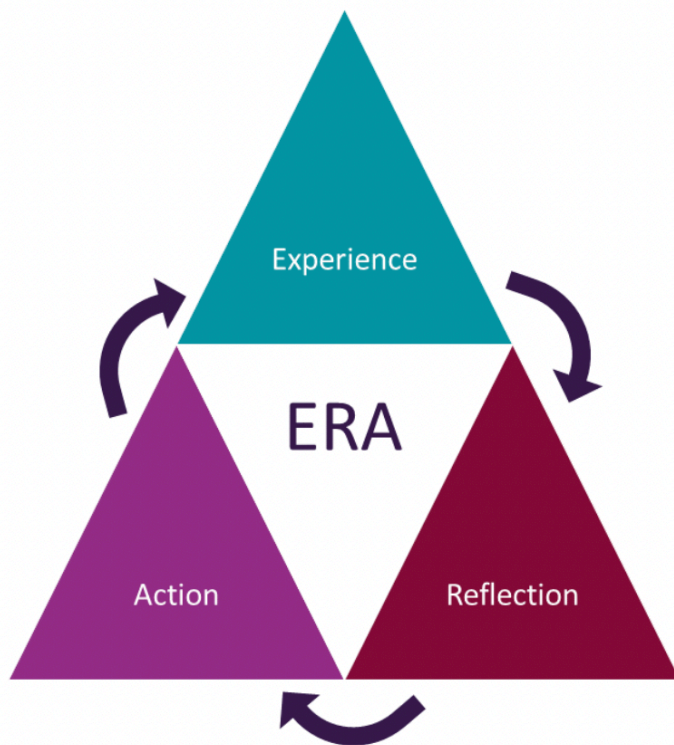
Critical Reflection

Introduction

Critically reflecting upon an experience involves going beyond describing and instead aims to analyse events and their implications (Rolfe et al., 2020). Upon completing this study, critical reflection provided space for deeper thinking and evaluation of how to develop my professional practice (Bassot, 2016). Professionals often reflect in-action adjusting approaches in real-time (Rolfe et al., 2020). However, reflecting after the action has taken place allows deeper analysis and an ability to challenge assumptions and practises, improving professional skills and understanding (Rolfe et al., 2020).

I have chosen to use Jasper's (2013) Experience, Reflection, Action reflection method to critically reflect on my experience completing this assignment (Bassot, 2015). This reflective model is a simple cyclic reflection model comprising three stages (See Fig.2, pp.11) (Bassot, 2015). A disadvantage I will need to be aware of is that the simple nature of the model can lead to a lack of deep reflection (Bassot, 2015). However, this reflective model's simple and open structure will lead to fewer restrictions to the flow of thought and, therefore, an ability to expand deeper in analysis. Throughout the completion of this study, it was helpful to log my reflections to allow reflection in action (Tanguay et al., 2020). To identify common themes within my log I found it beneficial to create a word cloud which displays common repeated word in bold when a document is uploaded (See Appendix 1 p.37).

Fig.2: Jasper's (2013) ERA reflective model (Hull University, 2023).



Experience

Deciding on a research question and subject took time when beginning this assignment due to a number of topics being relevant and beneficial for my workplace. From reflecting and prioritising concerns, I decided my focus would be on improving choir membership and retention. However, only after thought and preliminary research could I assign my main objective as developing an understanding of relevant motivational theories. I initially felt panicked not knowing my focus and commencing my literature search immediately. However, this sharpening of focus and evolution of the research question shows a deepening knowledge of the complexities of the area of study (Efron & Ravid, 2014). After completing this assignment and gaining a new understanding of the barriers people may face in joining a choir, I began to reflect upon why my choir is currently low in numbers. Whilst the pandemic and the cost of living crisis, which I discussed in my rationale, may affect choir membership, there may be other reasons I need to work on as a choir leader to attract and retain members. Acknowledging this led to self-doubt and a desire to improve professionally (Musician's Union, 2021).

Reflection

Developing a research focus can be a complicated process that demands attention and work (Lipowski, 2008). Developing a good research question that will make a difference within my workplace is the most essential part of the process of my independent study and, therefore, is worth focus and time (Lipowski, 2008). Life is often fast-paced, and it is easy to believe there is no time for Reflection (Bassot, 2020). However, allowing prioritising reflection may lead to fewer mistakes and saved time due to increased planning time and less anxiety due to an enhanced feeling of control (Bassot, 2020). Clear objectives and aims will help focus my research and a clear direction (Hargraves & Page, 2013). However, moving away from my view of research as a sequential and rigid process has been important (Oliver, 2012). Reflecting and allowing adaptations to aims and objectives dependent on the literature discovered and professional practice has led to a deeper knowledge and understanding (Hargraves & Page, 2013).

Despite the uncontrollable nature of the pandemic and the ongoing cost of living crisis, certain aspects within my control can contribute to the retention and membership of the choir. One aspect is my professional ability and development, which I have the power to enhance. I can become a more effective choir leader by cultivating confidence in my decision-making and developing my skills. Formal conducting training is a recent phenomenon, and training in the past was often through observation and participation within a choir (Jansson & Balsnes, 2021). I have never been formally trained as a choral director, and when I began singing teaching, I was thrown into choral conducting when I was expected to lead a choir in the school I was working. Although I have acquired much experience and developed as a choir leader, I often feel an imposter in this work area. Having imposter thoughts is common within creative industries and refers to a person's belief that their success is unrelated to their skill or effort (Musician's Union, 2021). It may affect someone's ability to take on new opportunities and limit professional growth and career progression (Cader et al., 2021). People dealing with imposter thoughts can create overreaching tasks to avoid being 'discovered', leading to burnout, negative self-talk and low self-esteem (Cader et al., 2021). Although feeling like an imposter can have adverse effects, it has been shown to improve interpersonal skills and the ability to handle sensitive situations (Wilson, 2021). Tewfik (2022) discovered that individuals with workplace imposter thoughts tend to focus on others because their self-esteem is lowered due to frequent imposter thoughts. This decrease in positive emotions towards themselves leads them to seek validation from others to protect their self-worth (Tewfik, 2022). Self-doubt can also act as a drive to improve skills and allow a more open mindset, leading to better solutions to challenges (Wilson, 2021).

Action

Formulating engaging and meaningful research questions is a skill to be developed through guidance and strategies (Lipowski, 2008). Developing an ability to focus on an area of interest may benefit future projects and assignments. Creating a list of the subtopics after preliminary reading within the area of interest and then narrowing a subtopic or combining subtopics may be a beneficial initial strategy (Efron & Ravid, 2018). Seeking advice and feedback from tutors and colleagues can help ensure the research question is viable (Efron & Ravid, 2018). Being happy with the amount of literature available and considering how the literature review will fit into current research studies is important when assessing whether the topic is viable (Oliver, 2012). Ensuring I assign enough time for reflection on what I would like to focus on is essential for efficient time management (Bassot, 2020). Efron and Ravid (2018) stress the importance of a research topic for a literature review to be an area of intrinsic interest and personal curiosity as the more excitement personally felt for the topic can help avoid procrastination and motivation to overcome obstacles.

Questioning my skills as a choir leader has been present when considering membership in my choirs and led to self-doubt. However, understanding the broader issues people may be facing and researching clear strategies will help me establish confidence in my decisions and lead to improvement. Continued reflection and acknowledgement of imposter thoughts within this area of my work will help lead to personal growth and coping strategies (Cader et al., 2021). Tucker (2021) describes imposter thoughts as an alarm that alerts individuals that they are out of their comfort zone. Therefore, building my skills through continued professional development, such as choral-conducting workshops and deliberately incorporating motivational techniques I have learnt, will help increase my abilities and confidence. Accepting perfection may not be possible, and reframing challenges as opportunities to succeed rather than fail may help improve feelings of inadequacy (Tucker, 2021). Gaining perspective by talking to honest colleagues, viewing failures as opportunities for growth and celebrating success are ways to help increase feelings of competency (Amo, 2023). Reflecting upon completing this study has led me to realise the large number of barriers an individual may face to join a choir. Although these outside issues are beyond my control, I can work on myself as a choir leader and increase my ability to motivate and inspire singers to join or remain committed. Seeing my choir as fluid and constantly changing can help me to reflect and adapt to suit the needs of my members (Bassot, 2016). Being curious and open to change is crucial to allow my development as a professional to continue (Bassot, 2016).

Conclusion

Reflecting on completing this assignment has allowed me to learn from my experience and develop strategies for future studies and professional development (Tanguay et al., 2020). Acknowledge gaps in my understanding and linking learned theories to practice will enhance my skills as a choir leader (Tarrant, 2017). For future reflection, while logging my thoughts, it

would be beneficial to note them down using a reflective framework to help make the writing process less daunting (Tanguay et al., 2020). Prioritising time to reflect upon my study and professional practice using a reflective model focused on action and improvement, such as ERA, will help me control my professional development (Tarrant, 2017).

Part 2: Written assignment

Investigating motivational theories: Can a deeper understanding of motivational theories help a choir leader create strategies retain and recruit new members?

Introduction

Choral singing can bring health, social and psychological benefits (Dingle et al., 2012). Feeling accepted and valued as part of a group can raise self-esteem and help create a sense of identity (Batt-Rawden & Anderson, 2020). This constant identity can provide continuity and support throughout life challenges and changes (Batt-Rawden & Anderson, 2020). Singing can also reduce fatigue and stress and positively affect individuals suffering from health conditions such as dementia and lung conditions (Batt-Rawden & Anderson, 2020).

Motivation, as discussed in Part 1, is a primary concern for choir leaders as it can influence participation and retention within a choir (Redman & Bugos, 2018). *Motivation* is an internal process which stimulates an individual towards a goal, fulfilling a need or upholding a value (Open University, 2023). Motivation is complex and can be driven by reward, internal pressure, punishment, value, interest and enjoyment (University of Rochester Medical Centre, 2023). There are many answers to the question of 'why' someone may choose to engage with a choir and behaviour outcomes may be affected by a student's beliefs, ability, and environment (McClelland, 2014). Encouraging singing participation across demographics and developing strategies to maintain motivation is a crucial consideration for choir leaders. (Stamer, 2009). Implications of low participation rates can also result in a need to justify employment and funding, which can cause stress and anxiety for choir leaders (Pendergast, 2022).

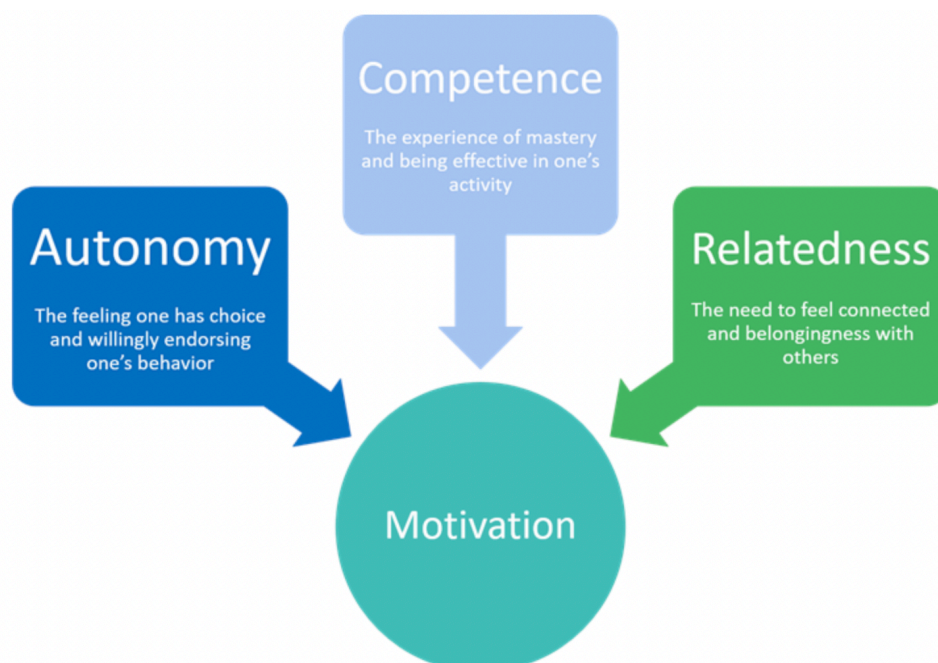
Understanding motivational factors for joining a choir may help increase clarity and an ability to strategise effectively and confidently (Pendergast, 2022). Numerous motivational theories investigate what motivates people into action, and it is only possible to cover

some relevant theories within this study. Therefore, I will focus on and apply a choral context to motivational theories shown to be beneficial within voice studios, choirs and music education: self-determination theory, attribution theory, expectancy-value and self-efficacy (Sanguinetti, 2022; Pendergest, 2022; Zelenak, 2020; Peterson, 2002).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

SDT assumes humans are inherently curious and driven to master their subject of interest (Ryan & Deci, 2017). SDT declares that people need to feel that their basic psychological needs (BPN) of relatedness, autonomy and competence are met to achieve psychological growth, development and motivation to pursue a goal (See Fig 3, pp.15) (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When BPN are met, individuals are more likely to experience intrinsic motivation and develop a deep interest in a subject (Pendergest, 2022). SDT has been well-researched within music education and has been shown to have beneficial results (Evans, 2015). The effect of fulfilling BPN is suggested within Evans and Liu's (2019) research assessing the effects of psychological needs satisfaction on high school orchestral students. The study found that focusing on helping fulfil BPN may lead to more engagement and general psychological well-being (Evans & Liu, 2019). SDT is also an expansive framework that may help understand the various behaviours apparent when studying motivation to join a choir (Evans, 2015). Therefore, ensuring choir members' BPN are met within rehearsals may be necessary to increase participant motivation. I will explore how relatedness, autonomy and competence may be considered in a rehearsal in order to retain singers and encourage new members.

Fig 3: SDT University of Rochester Medical Centre (2023)



Competency

Within SDT, competency refers to an individual's feeling of mastery of a subject (Ryan & Deci, 2017). A feeling of competency can be affected by social comparison, negative feedback and perceived failure (Ryan & Deci, 2017). If a person repeatedly fails, they may feel frustrated, and their feelings of competence may be lowered (Pendergest, 2022). Giving singers specific goals that are not overreaching and carefully selecting repertoire will ensure choir members do not feel overwhelmed but are sufficiently challenged (University of Rochester Medical Centre, 2023). Learning by ear for part of a rehearsal may help accessibility and give singers who do not read music a feeling of competence and self-esteem (Hendry et al., 2022). Within Fried and Konza's (2013) study assessing SDT in the classes of 25 teachers within whole class lessons, peer and individual feedback increased students' perceived competency. Feedback given throughout rehearsals must be clear and task-specific to lead to improvement (Pendergest, 2022). Interviews conducted on choral members showed the importance they placed on a musical director having an enthusiastic personality, which installs confidence within the choir (Wilson, 1998). Special learning activities such as masterclasses, guest conductors or performances may deepen an interest in choral singing and support learning and development leading to mastery (Pendergest, 2022). Another vital consideration is promoting vocal skills as being developed over time rather than being fixed (Sanguinetti, 2022). A growth mindset can be encouraged by celebrating effort and process over an end outcome (Sanguinetti, 2022). This encouragement may help drive singers to increase their skills and, therefore, feel more competent (Evans, 2015).

Autonomy

Autonomy is an individual's actions being self-endorsed and agreeing with their authentic values and interests (Ryan & Deci, 2017). When acting autonomously, actions are engaged and sincere (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Hendry et al. (2022) discovered that one of the main motivations for participants joining a choir was to gain control over how they spent their time. Members of the community choir interviewed stated they had limited time to themselves, and being part of a choir allowed them to do something for themselves (Hendry et al., 2022). Creating opportunities for choir members to discuss which repertoire may be used in concert performances may help create a sense of ownership and encourage reflection and evaluation (Sanguinetti, 2022). Repertoire which reflects the cultural background and interests of singers may also help a feeling of autonomy

(Pendergest, 2022). Providing background and rationale when asking singers to do something in rehearsal, acknowledging feelings and frustrations, and using non-controlling and informative language will support autonomy within a rehearsal (Evans, 2015). Hendry et al. (2022) suggest a pay-per-session approach to give members control, resulting in autonomy and creating intrinsic motivation to attend. However, this may be unrealistic due to funding issues and the financial security of choir leaders.

Relatedness

Relatedness refers to a person's feeling of being socially connected (Ryan & Deci, 2017). It is vital for an individual's psychological health to feel valued and accepted as part of a group (Rinn, 2022). A person may feel more of a sense of connection when they feel cared for, are an integral part of a group and can contribute positively within a group (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Changes within an individual's personal life can motivate them to seek belonging and identity within a group such as a choir (Hendry et al., 2022). Learning with others may not necessarily lead to a feeling of connection, and within a rehearsal, singers will need to feel a sense of belonging and connection to each other (Sanguinetti, 2022). Creating meaningful relationships with each other will help members gain self-esteem and be more likely to remain engaged and committed to a group (Hogg et al., 2008). Pairing less experienced singers with more experienced choir members to support and coach will encourage a feeling of belonging and increase competence (Pendergest, 2022). Investing in social outings and events will also help connect choir members (Pendergest, 2022). Connections with the broader community and members, friends and family are also important considerations. (Sanguinetti, 2023). Emails/newsletters/Social media posts help inform the wider community and create a sense of community (Sanguinetti, 2023). Choir leaders must be inclusive and approachable to create a feeling of belonging and competence (Hendry et al., 2022). To create meaningful connections with choir members, a choir leader should try to develop supportive relationships with them (Sanguinetti, 2023). In the early stages of musical learning, a nurturing, fun relationship is vital to ensure connection (Evans, 2015). This foundation will then allow a subsequent focus on technical skills (Evans, 2015). Encouraging choir members to seek other opportunities, such as masterclasses and auditions, demonstrates belief in students and an investment in their development (Pendergest, 2022).

Autonomy, relatedness and competency are all crucial for psychological growth and development (Ryan, 2019). A higher level of psychological wellness and motivation has

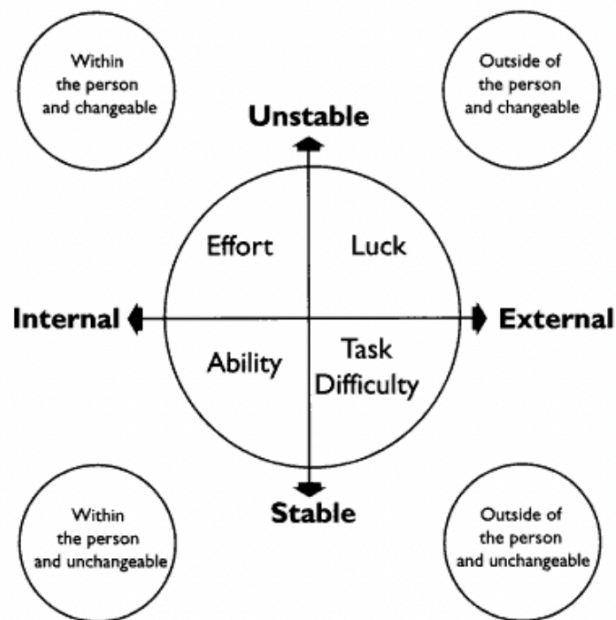
been discovered when all three needs are met (Ryan, 2019). If one of these needs is not met, it can lead to a decrease in psychological wellness and motivation (Towler, 2019). However, the three needs can interlink and boost each other (Towler, 2019). For example, a feeling of autonomy flourishes within a social circumstance where an individual can relate and act authentically, and competence can be increased by feeling accepted and encouraged by others (Ryan, 2019).

Attribution Theory (AT)

AT studies how behaviour is influenced by what a person believes causes an outcome (Towndrow et al., 2008). AT has been studied within a music education context, and research has found that most individuals perceive their musical success to be more dependent on ability rather than effort (Adams, 2020; Schatt, 2011). AT may help choir leaders understand why some people are keen to sing and join choirs whilst others are reluctant (Peterson, 2002). Achievement-oriented endeavours, such as performance, often entail a fear of failure, which may cause avoidance (Towndrow et al., 2008). The avoidance of a task can depend on their view of whether they can successfully complete it (Towndrow et al., 2008). An all-or-nothing approach to singing ability rather than a view of a spectrum of skill development is common in Western cultures and creates elitism (Bonshor, 2014). If individuals believe they are not naturally able to sing or are musically talented, they may feel unmotivated to join a choir.

AT contains four categories for the attribution of success or failure in an achievement focussed task: ability, effort, luck and task difficulty (FitsStephens, 2022) (See Fig.4, pp.19). Within AT, effort and ability are viewed as internal and within a person's control (Peterson, 2002). Luck and task difficulty are considered external and beyond a person's control (FitsStephens, 2022). External and internal categories can be considered unstable and subject to change or stable and unchangeable. (FitsStephens, 2022). Effort and luck are viewed as unstable, as if a task is repeated they can change at any time (Henry, 2011). Ability and task difficulty are seen as stable in the short term, as if the same task is repeated several times, they are unlikely to change (Henry, 2011).

Fig 4: AT (Peterson,2002)



Individuals completing a task can often view an activity that requires low effort but demonstrates a high ability as more successful and valuable than a task that requires high effort and demonstrates low ability (Towndrow et al., 2008). A task which results in low ability despite effort may negatively affect an individual's ego due to confirmation of having a low ability in a subject (Towndrow et al., 2008). If an individual believes their failure is due to their ability and believes they cannot improve, they are less likely to try again (FitsStephens, 2022). However, although some people will give up after a perceived failure, others will work harder (Towndrow et al., 2008). These responses differ in whether the individual recognises the causes as internal or external (Towndrow et al., 2008). If the cause is considered external and not within a person's control, an individual is more likely to work through failures (Towndrow et al., 2008). If individuals consider the cause internal and unchangeable, they will likely blame themselves and give up (Towndrow et al., 2008). However, when individuals view success as being internal and to do with ability and effort, they are likely to feel ownership over their success and be more inclined to expect future success in similar tasks (Henry, 2011).

Key to recruiting for a choir is understanding why potential members may avoid or participate in singing experiences (Peterson,2002). A large-scale research study on 20,000

participants found that only 1.5% of people could not match pitch (Peretz & Vuvan, 2017). However, many believe talent and musicality are innate and not a skill to be learned and nurtured (Garnett, 2017). A person who identifies as unable to sing can usually remember an event where they were told they were not musically talented (Garnett, 2017). Therefore, the belief of talent being innate needs to be challenged to prevent damaging criticism from discouraging people from enjoying the benefits of singing (Garnett, 2017). Future study into the origins of the belief that singing talent is innate will help challenge views and promote change. Ensuring positive and inclusive language focussing on effort rather than natural ability is vital for creating a growth mindset (Frey-Monnell, 2012). However, the emphasis on effort may affect students who attach achievement to self-worth, as a failure despite effort will confirm their view of being low ability and affect their self-esteem (Koh, 2008). If singing is used throughout the school system and not as a separate activity run by specialists, it will challenge the notion of singing being an innate gift and allow it to be accessible to all (Garnett, 2017). Therefore, singing will need to be viewed as essential and beneficial in the senior management of a school or establishment for a real difference and a higher level of engagement to be felt (Garnett, 2017).

Expectancy-Value theory (EVT)

EVT explores how motivation to complete a task is impacted by an individual's expectation of success and their perspective of the task value (Pendergest, 2023). Researchers within music education have found EVT to provide insights and practical applications to increase motivation within an educational setting (Philips & Weiss, 2016). A simple formula for the theory is: $\text{Motivation} = \text{expectancy} * \text{value}$; if both value and expectancy are high, motivation is also high, but if expectancy or value lowers, so will motivation (Studer & Knecht, 2016). In summary, people are more likely to be motivated to engage in activities they value and expect they can succeed at (Pendargest, 2023). Therefore, people are more likely to join a choir if they feel they can sing competently and see the value and benefits of being part of a choral ensemble. Within EVT, a task's value is broken down into four components, which I will now explore and relate to choral singing using the following headings: attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value and cost (Leaper, 2011).

Attainment Value

Attainment Value is the personal importance of doing well in a task and how it forms part of their identity (Studer & Knecht, 2016). Potential choir members may feel that being part of a choir does not fit into the social norms within their shared social identity, such as gender

identity, ethnicity, religion or friendship group (Pendargest, 2023). A welcoming environment for students from all backgrounds will help encourage participation (Pendargest, 2022). Tailoring performances and repertoire to the people's cultural values within the school or community may help engage additional members from other demographics (Pendargest, 2023). Recruiting male singers is often a difficult task for choir leaders. A common reason for this is that they consider it a feminine activity, and being part of the choir will impact their masculine identity (Henwood, 2023). Choir leaders must acknowledge and challenge this perception to allow boys to feel more comfortable attending a choir (Henwood, 2023). One way to achieve this is to expose boys at a young age to male singing role models to allow them to view this identity as possible for themselves (Henwood, 2023). McBride (2016) warns choir directors to avoid promoting a restricted view of masculinity, such as sports references, to recruit singers. He suggests instead focusing on providing a welcoming environment to all, engaging repertoire and techniques to help boys through adolescent voice change (McBride, 2016).

Intrinsic value

Intrinsic motivation comes from an individual's satisfaction with engaging in a task (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016). Motivation to join a task for intrinsic reasons is likely to produce positive psychological effects and cause additional motivation (Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016). Including activities singers enjoy during rehearsals will help increase intrinsic value (Matthew et al., 2022). Common intrinsic motivations for adults joining music ensembles include personal development of a skill, enjoyment of singing or playing an instrument, being part of a group and social experiences (FitzStephens, 2022). Within Wilson's (1998) research, participants in an adult community choir explained that meeting with and gaining friends, increasing skills, and enjoying performing were the primary motivators for joining a choir. Selph and Bugos (2014) found that members' love of music was the most significant motivating factor, followed by a desire to improve. Other motivations include health benefits, challenges, a sense of purpose, spirituality and an appreciation of a musical director (FitzStephens, 2022). Working adults are more likely to join a choir to improve their vocal and musical skills, and non-working adults are more likely to be motivated by an appreciation of music (Selph & Bugos, 2014). When high school students were asked why they joined a musical ensemble, the areas of motivation included a love for music, family encouragement, to add variety to the school day and social benefits (Adderley et al., 2003). Within Koehler et al. (2021) investigation on motivation for hobby musicians, it was discovered that autonomous intrinsic motivation provided more positive results for well-

being than extrinsic motivations. These findings within research on expectancy-value theory overlap with concepts within SDT and the BPN of relatedness and competence, highlighting their importance of increasing intrinsic motivation.

The process of seeking a deeper understanding of an interest is intrinsically rewarding (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). An individual will gain positive feelings from gaining knowledge and will likely persevere with their chosen subject despite encountering difficulties (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). Hidi and Renninger (2019) developed an influential 4-phase model of interest development that may be incorporated within choral rehearsal to encourage persistence (See Fig. 5, pp.22). Triggering an interest through an inspirational performance which holds relevance to the targeted demographic followed by maintaining interest through varied approaches are key to initiating motivation (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). The following two phrases focus on connecting with others with the same interest and encouraging independence of learning and development (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). This four-phase model may be a valuable tool for strategically planning how to increase motivation and deepen interest for choir members over a period of time. However, due to the varied experiences of choir members, they will be at different phases within the model, and it may be necessary to incorporate aspects from all 4 phases within rehearsals.

Fig 5 : How Is an interest developed? (Hidi and Renninger, 2019)

Phase	How to support a development of an interest	Results
Phase 1: Triggered situational interest	An experience which triggers an interest may have personal relevance, surprise, or capture the imagination.	This may result in short-term information searching
Phase 2: Maintained situational interest	Encouragement and different approaches to learning, such as games and group activities, can create re-engagement with the activity.	Within this phase, content knowledge and the ability to work independently may develop.
Phase 3: Emerging individual interest	Working with others with the same interest and having the time and space to research content will help an interest emerge.	Encouragement may be needed to persevere when facing difficulties, resulting in seeing the value in the subject and a deepening of content-related knowledge.

Phase 4: Developed individual interest	Individuals will be committed to their own development and deepening understanding when an interest is developed. Conditions which challenge and encourage individuals to develop and seek more knowledge and skills will help development.	A developed interest will be likely to continue despite frustrations and difficulties. Other people may also be likely to note the quality of their skill and research.
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Utility value is the perceived usefulness for future goals or alignment with other current goals (Studer & Knecht, 2016). Expectations for success and what value is placed on a task can be largely determined by the value an individual's parents place or placed on specific subjects (Leaper, 2011). As children age, less value is placed on learning music, which may also apply to singing in a choir (Ghazali & McPherson, 2009). Children before the age of 8 are more likely to engage and explore different subjects as they are less likely to compare themselves to others (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). Children between the ages of 8 and 10 may compare their ability to others and re-direct their energies from engaging in the subject (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). At an older age, it may be needed for interests to be triggered and sustained (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). Within McPheason and O'Neil's (2010) study comparing music to 5 other subjects within eight countries, music was considered to have the least utility and value after art, which may extend to extracurricular musical activities and future music participation. Parents, peers and competency are influential factors when students assess the value of subjects (Rinn, 2022). Highlighting the relevance and usefulness of singing within a choir and working alongside peers may encourage the development of an interest (Hidi & Renninger, 2019). Creating choral experiences where school staff and parents can be involved in rehearsals and performances may increase the adults' positive perception of choral singing and lead to more encouragement and participation (Rinn, 2022).

Cost

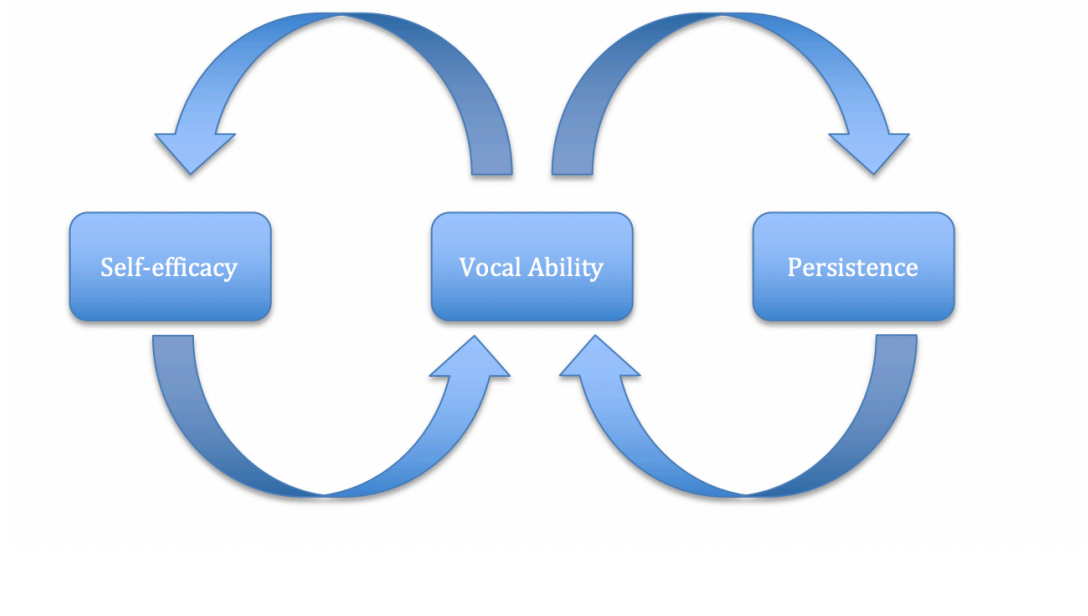
Cost is the competition the task may be in with other goals, the effort it takes, and the negative effect on other areas of life (Studer & Knecht, 2016). Factors that have been shown to affect participation in music ensembles include forfeiting another activity, social implications, financial burdens, and the effort and time it takes to be involved (Rinn, 2023). Within Freer's (2015) interviews with adolescent choristers, choir clashing with sport was considered a significant issue for some singers. Working with school administration teams to ensure a choir does not clash with other popular extracurricular activities may be essential to lower the cost of participating in the choir (Rinn, 2023). Younger working

adults often experience time limitations; flexible rehearsal schedules with varying locations may allow busy working people to attend rehearsals (Selph & Bugos, 2014). Within Selph and Bugos's (2014) study, they found that engaging children at the same time as an adult choir encouraged attendance amongst the 30s-40s demographic (Selph & Bugos, 2014). Bolden, 2014 analyses the Toronto vocal group Choir!Choir!Choir! and the group's success in engaging the people with the benefits of singing and music. The choir offers no commitment, open opportunities, accessible repertoire, clear and achievable goals, relaxed venue, atmosphere, and community (Boldon, 2014). Boldon (2014) recognises that this engagement does not provide the depth of musical knowledge regular rehearsals over a more extended period will do but may help the community discover or rediscover the benefits of choral singing. A small group of committed, focused and experienced singers which retains numbers will produce more beneficial results and a stronger sense of community than larger groups of transient members (Paltrowitz, 2018).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy was first proposed as a motivational concept by Albert Bandura (1977) and can directly influence a person's motivation to pursue interests (Royo, 2014). Individuals with high self-efficacy are motivated to pursue goals throughout difficulties and can develop deep interests and commit to them (Cherry, 2023). Self-belief in ability directly impacts motivation and learning strategies (Ritchie & Williamon, 2011). Self-efficacy is an individual's confidence that their abilities can influence events and their environment (Lopez-Garrido, 2023). Self-efficacy begins in childhood but can change and develop over a person's lifetime as they develop skills and have different experiences (Cherry, 2023). Fryling (2015) investigated why some individuals continue to sing chorally from secondary to post-secondary schooling through questionnaires and singing samples. This study found that the strongest predictor of persistence was vocal ability, followed by vocal efficacy (Fryling, 2015) (see Fig. 6, pp.25).

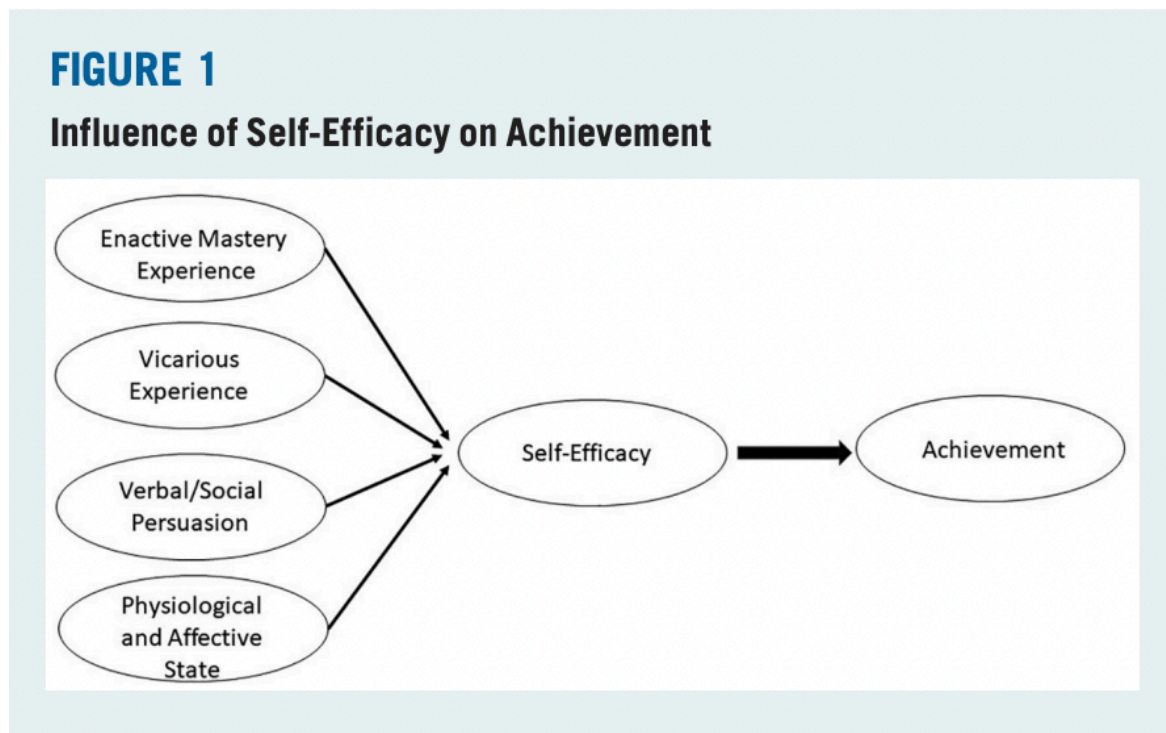
Fig 6 : Self Efficacy and persistence



Ritchie and Williamon (2011) found a link between high self-efficacy in primary school children and their likelihood to pursue extracurricular musical activities. Through interviews with boy choristers, Freer (2015) found low self-efficacy during the voice change due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of what was happening to their voices. Within the interviews, the choristers suggested time for teaching vocal technique during a choir rehearsal to allow them to work on their changing voices and a continued challenge to sustain learning momentum. Within Hendry et al.'s (2022) research, interviews of community choir members showed a higher feeling of self-efficacy and self-esteem was a positive benefit of singing within a choir. Participants revealed they felt more confident when singing and within other areas of their lives and capable of taking on new challenges (Hendry et al.,2022). However, some choir members noted that their self-efficacy had been affected negatively due to difficult social interactions (Hendry et al.,2022). Managing social dynamics within a choir may help to encourage positive psychological results (Hendry et al.,2022).

Self-efficacy can be influenced by accomplishing a task, seeing a task completed, and verbal encouragement (Ritchie & Williamon, 2011) (See Fig.7, pp.26). To increase self-efficacy, I will explore how these aspects may be addressed in a choir rehearsal.

Fig 7: Zelenak(2020)



1. Mastery experiences

Mastering a challenge is essential in increasing self-efficacy (Ritchie & Williamon, 2011). During a rehearsal, emphasis needs to be put on strengthening the technique of all members within a choir and helping choir members accurately assess the areas in their vocal technique which need development (Fryling, 2015). Matching ability level to repertoire is essential, especially during adolescent voice change, which can affect vocal range, agility and timbre (Henwood, 2023). Henwood (2023) suggests improvisation as a way for adolescent boys to explore their voices while participating in a musical experience and experiencing success. Improvisation may also be a beneficial and accessible warm-up activity for other voice types to increase self-efficacy. When success can be attributed to a particular strategy, this can lead to a greater feeling of self-efficacy and a belief that success is down to skill rather than luck (Zelenak, 2020).

2. Vicarious experiences

Vicarious experiences have been shown to impact individuals with low self-efficacy substantially and can be used to motivate people who have experienced repeated failure (Zelenack, 2020). Watching others like themselves take on a challenge successfully

inspires and motivates, and provides a reference for their abilities (Zelenack, 2020).

Vicarious experiences can be more effective when choir members watch individuals of a similar age, ability and culture (Zelenack, 2020). These experiences include watching live or recorded choirs, encouraging peer performances, masterclasses and working in small groups. These experiences will allow choir members to view people's strengths as inspiration to increase self-efficacy (Royo, 2015; Zelenack, 2020).

3. Verbal/Social Persuasion

True self-esteem is where self-worth is not based upon external factors, rather than contingent self-esteem, which depends on external validation or achievements (Ryan & Deci, 2017). True self-esteem commonly accompanies a higher level of basic psychological need satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Motivation has been shown to improve in a classroom setting when a teacher is nurturing, interested in the progress of students and enthusiastic (Stamer, 2009). The most effective feedback is specific and positive personal feedback, which is more effective in motivating a vocal ensemble (Stamer, 2009). Awards and certificates formally recognise achievement and can be kept by members to remember past accomplishments in times of low self-efficacy (Zelenack, 2020).

4. Physiological and affective states

The body's response to specific environments and stresses can impact self-efficacy, as negative experiences will lead people to avoid them in the future (Zelenack, 2020).

Rehearsals which focus on expression rather than perfection and where choir members work towards common goals can help reduce performance anxiety and self-criticism (Zelenack, 2020). Visualising success, encouraging positive self-talk and ensuring singers are adequately prepared may help choir members have positive experiences performing and increase motivation to continue (Music Pandit, 2023).

Conclusion

Understanding motivational theories can bring clarity and confidence when making strategic decisions as a choir leader. However, due to the complex issues surrounding motivation, they can also bring confusion due to overlapping factors and terms (Henry, 2011). Understanding the barriers singers face to join a choir and adapting rehearsal schedules, venues and repertoire to suit members may help motivation to attend (Studer & Knecht, 2016). Adapting to members' interests and cultural backgrounds may help

increase intrinsic motivation (Stamer, 2009). Therefore, successfully retaining and recruiting singers depends on the demographic chosen to engage (Pendergest, 2022). Subsequently, knowing and understanding the demographic the choir is aiming at and establishing how best to establish an effective learning environment is crucial (Selph & Bugos, 2014). Asking my students to complete a questionnaire about their musical interests and experience may be a way to put this into practice within my workplace. Self-perception of ability is a common theme within Attribution theory, Expectancy- Value, Self-Efficacy and Self-determination Theory and may be a crucial element to consider when aiming to increase motivation (Henry, 2011). Therefore, promoting a growth mindset is essential to help singers persist through obstacles and develop feelings of competency (Zelenak, 2020). Core strategies I will aim to implement within my choir rehearsals will be to ensure my feedback is constructive and specific, track students' progress to demonstrate their growth, celebrate mistakes as opportunities for growth and encourage students to problem solve (Adams, 2019). Future research may include applying highlighted motivational theories in this study to specific demographics. This understanding may result in an occurrence of common themes and the development of demographic-specific strategic methods to increase motivation (Evans, 2015).

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