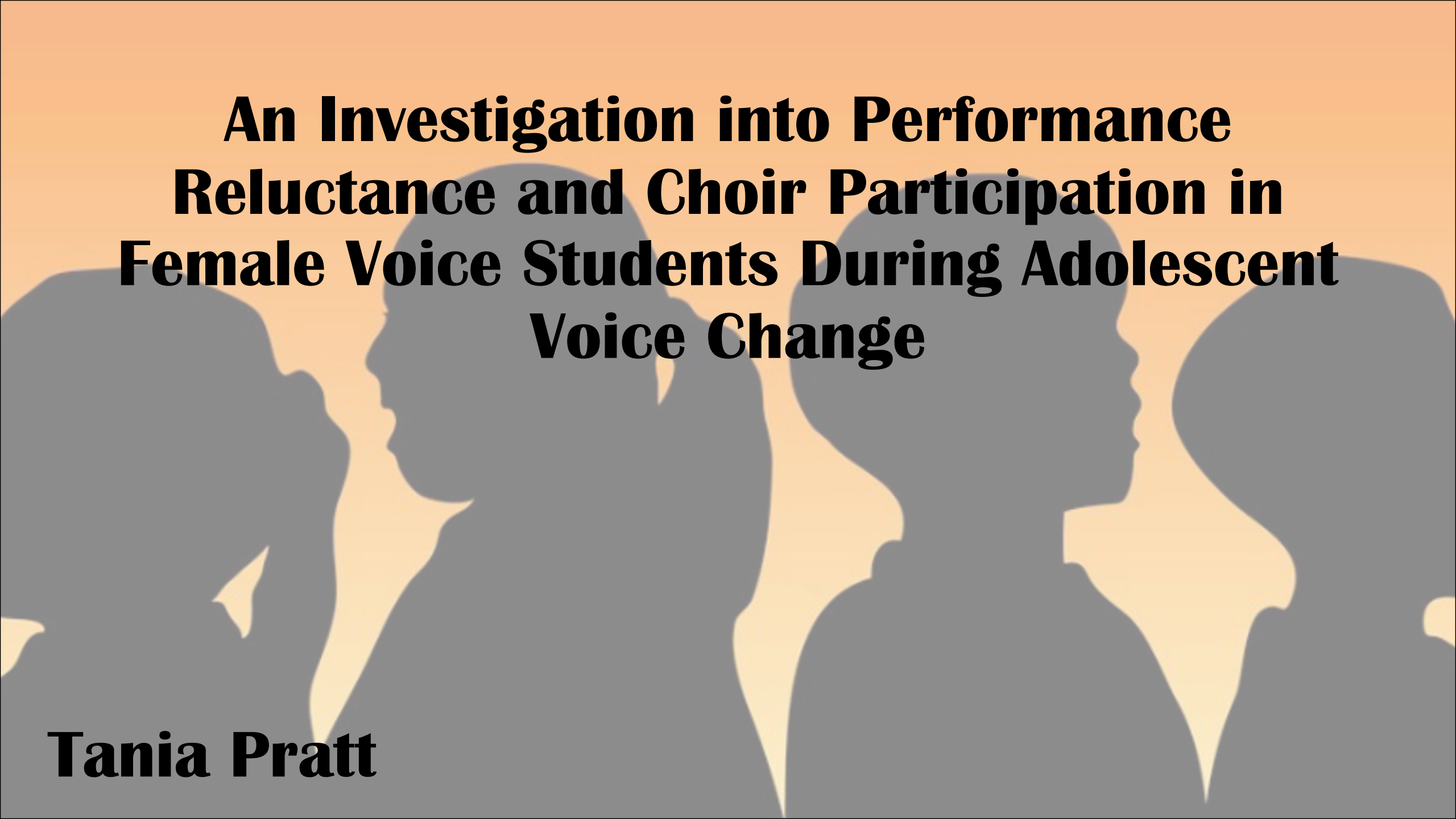


The background of the slide features a light orange color. Overlaid on this are the dark grey silhouettes of four female students. They are positioned as if they are singing into microphones, with their heads tilted back and mouths open. The silhouettes are arranged in a row, with the student on the far left being slightly more prominent than the others.

An Investigation into Performance Reluctance and Choir Participation in Female Voice Students During Adolescent Voice Change

Tania Pratt

Context

- Girls age 12-15 reluctant to perform in concerts or join choir.
- Adolescent voice research – weighted towards male voice change.
- Peak of female voice mutation, age 13-14; “critical time” (Gackle, 1991, p. 22).
- No significant research simultaneously investigating performance willingness and voice change.

Aims and Learning Objectives

- Does willingness to participate in performance change between ages 12 to 16?
 - What are the perceived obstacles to participation?
 - What can we, as teachers, do to better support singers in this period to encourage increased participation?
- An understanding of the perspectives and problems faced by the female adolescent voice student.
 - The themes identified will shape future areas of research.
 - Use the knowledge gained to create better teaching strategies to encourage performance and inform choir recruitment policies.

Methodology

- Phenomenology
- Seeks to describe an event by uncovering the subjective experiences of the participants (Mertens, 2010).
- “Essence to an experience that is shared with others” (Marshall and Rossman, 2016, p. 66),

Data Collection and Analysis

- Focus Groups
- Data Sources – Singing Students aged 16-18, and Teachers / Choir leaders
- Literature Review
- Horizontalization and Imaginative Variation (Moustakas, 1994)

Ethics

- Ethical approval
- Institutional approval
- Active informed consent
- Insider Research
- Bracketing / Epoche
- Data triangulation

Findings

Textual Descriptions

Experiences of Change

The Importance of Others

Structural Descriptions

Performing in a Safe,
Comfortable and
Supportive Environment

The Importance of Style

Experiences of Change





Performing in a Safe, Comfortable and Supportive Environment





Literature Review

- Puberty coincides with a lack of voice confidence (DeAmbrose, 2019)
- Symptoms of voice change (Gackle, 1991; Sweet, 2015)
- Self perception during adolescence (Sweet', 2015, 2018, 2020; Monks, 2003)

- Peer influence a significant factor in participation of singing activities (Cooksey and Welch, 1998)
- Fear of being judged by “The Invisible Audience” (Sweet, 2020, p. 126).
- Influential others can motivate participation (Sweet and Cassidy Parker, 2019).

Literature Review

- Presence of co-performers exerting a supportive influence (Welch, et al., 2008).
- Singers become insecure when singing amongst more mature voices (Barefield, 2012).

- Girls especially concerned with style of music (Turton and Durrant, 2002)
- Range and difficulty can lead to negative experiences (Sweet and Cassidy Parker, 2019).

Experiences of Change

The Importance of
Others

Performing in a Safe,
Comfortable and
Supportive Environment

The Importance of Style

Essence

Girls find enjoyment in singing but during adolescence experience changes in their voices, their range, and how they view the importance of others, which leads to a lack of confidence and willingness to participate in choirs and concerts. Given opportunity to sing in a safe environment, with accessible repertoire and the support of their peer group, girls will have more confidence to participate in choirs and performance settings.

Implications for Teaching

- Educate young female singers about voice change.
- Create choir environments where girls can be with their peers.
- Changes of range and voice symptoms to be at forefront when choosing repertoire.
- Keep up to date with ever changing music trends.
- Create accessible performing platforms.

- A similar study using a wider demographic.
- A longitudinal study investigating a single case of performance willingness through secondary years.
- Research of available repertoire for religious services and its relevance to adolescents.
- A review of teaching and choir practices in relation to voice mutation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

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