

RELATIONSHIPS OF DIMENSIONS OF THE MEANING OF THE CHORAL  
EXPERIENCE TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PREFERENCES FOR  
CONCERT VS SHOW CHOIR

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RELATIONSHIPS OF DIMENSIONS OF THE MEANING OF THE CHORAL  
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## VITA

William Dale Farmer was born in Birmingham, Alabama on July 19, 1954. He is the son of Gene and Florence Farmer. He has one sister, Carla Ingram, married to Ray Ingram and has two nieces and a nephew, Lacie, Kaylee, and Rob. Dale graduated from Huffman High School in Birmingham in 1972 and attended Auburn University where he received the Bachelor of Science in Music Education in 1976 and the Master of Education in 1977. He taught choral music and other related music and drama courses for nine years, five in Americus, Georgia, and four in Tifton, Georgia. In 1986, Dale left teaching and became employed by Delta Airlines where he worked in Inflight Service as a flight attendant, supervisor, and training instructor. In 2003 he returned to Auburn University and entered the Ph.D. Program in Music Education. He also served for three years as an administrative assistant to the Chair of the Music Department and taught in various capacities in both the Music Department and the Department of Curriculum and Teaching in Music Education. Dale remains employed by Delta Airlines and is currently conductor of the Auburn University Singers.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

RELATIONSHIPS OF DIMENSIONS OF THE MEANING OF THE CHORAL  
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CONCERT VS SHOW CHOIR

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The growth of the show choir since the 1970's has caused controversy among choral music educators. In spite of the traditional paradigm which questions the value and validity of show choirs, their presence and significance continue to increase in music education. The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs. Also examined was the perceived meaning of the choral singing experience and how dimensions of meaning might predict students' preferences for participation in each type of choir. To address the research questions, an adaptation of the *Choral Meaning Survey* (Hylton, 1980) was administered. Students ( $N = 307$ ) from 7 high schools in Alabama and Georgia participated in the study. Results indicated a very strong overall preference

for show choir participation with 239 respondents (77.9%) selecting “strongly agree” and only 4 respondents (1.3%) selecting “strongly disagree.” Conversely, for concert-type choir, only 65 (21.2%) selected “strongly agree” and 32 (10.8%) “strongly disagree.”

Principal components analyses were performed to examine the perceived meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show-choir music. While there was consistency with items related to two of Hylton’s factors, Spiritualistic and Musical/Artistic, items from the remaining four, Achievement, Communication, Integrative, and Psychological, appeared to converge on the first resulting factor. Given the interrelationships presented by many of these items, the investigator created a fourth variable, Social Interactivity. The six identified dimensions, Social Interactivity, Spiritualistic, Physical Activity, Musical-Artistic, Dance, and Travel were used to conduct a discriminant function analysis to determine which dimensions of choral meaning predict student preference for participation in concert-type choirs or show choirs. DFA results indicated that 59.6% of the originally grouped cases were correctly classified. Of those preferring show choir 64.2% were correctly classified, 50% preferring concert choir were correctly identified, and 48.1% preferring both equally were correctly identified. Of the six identified factors, dance was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ), indicating that it predicts preference for show choir but not concert choir or preferring both equally. Results of this study show that high school choral musicians have a strong regard for participating in show choirs. While they do not reject the performance of concert music, it is not at the forefront of their preference. Choral directors who can balance their curricula to be as diverse as possible will conceivably be able to involve more high school choral musicians.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Music education has seen tremendous growth during the twentieth century and has become an important part of the curriculum (Hylton, 1995, p. 1). Indeed, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 includes the arts in its core academic subjects (Ed.gov, 2004). In the United States, there are at least 38,000 school choral ensembles in schools (Chorus America, 2003) from the primary grades through college. These choirs vary in size scope, and gender, and, the repertoire performed can be quite diverse. Music from traditional Western music history may serve as the cornerstone for choral ensembles, but other types and styles of music are also performed. In the past few decades, many schools have included popular and show music, often with movement, as part of their repertoire. Reasons for including popular music may vary, as may students' preferences for performing in certain ensembles. Students' preferences for various types of choral ensembles and the reasons they prefer one over another are worthy of research.

The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) has served to ensure that students receive a music education that is comprehensive and of the highest quality. To that end, it sponsored the Tanglewood Symposium in 1967. The symposium was a gathering of music educators, musicians, and scholars from diverse disciplines. The purpose of the meeting was to closely examine the state of American music education

and make suggestions for its improvement. Among the recommendations was to teach music of all periods, forms, cultures, and styles including popular music (McAllester, 1968). As an affirmation of this recommendation, ethnomusicologist David McAllester, a moderator at the symposium, said:

We affirm that it is our duty to seek true musical communication with the great masses of our population. While we continue to develop and make available, to all who are interested, the great musics of the middle class and aristocracy, we must also learn the language of the great musical arts which we have labeled 'base' because they are popular... When we have learned that any musical expression is 'music,' we hope to be able to reduce the class barriers in our schools and our concert halls. The resulting enrichment of our music will, we hope, give it a new vitality at all levels, and provide a united voice that can speak, without shame, of our democratic ideals.

Suggestions from the Tanglewood Symposium clearly indicated that the study of music should be highly diversified. In the study of popular music, the show choir genre can serve as a vehicle through which this can be accomplished.

Perhaps the most significant advancement in choral music and indeed all of music education in recent times is the advent of Comprehensive Musicianship, an approach to curriculum that resulted from the Comprehensive Music Project begun in 1963 (MENC, 1968). Comprehensive Musicianship implies that music is not learned in fragments nor in a vacuum, but in a broader, more integrated framework as it relates to other ideas in a more global fashion. Students are given a variety of musical experiences through diverse repertoire and many musical contexts (MENC, 1968). Current technology presents more

opportunities to enhance Comprehensive Musicianship. Since a purpose of Comprehensive Musicianship is to appreciate all types of music in all types of genres, it only follows that the show choir would be a natural component of a well-rounded choral program.

In the late 1960's, ensembles called swing choirs or pop ensembles began to emerge in schools (Grier, 1991). Now known as show choirs, they focus on performing popular and show music, usually with choreography. These choirs can be an addition, subgroup, or replacement for classical-style choral ensembles. While the musically elite may reject this choral genre, it continues to grow and emerge in American choral music education (Hylton, 1995, p. 244). Amid a great deal of controversy among choral musicians, the show choir concept has seen tremendous growth in the past twenty years. The ensembles exist not only on the college and high school levels, but in elementary, middle, and junior high schools. Recently the American Choral Directors Association recognized show choirs as a choral discipline separate from that of vocal jazz ensembles (Choral Journal, 2004), which are choirs that perform without movement and in a style in which the voice stylistically imitates musical instruments. One would be hard pressed to find a high school choral program that did not include popular music to at least some extent (Grier, 1991). It is quite possible that the show choir style has a very strong presence in secondary schools. In a study of 12 Indiana high school choral departments (Turley, 1988), five were strong in show choir characteristics, three were strong in traditional choir attributes, three were transitional or struggling, and one had equal strength in traditional and show choir. However all 12 choirs performed popular music to some degree.

In regard to choral repertoire and teaching methods, there appears to be a need not only for more diversified types of music—including popular—but also for an emphasis on the value and importance of quality in repertoire selection (Forbes, 1998). Fredrickson (2004) stated: “Popular, jazz, and show choir music should be a viable part of well-rounded choral music programs throughout the country” (p. 20). Furthermore, Fredrickson pointed out the need for proper training if the show choir genre is to be included in the curriculum. Fredrickson’s words were echoed in Borst’s (2002) cross-case analysis of the lives of two exemplary choral music educators. As a result of the study, Borst suggested a multidimensional approach to choral music instruction. Directors should use a variety of teaching strategies, diversify their curricula, and take into consideration the class climate.

Advocates of show choirs argue that these ensembles give students opportunities to perform musical styles which might lead to gainful employment (Frederickson, 2004). Other justifications are that music and movement are natural partners, and that choreography enhances the music (Hylton, 1995, p. 245). In addition, these ensembles can provide public relations for the institution and the music department. Also, show choirs can demonstrate a diversity of performance aesthetics and practices. Furthermore, show choirs can also serve as excellent recruitment vehicles at the college level (Tiboris, 1983).

Critics challenge the legitimacy of show choirs, contending that show choirs overshadow the success of other ensembles and that participants are exploited to provide positive school public relations (Hylton, 1995). Additionally, show choirs require extensive commitments of time and finances. Opponents think that popular music lacks



meaning, is superficial, and is poorly arranged. They also feel choreography can be poorly conceived, contrived, and trite. The potential for vocal abuse exists because of the “Broadway-belting” or chest singing (Tiboris, 1983).

There are also philosophical reasons cited for opposition to show choirs. A study of the Indiana State Choral Festival Association indicated concerns over the emphasis placed on show choirs (Greenlee, 1982). Paine (1981) claimed that show choir music has a limited role in music education and expressed concern that it will eventually drive out traditional choirs. Paine stated that he does not think this type of music will “expand [students’] consciousness and push them to new limits of understanding and emotional involvement with art.” Itkin (1986) acknowledged that the popular arts dominate our personal lives and cannot be ignored, which is the very reason music educators should not further strengthen popular music’s influence by including it in choral curriculums. Others may feel show choirs and their popularity “cheapen the choral art” (Hylton, 1995, p. 245).

Bennett Reimer is the author of three editions of *A Philosophy of Music Education* (Reimer, 2003). The first and second editions, published in 1970 and 1989, helped bring to the forefront the aesthetic philosophy of music education. Since 1989, many other views and ideas have emerged, causing, on one hand, the stimulus for expansive thinking, but on the other, confusion and conflict. Reimer’s third edition, published in 2003, takes his previously presented ideas and frames them around present day research, theories, perspectives, and developments in curriculum. It is in this edition, also, that he compromises to a more integrative approach, actually incorporating elements of a praxial philosophy into his own, where the focus is on the actual making of music.

In chapter two of his book, Reimer discusses the form of music; not just the overall structure of a particular work, but also the relationship of sounds and silences to each other, that is, how they fit together. It is here, the emphasis on the construction of compositions, that the strictest formalists from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries placed their focus and also the source from which the aesthetic approach grew. The aesthetic music education philosophy is an intellectual approach. The fact that one can experience music only for music's sake and not as it relates to the rest of the world is the primary reason for music to exist. The outside world is not ignored, but rather it is simply considered unimportant. Although a musical work is the product of composers and performers and therefore their life experiences, the true value of music is found in its autonomy, the work itself. Concentration is placed on internal qualities. Because the focus is on musical intricacies, formalists believe only an elite few are capable of a true, esoteric musical experience. All others only have non-musical reactions to stories, images, or ideas. This is the aesthetic music education philosophy in excess. Reimer suggests this extreme position is inaccurate and that many enjoy music "for the sheer delight musical sounds afford" (Reimer, 2003, p. 45).

Regarding aesthetic education, Reimer's view is less extreme than the formalists. He believes aesthetic education can be changeable and flexible as it captures the best thoughts about music, and that these thoughts can be adapted to music education. Still, he identified several characteristics as they apply to music education, including the availability to all students instead of only students deemed "talented," a comprehensive approach integrating the National Standards, and the importance of interactions with music to be "musical" where the unique characteristics that set music apart are the

primary elements of the educational activity. His other characteristic beliefs are that any activity in a music education experience, performance-centered or otherwise, can be part of an aesthetic experience. In other words—and perhaps central to Reimer’s basic tenet—any musical interaction, not just listening or performing, can foster an aesthetic education. Finally, beyond the structures of musical sounds lie a plethora of resources (e.g. cultural beliefs, moral views, stories, conventional symbols, and political statements) which are augmented when music is infused to create a transformation or “beyond-the-commonplace” experience. Because of this, the school music experience should include “all the world’s musics” (Reimer, pp. 10–11).

In his book *Music Matters* (Elliott, 1995), David Elliott identifies what he believes are four problematic assumptions with the aesthetic approach to music. First, it is assumed that music is a collection of works or objects. Secondly is the assumption that the only way to listen to musical works is aesthetically: focusing on the formation of music or the elements of music and how they are organized and presented, which, in turn, provides the aesthetic experience. The third assumption is that there is only intrinsic value in musical works as experienced by “structural properties of musical works alone.” (Elliott, 1995, p. 23). Finally, the fourth assumption is that individuals will realize an aesthetic experience when they listen to music aesthetically.

Elliott counters these assumptions with his praxial viewpoint in which the focus should be on the making or “doing” of music. The praxial approach requires that close attention be placed on the people doing the music making. Contrary to the formalistic approach, there is more to the composition than the composition itself. Simply put, Elliot believes in process over product. Even so, the codependence of process and product are

recognized: “Music, then, is a four-dimensional concept at least ... involving (1) a doer, (2) some kind of doing, (3) something done, and (4) the complete context on which doers do what they do” ( p. 40). The focus is on process and Elliot states that performance is the major mode of musical learning, whereas Reimer views it as one of several ways learning can occur.

The contrasting views regarding the inclusion of the show choir in choral music can be related to the views of Reimer and Elliott. Those who could be called formalists believe there is no musical value in the popular music performed by show choirs. Conversely, advocates of the show choir view its inclusion in a diverse curriculum as an opportunity for students to have a well-rounded musical experience. This controversy and the differing views of philosophy on the show choir and its position in choral music education are cause for investigation into why it has become so prominent in so many high school choral music programs.

### Statement of the Problem

The growth of the show choir since the 1970’s has caused controversy among choral music educators. In spite of the traditional paradigm which questions the value and validity of show choirs, the presence and significance of show choir ensembles continue to increase in music education. Perhaps the established notion of what music is most valuable is threatened and being challenged.

While some choral musicians have embraced show choirs and have included them to at least some degree in their curricula, others have shunned them for their alleged lack of musical and educational value. Even so, these ensembles may attract, engage, and

motivate students. Show choirs may serve to involve students who would not be involved otherwise. Conversely, there are students who may prefer to be a part of the traditional choral ensemble exclusively. Still, there are other students who may enjoy participating in both types of ensembles.

Several studies provide reasons why students participate in choirs and what motivates them to do so (e.g., Adderly, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Hylton, 1980; Neill, 1998; Sichivitsa, 2003). Furthermore, repertoire selection and preference have been studied (Droe, 2006; Forbes, 1998; Gregory, 1994). However, there appears to be little empirical data on possible motivational factors that contribute to students' preferences for the type of choral ensemble, or ensembles, in which they participate. By identifying some of these factors, educators and other interested parties may better understand and respond to their students in the choral setting. Choral directors can plan and design their curricula to better suit their school situations. As better understanding in this area expands, choral conductors and other educators can improve their choral programs.

Hylton (1980) examined the meaning of the high school choral experience for students. In addition, he investigated the interrelationship of those meanings and their relationship to musicality, musical background, performance level of the ensembles, and the directors' perceptions of the meaning of the choral experience for students. However, there appears to be no empirical research that examines the relationship of the meaning of the high school choral experience to the types of ensembles in which students participate. Furthermore, no research has been found which determines students' preferences for either the concert-type choir or the show choir, nor has research been located that studies the motivational factors that might predict these preferences.

### Purpose of the Study

Since the show choir has been integrated into many high school curricula, it is critical to examine what factors influence students' preferences for the types of choirs in which they participate. The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree do high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs. The study was also designed to examine the perceived meaning of the choral singing experience and how dimensions of meaning might predict students' preferences for participation in each type of choir.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were presented:

1. To what degree do high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs?
2. What underlying dimensions exist in the meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show-choir music?
3. Which dimensions of choral meaning predict student preference for participation in concert-type choirs or show choirs?

Since there is no evidence of previous empirical research in student choral ensemble participation preferences it was important to investigate this topic. It was hypothesized the majority of students would prefer to perform in show choirs. However, it was anticipated that the perceived meaning of the choral experience would be the same

regardless of students' preferences, and that interrelationships of the underlying factors would be similar as well.

### Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions apply.

*Concert-type choir* – is a group of singers who performs classical-style music without any added movement or choreography. Concert choir repertoire may include works from all periods of Western music history.

*Show choir* – is defined as a group of singers who perform predominantly popular-style music and songs from Broadway musicals. These performances usually include choreography.

The scope of the study included high school choral music students, each of whom participated in a single choir that performed in both the concert and show choirs setting. Participants were recruited from seven different high schools in the states of Alabama and Georgia which created a geographic limitation. In addition, it is possible that students participate in other types of music ensembles such as instrumental groups, or other types of choral groups, for example, madrigal choirs, quartets or trios, which could possibly influence what is perceived as the meaning of the experience being investigated. Also, participation in other fine arts genres such as theater or dance as well as in other musical environments, including church settings, might influence students' responses. It was assumed in this research that high school choral music students do derive some degree of meaning in participating in the ensembles. It is possible, however, that other motivating factors existed for participation, such as a course requirement or lack of course selection.

Due to the lack of research related to ensemble participation preference, this study may provide choral music educators valuable information that could assist them in developing curricula and selecting appropriate music of all types. Choral musicians who continue to challenge the validity of the show choir may come to a better understanding of why the performing ensemble is being included in choral programs. With the advent of new types of performing ensembles in both instrumental and choral music, it was hoped that this study would stimulate further investigation into the importance and inclusion of these ensembles in music education.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study of motivation within many contexts has long been a focus for research studies. Over time, theories have evolved and continue to do so. Various methods of study have been executed, including the use of electrical and chemical brain stimulation to examine physiological attributes, and individual analysis at the psychological level (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2007). This chapter includes some of the literature regarding motivation in general, within an educational context, and more specifically as it pertains to musical preference. In addition, this review presents motivation in various choral music contexts, including the meaning of participation in both the passive and active roles (listener and performer).

The literature to be reviewed was compiled using the following available databases: Annual Reviews, Cambridge University Journals, ComAbstracts, Ebsco HOST, Education Full Text, ERIC, Eric Silver Platter, Historical Abstracts, International Index to Music Periodicals, IIMP Full Text, International Index to the Performing Arts, Music Index, NRC Research Press, and PsycInfo. Both broad and more precise search terms were used, including: attitudes, adolescent motivation, adult motivation, behaviors, choir, choral, choral conductor, choral director, choral music, choral setting, choral students, choreography, conductor, conductor behavior, conductor beliefs, education motivation, ensemble types, extrinsic motivation, Greek philosophers, motivation,

meaning of participation in music, motivation in music, motivation in choral music, music and self esteem, participate in music, participation as listeners, participation as performers, perceptions students, performing art, philosophies of motivation, pop music, preference in music, preference in choral ensembles, preference in choirs, quality of choir, repertoire choral, traditional repertoire, show choir, self efficacy, and skills. This chapter explores motivation historically and theoretically, motivation in education within a broad context, and then in music education. Also reviewed is music preference for high school students as it relates to familiarity, gender, age, and ethnicity. Finally, high school students' ensemble participation is examined.

### Theories of Motivation

To ascertain a broad definition of motivation, the investigator searched textbooks, scholarly reviews, books on current theories of motivation, and books that dealt with motivation from a historical perspective. In its most basic context, motivation is defined as “forces either on or within a person to initiate behavior” (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2006). In studying motivation, Weiner (1992) states that one examines the determining factors of thought and action, or why behavior begins, continues, and ends, as well as what choices are made, or “the determinants of thought and action” (p. 26). Huitt (2001) gleans a definition from various psychology textbooks which states that motivation is “an internal state or condition (sometimes described as need or want) that serves to activate or energize behavior and give it direction.” An additional component by Franken (1994) includes the “arousal, direction, and persistence of behavior.”

It appears that, throughout history, individuals have had the desire to know what causes behavior (Bolles, 1967; Cofer & Appley, 1964). A philosophy of motivational concept appears to have evolved from the discussions and teachings of ancient Greeks such as Socrates and Plato. In his book, *Plato's Theory of Human Motivation, Reason and Emotion: Essays On Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory*, Cooper (1999) construes that, in the *Republic*, Plato theorized there were three parts to the human soul: reason, spirit, and appetite, and from these came a unique but interrelated set of what he called virtues. It was from these virtues, he believed, that human motivation developed.

According to Weiner (1992), the source of some motivational theories can be traced to the highly influential contributions of Descartes and Darwin. They offered a new way of thinking. Descartes philosophized that “sub humans,” or animals, are machines, so Darwin later concluded that humans were machines. They termed humans as godlike, or having the ability to think rationally and judge others. In addition, Weiner proposes that Darwin thought that rationality was also a characteristic of sub humans. From these two metaphors, two types of motivational theories developed. One embraced the ideas of the machine comparison, such as psychoanalytic, ethological, and sociobiological. The other resulted from the Godlike comparison from which expectancy-value and attribution theories developed (Weiner, 1992). Cooper's historical examination of ancient theories and Weiner's later theories served as catalysts for the development of future theories.

Later attempts to explain motivation fell into three general groups according to Hallam (2002). The first included an individual's requirements for survival, such as food and drink. Once these needs were met, motivation decreased. Psychologist Clark Hull

called this drive reduction (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2009). The second group of motivational theories involved psychoanalytic theories, derived from the works of Freud, stating that behavior is based on viewing a human being as an energy system with sexual and aggressive drives who pursue pleasure, also called tension reduction. Finally, according to Hallam, psychoanalytic theories have shunned sexual drive as the foundation for motivation, and instead have focused on the individual seeking growth and self-development (Hallam, 2002).

Motivation has played a role in the humanistic theories developed by Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. An individual's uniqueness and freedom to make choices were the foundation of the humanistic theories. One sought self-fulfillment through maturity, socialization, and self-actualization. Each individual's experiences are the basis for his perception of the world. This perception affects one's personality and causes him to strive to become one's self, or become self actualized (Schneider, Bugental, & Pierson, 2001).

Biology and its relationship to motivation has also been examined. McCrae and Costa (1987) developed the Five Factor Theory that represents tendencies to feel and act in certain ways. The five factors, neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are related to various characteristics that influence intrinsic motivation. These traits are largely inherited and progress over one's lifetime. Experience has little influence on them and they affect the development of the rest of the personality.

Although participation in a choral ensemble is not viewed as a job, the same tenants are present. Choral singing can be viewed as a task with a definitive goal. The student is "employed" to accomplish something. In the area of job satisfaction, Pardee (1990) reviewed what is known as the classical literature on motivation and identified

four major areas of theory. The first, Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, states that individuals are motivated by unmet needs which are in a hierarchical order where one need cannot be met until the other lower level ones are met (Maslow, 1948). The second area is characterized by writings of Frederick Herzberg who stated that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposites because they are not on the same continuum. One can be either satisfied or unsatisfied by motivational factors while what Herzberg termed hygiene factors, or environment, can cause dissatisfaction when absent, and no satisfaction when present. Both of these theories, Pardee believes, have some degree of strength. Pardee's third area of motivational theory is represented by David McClelland's theory that bases one's need for achievement on Maslow's self-actualization. The fourth area, represented by Douglas McGregor's Theory Y is also similar to Maslow's self-actualization and assumes that maturity, self-control, and self-direction govern motivation.

In modern theories, cognition is considered in regard to motivation. A great deal of human behavior is based on one's thoughts and perceptions of events. How one perceives an event influences action more than the event itself (Kelly, 1955). These interpretations are somewhat influenced by how much control an individual has over situations. Known as locus of control, this idea suggests that some individuals feel they are in control of their lives, known as internal locus of control, while others believe external forces, or external locus, controls them (Hallam, 2002).

It is a constant challenge to motivate choral music students, yet, motivation must occur for learning to take place. Understanding the basic theories of motivation can serve as a foundation upon which to determine the meaning of the choral experience and what

motivates a student to participate. Rogers' and Maslow's humanistic theories espouse that an individual grows and matures, or becomes self-actualized, by making choices. It is through his developing personality that he perceives the world. His perceptions influence his motivations to achieve and find meaning in what he does. The next section will examine concepts and theories of motivation in the educational arena.

### Motivation in Education

Motivation in education has long been an area of research and will be the focus of this section. Regarding philosophies and theories of schooling, Maehr and Meyer (1997) examined the individual and his relationship to goal orientations as part of motivational research. This orientation served as a catalyst for the evolution of a philosophy or theory on schooling. In lieu of the term "motivation," Maehr and Meyer prefer "personal investment" because it focuses on human actions. They suggest that the focus of study should not be on whether or not a student is motivated since it is assumed they are. Instead, attention should be given to "when and how individuals invest time, talent, and energy in a particular activity" (p. 373).

Regarding perceptions, thought, and beliefs, Weiner (1992) identifies three basic principles surrounding his attribution theory. The first involves cognitive processes, conscious experience, and the self. The second states that a wide spectrum of emotions should be examined. Finally, the third principle includes aspects of the attribution theory where one interprets events in relationship to a fairly constant environment. Here are included both rational decisions in the attribution process, the logic of cause and effect, and irrational decisions with "hedonic biasing of attributions (attribution of success, but

not failure, to the self)” (p. 36). Cunningham, Gerard, and Miller (1978) examined the adolescent’s motive for self worth and pointed out that research has shown students prone to success attribute success to skill and effort and failure to a lack of effort. As with Weiner’s theory, Cunningham et al. also theorizes that those prone to failure attribute their minimal successes to external factors such as luck, the ease of a task, or assistance from a teacher, and their failures to inability or lack of skill. These students, therefore, feel their successes are beyond their control and that self-praise is not warranted. In addition, they shun future success because it implies an obligation to again succeed, which is something of which they feel they are incapable. An understandable consequence, then, is that they tend to be self-critical.

Choral ensembles are usually elective classes that students must select among other non-required courses. This opportunity to choose and its relationship to motivation in an educational setting has been examined by Prusak, Treasurer, Darst, and Pangrazi (2004). Female participants in five junior high schools completed a 10-day unit on walking in a physical education class. One group was allowed to choose activities associated with walking while the other group was instructed on what to do. Girls allowed to choose reported more intrinsic motivation, had less external control, and were less motivated in the physical education setting where they were instructed on what to do. As a result, the investigators suggested there is an increase in student motivation when more choices are provided (Prusak, Treasurer, Darst, & Pangrazi, 2004). Ferrer-Caja and Weiss (2002) discovered there was a difference in intrinsic motivation between students who choose, or volunteered for a class, and those who took a course as a requirement.

However, factors which led to intrinsic motivation, such as enjoyment, learning, and improvement, were comparable to those which led to predicted persistence and effort.

Of interest for this project is literature regarding musical motivation. Although the focus of this study is motivational factors that influence high school students' preferences for the types of choirs in which they perform, the investigator it was prudent to review a variety of aspects related to motivation, including motivation for achievement, self-esteem and self concept as they relate to motivation, and the ensemble director's role in motivating students. Hallam (2002) examined motivation to participate in music making activities using historic and current theories. Through a review and synthesis of research Hallam developed a model which supports the idea that musical motivation is the result of an interaction between a series of individual characteristics such as personality, self-concept, and personal goals and the environmental aspects including cultures and sub-cultures, society, time, place, institutions, family, and peers. The current and historical theories of motivation provide a model which supports the idea that motivation in music is the result of students' "complex interactions between the individual and the environment within which they find themselves" (p. 225).

Achievement in music can be directly related to motivation. Asmus (1994) conducted a review of research on motivation for achievement with a primary focus on music education. He observed that the research was divided into self-concept, motivation and teacher learning, motivation and student behavior, and motivation connected to attribution theory. Regarding self concept, Greenberg (1970) hypothesized that out-of-tune singing and underachievement in music result from low self-concept of musical ability. In case studies of eleven uncertain singers, he observed that music self-concept is



improved from music experience. In another study by Nolin and Vander Ark (1979), it was found that junior high music ensemble participants' self-esteem scores were significantly higher than those not involved in music ensembles.

Vander Ark, Nolin, and Newman (1980) investigated the relationships between self-esteem, music attitude, social status, and grade level in third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students in 16 Midwestern elementary schools ( $N = 542$ ). The investigators used a curvilinear analysis assuming that relationships between self-esteem, music attitude, and other variables could be more accurately represented. They found that self esteem predicted attitudes toward classroom music experiences higher than those related to social status, gender, and age. They also discovered that there were more positive attitudes towards music in middle-social status students than low or high-status students. In regards to classroom music, the researchers found there was decreasing attitudes as grade level increased.

Music competition can also be a motivational factor in music learning. Specifically, music contest format and its relationship to self-concept was investigated by Austin (1988). He randomly assigned two groups of fifth and sixth-grade band students ( $N = 38$ ) to either a group that received comments and ratings or a group that received comments only. Both the comments-only group and the comments and ratings group had significant increases in musical self concept. There was no significant difference in achievement motivation scores between the groups. However, only the ratings group gained in musical achievement. Seventy-six percent of the students indicated they would prefer to participate in a rated event. For this project, competition was identified as one of the four factors important to students who participated in choral ensembles.

In the pilot study for this project, there were some references made to the director's impact on the meaning of the choral experience (See Appendix B). While none of the items in the instrument directly referenced the director, it is quite possible that the teacher does have an impact on the students' meaning of the experience and can influence participation. The teacher has been seen as a major influence in motivating students and determining their achievement in the music classroom, particularly in performing ensembles (Asmus, 1989). Caimi (1981) used Cattell's Motivational Analysis Test to measure the relationship between student achievement and teacher behavior. He found that ensemble performance level was strongly related to band directors' "conscious concern for security and sub-conscious concern for home and parents" (p. 16–17), as quoted by Asmus (1994). Sichivitsa (2003) surveyed 164 college choral students to measure intentions to continue in music while in college and after leaving, and found that one of the factors for continuing in an ensemble was fondness for the director.

A student's perception of his own musical ability can influence his interest in and motivation to participate in music activities. Lillemyr (1983) developed and administered four instruments, the *Self Perception Inventory*, the *Perceived Competence Scale*, the *Achievement Motives Scale*, and an *Interest in School Music Scale* to measure self-confidence, perceived confidence in school, interest in music activities, and achievement motivation. In Trondheim, Norway, 381 fourth graders in eight elementary schools participated. Results indicated that motives for achievement influenced students' self-perceptions and that many aspects of self-perception contributed significantly to student interest in school music.

Asmus (1985, 1987, 1989) has completed extensive research on the relationship between achievement motivation and attribution theory. In his initial study (1985), he surveyed 118 sixth grade students to determine their views about the causes of failure and success in music. The majority of students selected ability and effort to be the major causes for success and failure in music. Attribution was not affected by whether or not a student was successful or unsuccessful. In 1987, Asmus studied the effect of grade level and motivation level on 248 high school instrumental and choral students' attributions for music success. Using a 35-item device Asmus developed in a previous study (Asmus, 1986b), the students were assessed on the degree of motivation and on five attribution categories students previously identified as causes for music success and failure (effort, background, classroom environment, musical ability, and affect for music). There were grade level differences on background and classroom environment attribution categories. In addition there were motivational differences for effort, musical ability, background, and affect for music. Those with low motivation levels placed more importance on musical ability, while more highly motivated students placed more importance on effort. Effort, affect for music, and classroom environment were significantly related to magnitude of motivation and accounted for 37.7% of magnitude variance.

Asmus and Harrison (1990) conducted a similar study with college undergraduate non-music majors to determine the relationship between musical motivation and musical aptitude. Music appreciation students were administered an experimental college version of Gordon's *Musical Aptitude Profile*, containing five previously identified factors. Through use of Asmus's five-dimensional instrument, participants were also assessed on three aspects of magnitude of motivation: personal commitment to (a) music, (b) school

music, and (c) music compared to other activities. There was no significant relationship between motivation variables and musical aptitude. However there was a significant positive relationship between motivating factors and the measures of motivation magnitude.

In a study of self-expressed adult music education interests and music experiences, Bowles (1991) mailed a questionnaire to 800 music performance attendees. Among the 275 respondents, piano was the instrument most often selected for private study, followed by voice and guitar. Choral organizations were highest ranked among performance ensembles. In the academic arena, aural analysis and introductory music history courses were most preferred. Concerning experiences, most participants had taken private lessons and participated in performance organizations and a large number had self-directed musical experiences. Current involvement and early participation in classroom general music significantly influenced a positive attitude toward participation.

Faivre (2001) conducted a case study of the Norfolk (Virginia) Chorale to determine factors that influence adult participation in music. Through interviews of choir members and friends of the chorale, he found that, in addition to high school music experiences, factors such as family support, private lessons, and involvement with church choirs had a significant impact on participation. Most members were not professional musicians but were serious about their music and considered it extremely important in their lives.

In conclusion, motivation in education has been examined in a variety of contexts including motivation in relationship to self worth and success, and choice and its relationship to motivation. It appears that motivation for self-esteem increases with

success and decreases with failure and that more choices can increase motivation. In music education, it has been suggested that motivation is the result of interaction between a series of individual characteristics such as personality, self-concept, and personal goals and the environmental aspects including cultures and sub-cultures, society, time, place, institutions, family, and peers. In this investigation of choral music students' preferences for ensemble types, all these individual characteristics must certainly play a role.

### Motivation for Music Preference

For the purposes of this project, it was important to examine motivation and its relationship to music, and in particular choral music. Specifically, what motivational factors may influence high school students' preferences for the types of choral ensembles in which they participate? In this section, literature regarding music preference as it relates to familiarity, gender, age, and ethnicity is reviewed.

A large part of music education centers around students' music preference. In his review of literature on music preference, Droe (2006) states:

One of the purposes of music education should be to expand knowledge of music styles and music preference. Students exiting a music program should have a more expanded basis for choosing music and perhaps an increased preference for different styles of music before they started. (p. 23)

In his review of research, Droe identified four theoretical models related to music preference: listening, music complexity, repetition, and focus of attention. Leblanc (1980, 1981) devised a listening model with eight rigidly ranked variables influencing musical taste. The first level he called input variables such as physical properties and cultural

influence. Also included in this level were influences of parents and teachers. He identified enabling conditions, including musical training, basic attention, and current emotional state in levels two, three, and four. In level five are personality, training, and influences on maturation. It is levels six, seven, and eight that identified preference. These included brain processing, decision point, and preference judgment.

The variable of music complexity has been studied in relationship to music preferences. Walker (1980) proposes what he terms the “hedgehog” theory in addressing the relationship between musical complexity and preference. When a hedgehog becomes over stimulated, it retreats into a curl and withdraws itself from the source. Likewise, when music becomes too complex, an individual tends to disregard visual, sound, or tactile stimuli. Walker proposes that “psychological events nearest optimum complexity are preferred. Occurrence produces simplification” (p. 471). In each individual, there is an optimum complexity level that results in an optimum preference. Both frequent and infrequent stimuli produce low preference. Too little or too much complexity results in cessation by the individual to process the stimulus. Optimum complexity of the stimulus increases listening preference and the listener attempts to increase processing. Individuals tend to not prefer stimuli that move away from optimum complexity, and do prefer those that move closer.

Repetition has also been studied as a major contributor to music preference. Repetition produces simplification of complex stimuli, and when too complex, preference will increase. However, repetition will diminish preference if the stimuli are below optimum complexity. This might explain, Droe (2006) theorizes, the differences in

preference in music ensembles for music that is being rehearsed. For example, one instrumental section in a band might prefer marches while another does not.

Finally, focus of attention is a fourth focus for preference studies. A model developed by Madsen and Geringer (2001) suggests that the stimulus must be the listener's focus before any other information can be absorbed and processed. The researchers cite background music which is heard but in which the stimulus is not processed. Once the stimulus is noted, listeners begin to discriminate aurally and emotionally for musical meaning. This focus of attention affects the emotional state of the listener which, in turn, affects the focus of attention and subsequent discrimination. Madsen and Geringer ultimately relate this to the music classroom by pointing out that a student could possibly encounter varying distractions which could affect music preference.

As Droe (2006) pointed out, it is important for students to have enough knowledge and awareness to be able expand their awareness and, therefore, their choices for music. Obviously, repertoire in any music ensemble is of great importance. There is a substantial challenge for the director to select music which is appropriate for age level, degree of difficulty, diverse programming, and preference of the ensemble members. In the present study, repertoire was directly related to the questions presented. The popular and Broadway music performed by a show choir and the classical-style music sung by a concert-type choir can be quite different but can play a large role in high school students' ensemble preferences.

The influence of familiarity on music preference, through both listening and performance, has been examined increasingly since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Droe,

2006). Siebenaler (1999) asked ten classes of third, fourth, and fifth graders ( $N = 160$ ) to rank their preference of ten familiar songs and indicate their degree of familiarity with each of them. To measure possible relationships between the variables of preference and familiarity, subsequent classes each rehearsed one song (one per class) for ten minutes, and then the students were asked to again indicate their song preference and self-evaluate their own performance quality. There was a significant positive correlation between song familiarity and preference across all songs. Regarding the 10-minute rehearsal for each song, mean preference ratings were consistently higher than the initial preference ratings in nine out of ten songs. There was no significant relationship between the second preference ratings and self-evaluation of singing.

Getz (1966) examined how music preference was affected by repetition. Over a 10-week period seventh-grade music students ( $N = 339$ ) listened to 40 examples of familiar and unfamiliar classical music. Unfamiliar pieces by familiar composers were used. Five of the pieces were previously rated and representative of the range of preference and were repeated during the 10-week period. The other examples were decoys. Results indicated repetitive familiarity had a positive correlation with preference. Familiarity and fast tempo were the most cited reasons for liking an example, and loud volume was the most cited reason for dislike. In another study (Bradley, 1971), seventh-grade students were asked to listen to repetitions of contemporary art music over a 14-week period. Employing a pretest-posttest design, they were then asked to rate preferences for tonal, polytonal, atonal, and electronic music. Posttest results showed a significant increase in preference for three of the contemporary music categories, indicating that preference was affected by repetition of that music.



There are indications that familiarity is not always a strong determining factor for music preference. Gregory (1994) presented listening excerpts to sixth grade students, high school musicians in performance ensembles, and undergraduate college music majors ( $N = 1299$ ). Subjects listened to excerpts from early contemporary compositions, popular classics, selections from the *Silver Burdett/Ginn* elementary music series, and current crossover jazz recordings. Each of the classical categories was represented by keyboard, band, and orchestral excerpts. The *Continuous Response Digital Interface* was used by each participant to record knowledge and preference as they listened. The most familiar music across all groups was the *Silver Burdett/Ginn* category, but there seemed to be no predictable connection between familiarity of an excerpt and preference for it. High school and college musicians preferred instrumental versions for unfamiliar classical music, implying a media-based preference. Results also suggested training broadens interest across and within musical genres.

The use of various musical styles in the classroom and preservice teachers' views for its use have been examined by Barry and Walls (1999). In a large southeastern university in the United States, 323 teacher education students rated recordings of 32 short, recorded examples of various musical genres and styles. Students were asked to rate the examples for their personal reaction and interest in using the music in their teaching. Students were then questioned on how each example could be used in the classroom. Highest ratings for personal reaction fell to popular music excerpts while instrumental music from other cultures and non-English songs were ranked lowest. Conversely, students showed more hesitation about the appropriateness of use of popular and world music in the classroom, opting instead to use music especially for children.

Higher ratings were given by students with musical experience for instrumental and western art music and lower ratings for popular styles than by students without musical experience.

Along with familiarity, the relationship of other factors to music preference has been investigated. A study of 360 students in Singapore ranging in age from 11.3 to 17.5 examined the relationship between musical preference and gender, age, race, musical training, and familiarity (Teo, 2005). Teo developed a Musical Preference Scale which contained 15 musical excerpts from classical, popular, and non-western styles. Using a 5-point Likert-type scale, students indicated the degree to which they liked or disliked the musical excerpt. While there were no significant differences by musical age and training, there were significant differences in musical preferences by gender, race, and familiarity. Musical preference was also influenced by other variables including tempo, dynamics, timbre, melody, function of music, musical style, and rhythm. While the current study does not take into account gender, ethnicity, or familiarity, musical style is a factor which comes into play since concert-type choirs and show choirs normally perform different styles of music.

Characteristics of individuals and their influence on music preference is also of interest here. Adult music preferences were studied in northeastern Colorado communities using the variables of age, ethnic group, gender, musical training, and socioeconomic status (Persinger, 2001). There was a significant relationship between gender and preference for bluegrass, sacred music, disco, soft rock, soundtracks/Broadway shows/movies. Length of musical training was significantly tied to preference for soft rock, classical, and opera. There was a significant correlation between a

preference for classical music and participants who had participated in band, music appreciation, music theory, and private lessons. Opera was significantly related to participation in music theory, orchestra, and private lessons. When popular music was compared to the type of music instruction received, band participation was significantly related to new wave music and swing/big band styles were significantly related to participation in music appreciation. This is another indication of the importance high school students place on popular music styles.

Alpert (1982) examined the effect of adults and peers on musical preference by investigating the approval of music by peers, disc jockeys, and teachers. Eighty-two fifth grade students were divided into four groups. Thirty-second excerpts of country, rock and classical music were played for each group with each selection having approvals at the beginning and end from a disc jockey, teacher, or peer. Group number four listened to excerpts without approvals. Preferences were measured according to music selection behavior, verbal preference behavior, and music type preference. There did not appear to be an effect for music type responses and approvals, however, there was a significant correlation between music selection behavior and verbal preference response. Classical music listening and preference was decreased with peer approval but increased with teacher and disc jockey approval. There was more association between music selection behavior and music type preference than between music selection behavior and verbal preference responses. Peer, teacher, and disc jockey approvals did not affect preference or selection behavior for rock music.

Repertoire selection can also influence students' preferences for the types of choirs in which they prefer to perform. Forbes (1998) studied the repertoire selection

practices of high school choral directors. He divided the teachers into those identified as outstanding and all others in the population. Data was collected through interviews, solicited programs, and a written survey. It was found that, while directors use a wide variety of criteria in selecting music, none of those was applied consistently or systematically. Style of repertoire influences criteria used, and demographic characteristics including socioeconomic composition, program size, and teaching experience also helped determine the process. While some criteria of all directors were similar, there were differences between selection methods regarding the balance of repertoire they felt students should sing and the “relative importance and use of selection criteria” (p. 102).

Another study investigated and described the performance literature of beginning high school choirs (Reames, 2001). Survey results of 214 MENC high school choral directors were analyzed in five categories: demographics, repertoire selection criteria, literature sources, types of literature performed, and recommended repertoire for beginning mixed choirs. Results indicated directors use similar criteria for selecting literature for both advanced and beginning choirs, and that they valued sources including live concerts, reading sessions, personal libraries, and recordings. Twentieth century literature, including popular music, was programmed most frequently and successfully. The predominant repertoire for show choirs is popular music. Therefore, these findings are particularly relevant for the purposes of this investigation since students’ preferences for the types of choirs in which they perform is being examined.

In regards to music preference for the listener, most centers around support of aesthetic theory (Gates, 1991), and employ several variables, such as gender, age, race,

musical training, and familiarity (Teo, 2005). LeBlanc (1981) measured 354 fifth graders' music listening preferences based on the effects of style, tempo, and performing medium. By administering a music listening test, he found participants favored popular style and that this style was strongly related to preference. A correlation analysis found that, in all styles, there was a slight preference for faster tempos and instrumental music. Findings from this study provide insight into the possible motivational factors that influence high school choral students' preferences for types of ensembles in which they participate.

McCrary (1993) researched the effects of listeners' and performers' ethnicity on music preferences. African-American and Caucasian middle school ( $n = 102$ ) and university listeners ( $n = 119$ ) used a Likert-type scale to indicate their degree of like or dislike for 20 recorded musical examples. On a second rating scale they chose a point nearest what they believed was the performer's ethnicity. Another measurement examined the participants' attitudes toward social encounters with African-Americans and Caucasians. Statistically significant differences were found only among the African-American participants in their music preferences for Caucasian or African-American performers. When African-Americans identified the performers as African-American, they gave stronger preference ratings. Caucasian listeners' preferences were virtually equal for both races of performers. On the social-encounter measurement, each race provided more positive responses to statements of encounters with members of their own ethnicity.

Of particular interest for this study is popular music and the degree to which it is preferred by high school students. Boyle, Hosterman, and Ramsey (1981) identified factors influencing pop music preferences of children and adolescents. Students in grades

five ( $n = 70$ ), seven ( $n = 87$ ), nine ( $n = 94$ ), eleven ( $n = 64$ ), and college ( $n = 82$ ) self-reported reasons for their popular music preferences. Comparisons were also made in regard to different backgrounds and experience. Aspects such as melody, rhythm, mood, and lyrics were the most important reasons for preference. Not as important were sociological backgrounds. However specific differences were observed in the importance of several variables for different grade levels as well as background characteristics. Melody was significantly different between grade five and college level, rhythm between grade seven and college level, and mood between college level and all other grades. Students in grade 11 rated instruments significantly more important than students in the other non-college levels. Of particular importance for the present study is that danceability produced the widest range between the means in each grade level. There were significant differences between the lower three grades and the upper two, although there were no significant differences among either group.

### Motivation for Participation in Music Ensembles

The basic tenant for this study is the investigation into the meaning of participation in the choral experience and possible motivational factors which influence that participation, particularly as those factors relate to types of ensembles. The final section of this review will examine literature regarding the meaning of the choral experience and those possible motivational factors for participation.

Gates (1991) developed a music participation theory, dividing people into three categories: music participants, music audiences, and others who do not identify any value as a participant or audience member. Within the participants category are six types:

professionals, apprentices, amateurs, hobbyists, recreationists, and dabblers.

Professionals and apprentices view music as work while amateurs and hobbyists view it as a serious leisure activity, and recreationists and dabblers as play. Professionals, apprentices and amateurs depend on their audiences and each other for economic and psychological support, while hobbyists, recreationists, and dabblers are reinforced personally as opposed to what Gates terms a “sociomusical system” (p. 15). Another general observation by Gates (1991) is that, while both can be considered participants, performers and audiences are innately different in regards to their involvement. He states, “... these two groups have distinctly different complexes of motivations, processes, costs, and benefits” (p. 6).

There has been a great deal of discussion and research on motivational factors that influence students to participate in choral music (Eckel, 1994; Hylton, 1980; Neill, 1998), and the social implications as a result (Adderley, Kennedy & Berz, 2003; Eckel, 1994; Mudrick, 1997). Congruent with this research is what motivates a student to become involved initially and continue participating (Correnblum & Marshall, 1998; Sichivitsa, 2003). Also, there seems to be a correlation between participation and types of music, or repertoire, being performed (Forbes, 1998; Reams, 2001). Students are motivated for academic, musical, and family reasons. A feeling of accomplishment, spiritual fulfillment, and social interaction are other factors. Parental involvement, positive influence of and performance by the conductor, and, again, social integration are reasons for continuing. Diverse music styles including twentieth century and popular styles, as well as production of a musical, can play a positive role in students remaining in high school choirs.

The plethora of choirs in American schools may result from diverse reasons for students' participation. There is no dearth of research on the motivating factors for joining and continuing in choir. Perhaps most obvious is one's love of singing and performing. Students also join for social, academic, and family reasons. Neill (1998) surveyed 1,020 Missouri high school choral students to determine why they enrolled in choir. A 10-point Likert-type scale was used for participants to indicate the degree of influence for selected and predetermined factors which influences their decision to participate on choir. The strongest reason for enrollment was a love of singing followed by performing. Other important influences were the reputation of the choral program and previous choral experience. When asked to identify their three favorite aspects of choir, singing was their most favorite followed by concerts and friends tied for second, and trips as third.

Hylton (1980) investigated the meaning of the choral experience for high school students. For this study, the instrument designed by Hylton was used with additional items related to the show choir genre. The instruments for both the pilot and final study were mirrored after a previous study by Hylton (1980) which involved the administration of a survey he constructed called the *Choral Meaning Survey*. In the first part of his investigation, he presented an open-ended questionnaire to a group of high school choral students for the purpose of obtaining their perceptions of the meaning of the high school choral experience as it related to choir participation. From this information he designed the 70-item *Choral Meaning Survey* in which participants used a Likert-type scale to indicate the degree to which each item had meaning within context of their choral participation. Once Hylton's data was collected, he performed a principal components



exploratory factor analysis from which he gleaned six interpretable, underlying factors he identified and defined as follows:

1. Psychological—The choral experience is meaningful in that it aids in one realizing who they are.
2. Communicative—These statements involved providing messages to the audience and sharing their talent.
3. Integrative—This category reflects the “social aspects of choral participation. Statements were included which indicated that choral participation fulfills a need to be with others” (Hylton, 1980).
4. Musical-Artistic—Choral participation provides opportunities for one to grow musically.
5. Spiritualistic—Statements in this category “reflect a feeling that singing and communicating with an audience are religious or spiritual experiences, or ways of expressing spiritual thought or feelings” (Hylton, 1980).
6. Achievement—Statements reflect the student’s need to for positive self-esteem through a feeling of accomplishment.

Reliabilities of these six factor categories were analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha formula. Reliability coefficients for each factor were: Spiritual (.95), Achievement (.93), Psychological (.87) Communicative (.87) Integrative (.90) Musical-Artistic (.90). Hylton suggests that, “while the six dimensions are conceptually different, they seem to be tied to a more generic concept of meaningfulness—a global concept which may be considered subconcepts” (Hylton, p. 301).

Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) investigated the world of the high school music classroom. Structured interviews were conducted with 60 tenth-eleventh-and-twelfth-grade students—20 each from band, orchestra, and choir. The focus of the research was to determine motivations for joining and remaining in choir, the meaning of the experience for the students, the social climate within the groups, and how the ensemble members themselves perceived the musical groups, as well as how they felt the ensembles were perceived by the school community. Musical, social, academic, and family reasons were found to be catalysts for joining. Students tended to label themselves, often negatively, with words such as “band dorks” and “choir geeks.” However they found humor in these labels and implied that it was OK to use them with each other but not from outside the ensembles. Ensemble members felt they were often viewed as intelligent and talented. Students found value in the opportunity to be creative by making music, to learn about music, to enjoy music, and to have a sense of accomplishment. They also felt that the qualities of responsibility, commitment, perseverance, self-discipline, and humor had been enhanced. The social element, within and without the group, was highly valued by the ensemble members. Students commonly formed sub-groups of friends within the groups and socialized outside of school.

In a qualitative study, Murdick (1997) investigated specific factors that influenced student motivation in four successful choral programs in four Pennsylvania high schools. Using persistent observation, ethnographic interviews, and unobtrusive clues, he found within these programs that, generally, students were intrinsically motivated by feeling competent, mostly because of ample rehearsal time. Also influential were the social aspects of enjoying friends, meeting new people, and being able to relate to others

because of a common interest. Other motivating factors included diverse performance opportunities, including the production of an annual musical, a successful musical reputation, and challenging repertoire. A portion of the study by Murdick (1997) also examined the directors' teaching goals and skills and motivational techniques. Results showed students were motivated by clearly articulated musical goals and "dedicated, rigorous, energetic, and charismatic leadership exhibited by their director, honest, appropriate assessment from their director and by integrating their director's rules and values; above all, students are motivated by their director's sense of humor and genuine sense of concern for them" (from abstract).

Similar results were found in another study when Eckel (1994) examined 227 high school music performance students' emotional experiences, their perception of the value of the experience, and stated reasons for music study. A survey was administered to all students, and 30 of those were interviewed. He compared responses regarding emotional experiences with the philosophies of the music education profession. Results indicated social interactions within the ensembles, diverse musical experiences, formal performances, and self improvement were the values and motivating factors for participation. Also of note was that students often joined groups for personal and social reasons, whereas the music education profession prefers instruction within a musical context. Although students had positive regard for the educational aspects of music study, these aspects were not their primary reason for participation.

There is evidence that the teacher, or choral director, can have significant impact on choral members. An ethnographic study by Morgan (1992) revealed there were close similarities between students' perceptions and their teacher's philosophies and rehearsal

emphases. Furthermore, it was concluded that there is tremendous power for music educators to influence students' musical values, self-perceptions, and those of other students.

Student attitudes toward their choral experience in regards to performance and the conductor's methods in the rehearsal have been investigated. Through use of a researcher-designed instrument and the Music Class Attitude Index (MCAI), Gleason (1992) surveyed students from the top choirs in five Phoenix, Arizona high schools. The researcher-designed instrument gathered information from both students and conductors toward specific conductor behaviors. The MCAI obtained data about singers' attitudes toward their choral experience. Audio performance tapes of each choir were evaluated by three judges. The researcher also took narrative field notes during three live and four videotaped rehearsal observations. Choir size was strongly related to performance scores, and moderately related to attitude scores. When attitude scores were high, they continued to increase with years of experience with the conductor. Conversely, when the attitude scores were low, they declined with continued participation. Conductors' behaviors of high attitude choirs were highly valued by students, but not so with conductors of lower attitude choirs.

There has also been research regarding the students continued participation in music ensembles. Teachers' evaluations of students can impact their intentions to remain in a music program. Correnblum and Marshall (1998) developed a model for predicting student intentions to continue in a high school band program. Students gave information about their current grades, socioeconomic levels, attributions for performance in band, extracurricular music activities, and their perceptions of the attitudes towards the band

program by their parents, band teachers and the school. Also, each band director evaluated each student's performance. Through structural equation modeling, it was found that socioeconomic status and teacher evaluation were predictors for students to continue in music both inside and outside of school. The more favorable the evaluation, the more likely continued student participation would occur.

Influences to continue participation at the college level have also been examined. Sichivitsa (2003) designed a survey instrument based on the Tinto model of institutional departure to measure college students' intentions to continue in music while in college and after leaving. Parental music involvement and support, students' previous involvement in music, self-concept of musical ability, musical value, social integration in choir, and academic integration were the influential factors considered. Choral students ( $N = 154$ ) at a large southeastern university completed the questionnaire. The best predictors of musical intentions were musical value and social integration in the choral setting. Additionally, the majority of students enrolled in choral ensembles because they loved to sing, enjoyed the class, and liked the conductor.

Morrison, (2001) suggests that the culture of a school ensemble is, in many ways, different in size and scope from groups whose nationality, ethnicity, or geographical proximity determines formation. Still, as with any group, long-term common interests and shared values will eventually develop specialized manners, customs, vocabulary and conventions (Swanwick, 1988). Although not based on empirical data, Morrison adumbrates that performing groups are "guardians of their own specific culture that informs and enriches the lives of its members" (p. 24). Several social themes emerge such as identity, where students who participate for an extended period establish identities

around the ensemble and its characteristics in the framework of the school, and social dimension where social groups are formed and students associate with each other outside the group. There are also practical and personal boundaries where ensemble members spend much time together and become identified as belonging to the group, and transmission in which older, experienced members “pass down” the traditions and workings of the group.

### Conclusion

This review of related literature has defined and examined motivation in the broadest sense from a historical, theoretical, and philosophical perspective. While many theories have evolved, the same basic definition holds true: “forces either on or within a person to initiate behavior” (Encyclopedia Britannica Online, 2006). In education, and specifically music education, there has been research from both the listener’s and performer’s perspective. Many factors seem to act as motivators, including personality, self-concept, goals, social aspects, experience, teacher performance, and musical aptitude. All of these can, on some level, be motivating factors for preference of types of ensemble participation.

Regarding preference and participation in music and music ensembles, numerous studies have been executed. Gates (1991) developed a music participation theory, dividing people into music participants, audiences, and others who do not identify any value as a participant or audience member. However, of particular interest for this project are the preferences and participation of the high school choral music student. Although choral music has a long history in the United States with the establishment of all types of

ensembles, there has been little or no research as to what motivates a student to participate in one type of ensemble over another. It is for this reason that this project was executed.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to determine in which type of ensemble, concert-type choir or show choir, high school students prefer to participate. Also, examined was the perceived meaning of the choral singing experience for students who participated in choral ensembles that perform in both the concert-type and show choir setting. Finally the nature of the relationship with preference for the two types of groups was investigated.

The following research questions were examined:

1. To what degree do high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs?
2. What underlying dimensions exist in the meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show choir music?
3. What dimensions of choral meaning predict preference for participation in concert-type choirs or show choirs?

#### Participants

Participants for part one of the study consisted of a non-probability, volunteer convenience sample of high school choral music students ( $N = 66$ ) from a well-established high school choral program in southern Alabama. The school was selected



based on the researcher's awareness of the director's experience and the fact that students in his or her choirs performed both concert and show choir music.

Participants for part two of the study ( $N = 307$ ) consisted of a non-probability, volunteer, convenience sample of current choral music students from seven high schools in Alabama and Georgia. Because of the questions being examined, it was required that students perform both concert-type literature and also perform in the show choir setting. Schools were selected based upon the recommendation of the American Choral Directors Association's National Chairperson for Repertoire and Standards for Show Choirs. His criteria for selection was based on his knowledge and awareness of the directors' experience and their belief that their students should perform both concert-type music in a traditional concert setting and also perform popular music in the show choir setting. Each participant was enrolled in a choir that included both concert-type and show choir performance styles.

#### Access and Permission

The protocol for both the pilot study and the final study was approved as expedited by Auburn University's Institutional Review Board, Office of Human Subjects Research. For both investigations the researcher telephoned each choral director to provide information regarding the study and request his or her permission. Once verbal agreement was secured, the researcher mailed each choral director a letter requesting consent from his or her principal. The letter explained the study, how it would be conducted, and the procedures which would provide participants' anonymity. Once the principal agreed, he or she signed the provided letter of consent on school stationery and

returned it to the Office of Human Subjects. Each choral director was telephoned to arrange a date to distribute letters of consent to participants and their parents and to administer the questionnaire. (See Appendix A for Institutional Review Board approval and recruiting documents as well as letters of consent.)

### Instrument and Data Collection

The instruments for both the pilot and final projects were adapted from Hylton's (1980) earlier study. For this project, a pilot study replicating Hylton's study was conducted to develop additional items for the *Choral Meaning Survey*. Hylton's *Choral Meaning Survey* addresses the meaning of the choral music experience in general without differentiation of ensemble type. Since the purpose of this study was to examine interrelationships between ensemble types, students ( $N = 66$ ) who performed both concert-type music and show choir music in the choir completed an open-ended question identical to Hylton's original open-ended question:

As a member of your high school choral group you are a person who sings because this experience means something to you. We are trying to find out what it is about this experience that is meaningful for you. Would you list below what this singing experience means to you and the part singing plays in your life?

From these responses, the investigator anticipated extracting additional categories unique to the show choir genre as well as categories not indicated in Hylton (1980).

Initially, responses were compiled exactly as written by the students (see Appendix B). Statements interpreted within context of the pre-existing *Choral Meaning Survey* were listed under the six categories developed by Hylton. The remaining

statements were again examined to glean any additional categories. Four predominant new areas emerged and were defined as follows:

1. Dancing—Show choir performances usually involve movement, or choreography, to at least some degree.
2. Physical Activity—Students indicated dance served a dual purpose, the second being a way to work out and stay in shape.
3. Travel—Participating in a choral ensemble can include travel to festivals, or competitions, as well as concert tours.
4. Competitions—Ensembles often attend various competitive events, particularly those held for show choirs.

The first two, dancing and physical activity, were considered unique to the show choir experience, and the others, competition and traveling, could be experienced in both concert-type and show choirs. From the statements in these four categories 34 additional survey items were developed (see Appendix C).

Content validity of the new items was measured by presenting them in random order to the four members of the investigator's dissertation committee and asking them to indicate in which of the four categories they felt each item belonged. Of the 34 items there was discrepancy in eight. When the eight items were evaluated, it was observed that they could fall into more than one category (e.g. "to use dancing to stay in shape" and "to develop my coordination" could be categorized in either dance or physical activity). The dance and physical activity categories are indeed interrelated. Therefore, the researcher did not feel the close relationship of these items would compromise the validity of the instrument, and their inclusion could be justified. For this reason, they were randomly

integrated along with the other 26 new items into the previously validated *Choral Meaning Survey* to be administered in the current study (see Appendix C for new items).

The final survey consisted of 104 items, two of which addressed research question number one regarding the degree to which students preferred participating in concert-type or show choir. The remaining items addressed research questions two and three regarding the dimensionality of meaning for participation in the choirs.

### Data Analysis

The purposes of this study were to ascertain the degree to which high school choral students preferred to participate in both concert-type choirs and show choirs, to identify underlying dimensions of the meaning of the choral experience for students who participated in both, and to investigate if these dimensions could predict students' preferences for the types of ensembles in which they participated. Data analyses designed to address these respective questions were a frequencies distribution, principal components factor analysis, and discriminant function analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs. The study was also designed to examine the perceived meaning of the choral singing experience. The final question investigated was which of those dimensions might predict students' preferences for participation in each type of choir.

The following research questions were presented:

1. To what degree do high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs?
2. What underlying dimensions exist in the meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show-choir music?
3. Which dimensions of choral meaning predict student preference for participation in concert-type choirs or show choirs?

#### Response Rate and Sample Characteristics

A total of 580 surveys and parental permission/child assent forms were shipped or delivered personally by the researcher to the seven schools. Choral directors distributed the permission/assent forms to choir students one day before administration of the survey.

Students who returned to school the next day with signed forms were then given a survey to complete. Students who did not return the consent form were given the option of completing the survey; however, their responses were not included in data. The researcher administered the survey in person at two of the seven schools. The questionnaires for the remaining five schools were administered by the choral director using a script prepared by the investigator (see Appendix E).

The following high schools participated in the study: Auburn High School in Auburn, AL ( $n = 34$ ), Enterprise High School in Enterprise, AL ( $n = 64$ ), Florence High School in Florence, AL ( $n = 68$ ), Oak Mountain High School in Birmingham, AL ( $n = 65$ ), Eastside High School in Covington, GA ( $n = 8$ ), Fitzgerald High School in Fitzgerald, GA ( $n = 8$ ), and Tift County High School in Tifton, GA ( $n = 66$ ). Of the 580 questionnaires, 313 were returned for a return rate of 54%. The primary reason for some surveys not being included in the data was participants not returning parental consent forms. The questionnaires were coded by school and entered into SPSS. Once recorded, data were checked for incorrect entries and incomplete items. It was during this inspection that the investigator discovered the replication of one item, which was then eliminated. Six of the 313 responses were eliminated due to having two or more incomplete items or having more than one answer for an item. Among the remaining 307 (52.6%), eight had one answer missing, but were included in the data analysis. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest that at least 300 cases are adequate for factor analysis.

## Research Question 1

The first research question was “To what degree do high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs?” Two 5-point Likert-type items were designed to address this question: (1) “I would prefer participating in concert choir” and (2) “I would prefer participating in show choir.” Of the 307 total participants, 11 did not respond to one or both questions. Because there was a sufficient number of cases (Pallant, 2007, p. 57), these were deleted. Of the remaining 296, respondents indicated a very strong overall preference for show choir participation with 239 respondents (77.9%) selecting “strongly agree” and only 4 respondents (1.3%) selecting “strongly disagree.” Conversely, for concert-type choir, only 65 (21.2%) selected “strongly agree” and 32 (10.8%) “strongly disagree.” (See Table 1 for descriptive statistics.)

Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics, Frequencies, and Percentages for Choir Preferences (N = 296)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Rating</i>									
			5		4		3		2		1	
			<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>P</i>
Concert	3.26	1.34	65	21.2	87	28.3	37	12.1	75	24.4	32	10.8
Show	4.68	.733	239	77.9	47	15.3	11	3.6	4	1.3	4	1.3

Response scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree

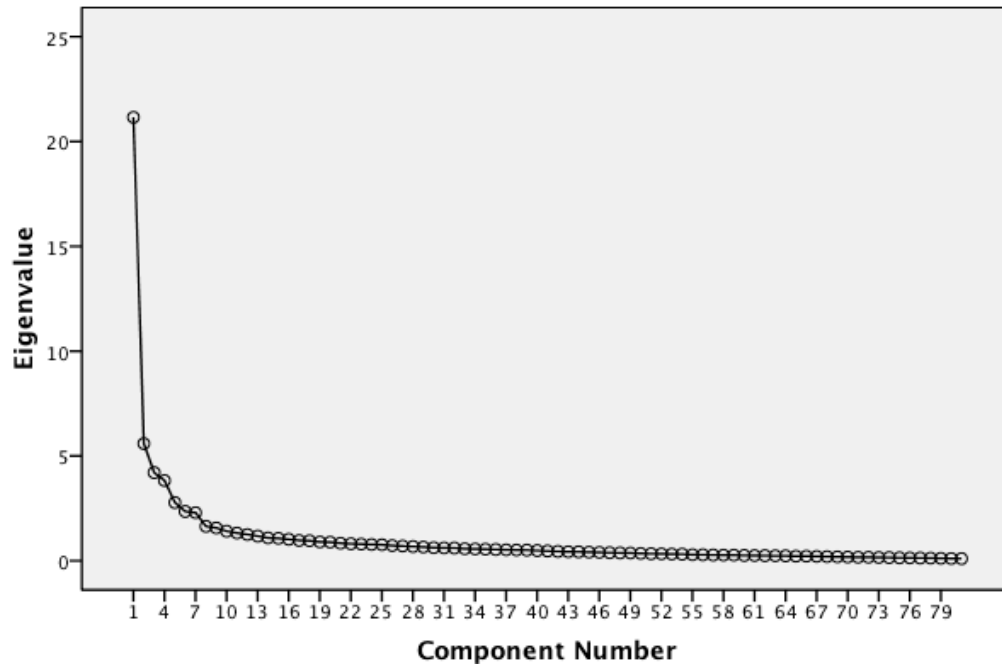
## Research Question 2

The second research question was, “What underlying dimensions exist in the meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show choir music?” Intervallic data was collected via 5-point Likert-type items. Six factors had been identified in the *Choral Meaning Survey* (Hylton, 1980) through a principal components analysis. In this study of ensembles that perform both concert-type and show-choir music, pilot study analysis suggested four additional factors. A principal components analysis was performed on all items included in the questionnaire. The initial test revealed 20 components with a total variance of 68.72%. The KMO value was .899. Examination of the scree plot revealed two distinct factors separate from the others. However, six additional factors appeared at the bend in the plot. Upon examination of the rotated component matrix, the ninth component had eigenvalues ranging from .391 to .627. The decision was then made to suppress the analysis to nine factors. The results produced 24 structure/pattern coefficients and the ninth component listed only three items.

An exploratory principal components analysis with factors suppressed to eight resulted in stronger loadings, but 22 structure/pattern coefficients. Removal of the 22 items produced structure/pattern coefficients but only one item in the eighth component. Finally suppression was set at seven. The resulting rotated component matrix was much cleaner with only five structure/pattern coefficients and a total variance of 52.1% (see Appendix F). The KMO was statistically significant at .915. The scree plot produced seven distinctly separated factors (see Figure 1).



### Scree Plot



*Figure 1.* Scree plot for Catell’s scree test as a measure of the number of factors for combined factors

Components 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6—Physical Activity, Spiritualistic, Travel, Musical-Artistic, and Dance respectively—were quite evident in the rotated component matrix. The seventh component had six structure/pattern coefficients from three different categories. One of the six loaded at  $-.397$  and therefore did not meet the level of suppression of  $.35$ . Two of the remaining five items were related to the hypothesized factor of Competition which was not included in the resulting categories. For these reasons, the six structure/pattern coefficients were discarded. Factor one contained 18 items falling into Achievement, Communicative, Integrative, Psychological, and Musical-Artistic. Evaluation of the rotated component matrix revealed a common theme the

researcher termed Social Interactivity. While previously categorized by Hylton into the aforementioned components, a new theme seemed to emerge because of the interrelatedness of 17 of the 18 items. It appeared that all but one of the items might fall into more than one category. For example, “to have the satisfaction of practicing and getting results” could be labeled as Achievement, Communicative, and Integrative as could “to enjoy being part of the sounds of many voices blending together.” The items and loadings on Social Interactivity are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

*Items Loading on Social Interactivity*

Item	Structure/Pattern Coefficients
To have a good time with the rest of the group	.648
To enjoy being part of the sounds of many voices blending together	.641
To present good concerts	.615
To learn to appreciate the arts	.575
To help other people enjoy music	.571
To try, succeed, and get better	.568
To hear others around me perform	.567
To experience the musical art	.553
To have the satisfaction of practicing long hours and getting results	.543
To associate with talented people	.532

(table continues)

Table 2 (continued)

Item	Loading
To sing songs well	.521
To be with a great group of people	.499
To share my talent with others	.480
To see the faces of the audience when we perform	.479
To be with choir people	.463
To take what we've learned and share it with other people	.395
To get out in front of a crowd and sing	.392

The investigator chose to include the four remaining structure/pattern coefficients in the final analysis because, theoretically, they could be included in more than one of the categorical factors. Three of the items, “to meet new people through travelling,” “to attend competitions and witness the ability of other schools,” and “to meet new people through competitions” contained structure/pattern coefficients in the travel category. All of these items would include travel. The fourth item, “to give others a message through my singing,” contained structure/pattern coefficients in the Spiritualistic category and could easily be construed as having a spiritual connotation. Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991) state that when reporting results of a factor analysis, there should be a “theoretical rationale for the specific application of the factor analysis.” (p. 626). In addition, all additional items in the instrument were reviewed by a group of experts for content and validity. Finally, the KMO for the analysis was statistically significant at .915.

Research Question Two addressed discovery of underlying dimensions for students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show choir music. Results of a principal components analysis indicated a convergence of the previously identified components (Achievement, Communicative, Psychological, and Integrative) combined into the new factor, Social Interactivity, as well as the presence of Musical-Artistic and Spiritualistic factors. (The convergence is further discussed in Chapter 5.) In addition, three new factors emerged: Dance, Physical Activity, and Travel. Data from the six factors were used to address the third research question.

### Research Question Three

Research Question 3 was, "What dimensions of choral meaning predict preference for participation in concert-type choirs or show choirs?" A discriminant function analysis (DFA) was conducted to estimate the relationships. DFA is primarily used to predict membership in two or more mutually exclusive groups. This is accomplished by using pre-existing data in which group membership is already known to compute a regression equation that differentiates, or discriminates, between groups. The resulting information can then be used to calculate group association (George & Mallery, 2007). For the purposes of this study the investigator attempted to ascertain the perceived preference for group membership or if students preferred both equally. Therefore it was necessary to reduce the data from all participants by transforming the survey items used in the final principal components analysis into numeric expressions. This was accomplished in SPSS by compiling the items related to each factor and obtaining the means for each participant. This established the six independent variables (Social

Interactivity, Musical-Artistic, Spiritualistic, Physical Activity, Travel, and Dance factors) used to carry out the procedure.

The two items presented in the questionnaire assessing the degree to which high school students preferred to participate in each type of ensemble were intervallic as opposed to categorical. It was therefore necessary to create a dependent variable with three categories of preference: concert-type choirs, show choirs, and prefer both equally. Participants were categorized into either concert-type or show groups according to which item had the highest ranking. If rankings were the same, participants were categorized as prefer both equally. Nine participants did not respond to both items so their data was excluded. Thirty-three of the 307 cases were missing at least one discriminating variable and nine contained out-of-range group codes, and, therefore, were not included in the data. In the follow-up  $F$  test, there was a significant ( $p = < .001$ ) main effect for the factor related to dance  $F(2, 262) = 12.12, p = < .001$ . Table 3 illustrates the difference in the means according to group membership.

Table 3

*Discriminant Function Analysis Means for Concert-type and Show Choir Participation**(N = 265)*

Factor	Concert-type ( <i>n</i> = 24)		Show ( <i>n</i> = 187)		Both Equally ( <i>n</i> = 54)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Socially Interactive	4.08	.621	4.19	.504	4.36	.540
Physical Activity	3.53	1.117	3.40	.862	3.60	.796
Spiritualistic	4.11	.684	3.83	.810	3.96	.715
Travel	3.93	.655	4.01	.633	3.93	.785
Musical-Artistic	4.031	.563	3.93	.488	4.23	.560
Dance*	3.214	1.243	4.02	.686	3.84	.760

\*  $p < .001$ 

For the remaining valid 265 cases (86.3%), DFA results indicated that 59.6% of the originally grouped cases were correctly classified. Of those preferring show choir 64.2% were correctly classified, 50% preferring concert choir were correctly identified, and 48.1% preferring both equally were correctly identified. Of the six identified factors, dance was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ), indicating that it predicts preference for show choir but not concert choir or preferring both equally. The overall multivariate function was statistically significant for group preference (Wilks' Lambda = .773,  $p < .001$ ).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree high school choral music students prefer to perform either concert-type repertoire or participate in the show choir arena. The study was also designed to examine the perceived meaning of the choral singing experience for students who participate in choirs that perform both types of music. The final question investigated was which of those dimensions might predict students' preferences for participation in each type of choral performance. As better understanding in this area expands, choral conductors and other educators can improve their programs. By identifying some of these factors and increasing the knowledge base, educators and other interested parties can better comprehend and respond to their students in the choral setting. Choral directors can plan and design their curricula to better suite their particular situations.

The following research questions guided this project:

1. To what degree do high school choral music students prefer to participate in concert-type choirs and show choirs?
2. What underlying dimensions exist in the meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in choirs that perform both concert-type and show choir music?
3. What dimensions of choral meaning predict preference for participation in

concert-type choirs or show choirs?

An investigation of related literature began with analysis of motivation in the broadest sense, then as it related to education, then music education, and, more specifically, to choral music education. While music students' motivation for participation has been studied (e.g., Asmus, 1985, 1987, 1989; Gates, 1991; Hylton, 1980), there is very little research, if any, pertaining to ensemble preference. The intent of this project was to examine possible factors, both previously and newly established, which might predict the type of ensemble in which a high school choral music student would prefer to participate.

To address the first research question, a frequencies distribution was performed on two items with Likert-type responses. Overwhelmingly, participants gave their preference for show choir the highest ranking with 77.9% and 15.3% for the next highest for a cumulative 93.2%. For the three lowest rankings, there was only a cumulative 6.2%. For the item asking for preference for concert-type choir, 21.2% ranked it highest and 28.3% second highest for a total 50.5%. The lower three rankings were a cumulative 49.5%. Clearly, the participants for this study had a strong preference for participating in show choir as opposed to concert-type choir. Still, a substantial number indicated their desire to also sing concert-type music. These results suggest that choral music students most enjoy the show choir genre and all it entails, however they also enjoy the more classical music. This seems to support the findings of Neill (1998) that students simply love to sing.

The second research question was: What underlying dimensions exist in the meaning of the choral experience for high school students who participate in both



concert-type choirs and show choirs? This question was addressed by administering the *Choral Meaning Survey* (Hylton, 1980) augmented by additional items developed by the researcher. Hylton's principal components analysis yielded six broad factors related to the meaning of the high school choral experience: Achievement, Psychological, Musical-Artistic, Spiritual, Communicative, and Integrative. For the current study, the investigator, through execution of a pilot study, gleaned four additional dimensions including dance and physical activity, both of which are related to show choir, and competition and travel, which pertained to both types of ensembles.

A principal components analysis was performed on Hylton's previously established six dimensions and the researcher's four hypothesized components. While there was consistency with items related to two of Hylton's factors, Spiritualistic and Musical/Artistic, items from the remaining four, Achievement, Communication, Integrative, and Psychological, appeared to converge on the first resulting factor. Given the interrelationships presented by many of these items, the investigator created a fourth variable, Social Interactivity. Four subsequent principal components analyses were conducted, the last being suppressed to seven factors. The researcher observed a good fit for six factors in the data: Musical-Artistic, Spiritualistic, Social Interactivity, Dance, Physical Activity, and Travel.

The integration of the previously established factors of Achievement, Integrative, Communicative, and Psychological could possibly be an indication of a society that has become technologically based. Perhaps this melding of these components is a reflection simply of our world today. With the ability to communicate literally at our fingertips, we are able to, in real time, socialize and interact with almost anyone on the planet.

Subrahmanyam and Greenfield (2008) theorize that “ for today’s youth, media technologies are an important social variable and that physical and virtual worlds are psychologically connected; consequently, the virtual world serves as a playing ground for developmental issues from the physical world, such as identity and sexuality” (p. 126).

Communication technology and the internet give us immediate access to unlimited resources. In addition to the internet, cell phones and other hand held devices present opportunities through phone calls, texting, chat rooms, blogs, and instant messaging. Social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter allow opportunities to establish a virtual domain where others can keep track of the everyday activities of others, sometimes moment by moment. Research has shown that communication tools are used by adolescents primarily to reinforce existing relationships and to entertain the possibility of new members of their offline world (Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfeld, 2006). Further investigation has shown that instant messaging is used by teens primarily to communicate with offline friends (Gross, 2004). Social networking sites are used to keep in contact with offline peers, make plans with friends they see often, and keep in touch with those they rarely see (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). Blogs are used to share details of everyday happenings in adolescents’ lives (Subrahmanyam, 2007). One can easily postulate that Hylton’s factors of Achievement, Integrative, Communicative, and Psychological could be conceived as a kind of social merge.

Although the manner in which high school choir members communicate and socialize is different from a generation ago, the meanings of this socialization in the setting of a performing ensemble remain constant. In the literature, Morrison (2001) suggests that performing groups are “guardians of their own specific culture that informs

and enriches the lives of its members” (p. 24). There are also practical and personal boundaries where ensemble members spend much time together and become identified as belonging to the group. Naturally, as students prepare for performances, they can have a positive feeling and are rewarded for what they have achieved. The one significant factor in this research, dance, is a highly social activity.

The literature states that motivation to achieve seems to fall into three general groupings: individual motivation coming from within the individual, coming from the environment, and from an intricate interaction between the environment and the individual interceded by cognition (Hallam, 2002). The desire of high school choral students to achieve appears to be directly related to all three of these categories. Students’ motivation to participate in music is stimulated from within and from his environment, which, in this case, are his peers and his audience. As he participates, he is reinforced or stimulated by the response he receives which drives him to strive for improvement.

In line with achievement is the spiritual aspect of choral meaning. The spiritualistic meaning of choral singing was so prominent that Hylton (1980) found it necessary to establish it as one of his six factors. Eckel (1994) found that social interactions within the ensembles, diverse musical experiences, formal performances, and self improvement were the values and motivating factors for participating in music ensembles. He also noted that students often joined groups primarily for personal and social reasons. Although not directly related to the spiritualistic aspect of choral meaning, participation in religious groups is highly personal and socially interactive. Usually, groups of people come together with common purpose and ideas to enhance and reinforce

their beliefs. While the reason for the assemblage is intrinsic, social interaction occurs as a result.

Competition was the only newly-hypothesized factor that was not strongly identified in the data. Although all the choirs surveyed travel to various festivals and performance events, two of the seven choirs surveyed do not actively participate in actual choral competitions. One of those two schools in particular has a long standing, large choral program with a director who has held her position for many years. The researcher knows that her philosophical views tout the importance of a strong, diverse musical foundation and presenting performances within the school and community environment. She feels this should take precedence over attending choral competitions. The long success of her program is testament that choral competitions are not a necessary activity for thriving high school choral ensembles.

The six identified dimensions, Social Interactivity, Musical-Artistic, Spiritualistic, Physical Activity, Dance, and Travel were used to conduct a discriminant function analysis to address the third research question “Which dimensions of choral meaning predict student preference for participation in concert-type choirs or show choirs.” All six factors predicted group membership with one, Dance, being statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). Results indicated that 64.2% of the participants preferring show choir correctly classified, 50% of those preferring concert-type being correctly classified, and 48.1% of those preferring both equally correctly classified.

Of the six identified factors, only dance was statistically significant in predicting preference for participation in show choir ( $p < .001$ ). The items for this dimension loaded quite highly in the analysis, ranging from .545 to .792. Dance is a dimension that

is unique to the show choir genre. While the investigator was unable to locate any prior empirical data pertaining to the movement aspect of show choir participation, it is apparent that the choreographic aspect is substantially valued by high school choral students and should be noted by high school choral conductors. The addition of dance or movement to a musical performance adds a unique dimension of social interaction to a student's choir experience. Performing a dance routine – regardless of the level of difficulty – increases an individual student's engagement in the entire presentation as an important member of a group experience, more so than simply standing and singing. Still, the Dance factor was ambiguous for students preferring concert-type performances.

Closely related to dance is physical activity, the other factor unique to the show choir experience. Again, there was no previous empirical data to support the importance of it as it relates to choral singing, but participants in this study seem to place a great deal of importance on the health contributions made by dancing. While not statistically significant, loadings for this dimension ranged from .576 to .835. Most adolescents are naturally active. Their high energy levels lend themselves to being physically active. They appear to view movement in show choir as an alternative to what is perceived as traditional methods for maintaining physical health.

## Implications

The results of this study make it quite evident that the high school choral musicians surveyed have a strong regard for participating in the show choir genre. While they do not reject the performance of concert-type music, it certainly is not at the forefront of their preference. This finding supports the 1967 recommendation of the Tanglewood Symposium that “music of all periods, styles, forms, and cultures belong in the curriculum.” Choral music educators would do well to take notice and design their programs to meet the desires of their students. Directors often find it challenging to recruit participants for their programs. One reason for this seems to be that students simply do not like the repertoire or prefer more contemporary music including popular music (Reames, 2001). Performing popular and current music is one possible way to attract and keep students. In addition, movement is an added plus to the experience. Choral directors who can master the task of balancing their curricula to be as diverse as possible will conceivably be able to involve more high school choral musicians.

Certainly it is not appropriate to perform one type of music exclusively. The repertoire for a non-specific choral ensemble should possess diverse musical styles, genres, and cultures. No style should be more important than another, and they should be studied and rehearsed in the same manner. The role of popular music should simply be one of equal inclusion, and its justification, as mentioned above, is evidenced by its impact on the unity of all musicians and the richness it will provide to music. The literature supports this notion. Reames (2001) found that twentieth century literature, including popular music, was programmed most frequently and successfully. Students are more apt to prefer music with which they are familiar. When Getz (1966) interspersed

familiar examples of classical music with unfamiliar ones, repetitive familiarity had a positive correlation with preference.

Music has a kind of power and influence unlike anything else. It plays a fundamental purpose in our existence. It is impossible to realize all it can do for the human condition. It has existed since the beginning of time and in all cultures, and has evolved and continues to evolve. The emotional, psychological, sociological, and even physiological needs of all persons can be helped by the presence and function of music in one's life. It provides a means of both individual and collective expression, and serves as motivator and catalyst for creativity and even technological advancement.

#### Recommendations for Future Study

The relatively new arena of show choir in choral music presents numerous opportunities for investigation. This project revealed that students have an overwhelmingly strong preference for participation in show choir. Furthermore, the movement or dance aspect of that genre is of great importance to those who prefer show choir. Dance and its role in the execution of choral singing is an area that demands attention. When is it too much? When does it begin to detract from the intended purpose of the ensemble, that is, to sing and sing well? Vocal production and health, particularly in adolescents, should be explored. Areas such as the effect movement has on singing and ways vocal production is affected by movement should be explored. Comparisons should be made from a physiological perspective between singing concert-type music and popular music. The number of show choir festivals and competitions has rapidly

increased. The impact of music competition on the emotional and psychological development of young musicians should be examined.



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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER, DOCUMENTS FOR  
RECRUITMENT, AND LETTERS OF CONSENT



**AUBURN**  
UNIVERSITY

Office of Human Subjects Research  
307 Sanford Hall  
Auburn University, AL 36849

Telephone: 334-844-5966  
Fax: 334-844-4391  
hsubjec@auburn.edu

February 9, 2009

MEMORANDUM TO: Dale Farmer  
Curriculum & Teaching

PROTOCOL TITLE: "Motivational Factors which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral Ensembles in which They Participate"

IRB AUTHORIZATION NO: 08-276 EP 0811

APPROVAL DATE: November 20, 2008  
EXPIRATION DATE: November 19, 2009

The above referenced protocol was approved by IRB Expedited procedure under 45 CFR 46.110 (Category #7):

"Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

You should report to the IRB any proposed changes in the protocol or procedures and any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others. Please reference the above authorization number in any future correspondence regarding this project.

If you will be unable to file a Final Report on your project before November 19, 2009, you must submit a request for an extension of approval to the IRB no later than November 2, 2009. If your IRB authorization expires and/or you have not received written notice that a request for an extension has been approved prior to November 19, 2009, you must suspend the project immediately and contact the Office of Human Subjects Research for assistance.

A Final Report will be required to close your IRB project file. You are reminded that you must use the stamped, IRB-approved informed consent and parental permissions when you consent your participants. Please remember that you must keep signed consents for three years after your study is completed.

If you have any questions concerning this Board action, please contact the Office of Human Subjects Research at 844-5966.

Sincerely,

Kathy Jo Ellison, RN, DSN, CIP  
Chair of the Institutional Review Board  
for the Use of Human Subjects in Research

cc: Dr. Nancy Barry  
Dr. Kimberly Walls

APPROVED

AUBURN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD for RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS  
RESEARCH PROTOCOL REVIEW FORM

For information or help completing this form, contact: THE OFFICE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH, 307 Samford Hall,  
Phone: 334-844-5966 e-mail: hsubjec@auburn.edu Web Address: http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs/index.htm

Complete this form using Adobe Acrobat Writer (versions 5.0 and greater).

- 1. PROPOSED DATES OF STUDY: FROM: 11/01/2008 TO: 04/30/2009
REVIEW TYPE (Check one): [ ] FULL BOARD [X] EXPEDITED [ ] EXEMPT
2. PROJECT TITLE: Motivational Factors Which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral Ensembles in Which They Participate
3. Dale Farmer Graduate Student CTMU 4045563253 farmew1@auburn.edu
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR TITLE DEPT PHONE E-MAIL
Music Dept Auburn University, AL 36849 ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE 3348443168 FAX
4. SOURCE OF FUNDING SUPPORT: [X] Not Applicable [ ] Internal [ ] External (External Agency):
5. STATUS OF FUNDING SUPPORT: [X] Not Applicable [ ] Approved [ ] Pending [ ] Received
6. GENERAL RESEARCH PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

A. Research Content Area B. Research Methodology
Please check all descriptors that best apply to this proposed research project.
[ ] Anthropology [ ] Anthropometry
[ ] Biological Sciences [ ] Behavioral Sciences
[X] Education [ ] English
[ ] History [ ] Journalism
[ ] Medical [ ] Physiology
[ ] Other (Please list):
Please list 3 or 4 keywords to identify this research project: choral participa
Please check all descriptors that best apply to the research methodology.
Data collection will be: [X] Prospective [ ] Retrospective [ ] Both
Data will be recorded so that participants can be directly or indirectly identified: [ ] Yes [X] No
Data collection will involve the use of:
[ ] Educational Tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement)
[X] Surveys / Questionnaires
[ ] Private Records / Files
[ ] Interview / Observation
[ ] Audiotaping and / or Videotaping
[ ] Physical / Physiologic Measurements or Specimens

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from 11/20/08 to 11/19/09 Protocol # 08-276 EP 0811

C. Participant Information D. Risks to Participants
Please check all descriptors that apply to the participant population.
[X] Males [X] Females
Vulnerable Populations
[ ] Pregnant Women [X] Children
[ ] Prisoners [ ] Adolescents
[ ] Elderly [ ] Physically Challenged
[ ] Economically Challenged [ ] Mentally Challenged
Do you plan to recruit Auburn University Students? [ ] Yes [X] No
Do you plan to compensate your participants? [X] Yes [ ] No
Please identify all risks that may reasonably be expected as a result of participating in this research.
[ ] Breach of Confidentiality [ ] Coercion
[ ] Deception [ ] Physical
[ ] Psychological [ ] Social
[X] None [ ] Other (please list)

RECEIVED NOV 20 2008 Office of Human Subjects Research IRB

For OHSR Office Use Only
DATE RECEIVED IN OHSR: 11/14/08 by LH
DATE OF OHSR CONTENT REVIEW: by
DATE OF IRB REVIEW: 11/20/08 by KJE
INTERVAL FOR CONTINUING REVIEW: 1 yr
PROTOCOL # 08-276 EP 0811
DATE ASSIGNED IRB REVIEW: by
DATE IRB APPROVAL: 11/20/08 by IRB procedure
45 CFR 46.110 (#7)

Minor

final revisions rec'd. 2/5/09



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT)

PARENTAL PERMISSION/CHILD ASSENT for a Research Study entitled "Motivational Factors Which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral Ensembles in Which They Participate"

Your child is invited to participate in a research study to find out why students might prefer different kinds of choral music. Dale Farmer, Graduate Student, is conducting the study under the direction of Dr. Kimberly Walls, Professor and Coordinator of Music Education in the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. Your child was selected as a possible participant because he/she is in the choral program at his/her school and is 18 or younger. Since your child is 18 or younger we must have your permission for their participation

If you decide to allow your child to participate, he/she will be asked to complete an anonymous question during choir. Your child's total time commitment will be approximately 20 minutes. Since the question is anonymous, there are no known risks or discomforts.

Your child's participation is completely voluntary. The question is anonymous so there is no way to identify who completed it and there is no way to withdraw your child's responses. Your decision about whether or not to allow your child to participate will not jeopardize you or your child's future relations with Auburn University or the Department of Curriculum and Teaching.

Your child's privacy will be protected. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. Information obtained through your child's participation will be used for my dissertation to publish scholarly articles and presented at professional meetings.

If you or your child have questions about this study, please contact Dale Farmer at 404-556-3253 or farmerw1@auburn.edu. A copy of this document will be given for you to keep.

If you have questions about your child's rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or email at hsubject@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH FOR YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR CHILD'S SIGNATURE INDICATES HIS/HER WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.

5040 HALEY CENTER
AUBURN, AL 36849-5212

TELEPHONE:
334-844-4434

FAX:
334-844-6789

www.auburn.edu

Participant's Signature Date

Printed name

Parent's/guardian's signature Date

Printed name

Investigator's signature Date

Printed name

Page 1 of 1

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN APPROVAL STAMP  
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INFORMED CONSENT FOR ADULTS for a Research Study entitled "Motivational Factors  
Which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral Ensembles in  
Which They Participate"

You are invited to participate in a research study to find out why students might prefer different kinds of choral music. Dale Farmer, Graduate Student, is conducting the study under the direction of Dr. Kimberly Walls, Professor and Coordinator of Music Education in the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. You were selected as a possible participant because you are in the choral program at your school and are 19 years of age or older.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete an anonymous written survey during choir. Your total time commitment will be approximately 20 minutes. Since the question is anonymous, there are no known risks or discomforts.

Your participation is completely voluntary. The question is anonymous so there is no way to identify who completed it and there is no way to withdraw responses. Your decision about whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of Curriculum and Teaching.

Your privacy will be protected. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. Information obtained through your participation will be used for my dissertation to publish scholarly articles and presented at professional meetings.

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**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE  
WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR SIGNATURE  
INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

5040 MALEY CENTER  
AUBURN, AL 36849-5212

TELEPHONE:  
334-844-4434

FAX:  
334-844-6789

[www.auburn.edu](http://www.auburn.edu)

Participant's signature	Date	Investigator's signature	Date
Printed name	Date	Printed name	Date

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Printed name	Date	Printed name	Date

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Protocol # 08-216 EP 0811



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN APPROVAL STAMP  
WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT)

PARENTAL PERMISSION/CHILD ASSENT for a Research Study entitled "Motivational  
Factors Which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral  
Ensembles in Which They Participate"

Your child is invited to participate in a research study to find out why students might prefer  
different kinds of choral music. Dale Farmer, Graduate Student, is conducting the study under  
the direction of Dr. Kimberly Walls, Professor and Coordinator of Music Education in the  
Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. Your child was selected as a  
possible participant because he/she is in the choral program at their school. Since your child is  
18 or younger we must have your permission for his/her participation

If you decide to allow your child to participate, he/she will be asked to complete an  
anonymous survey during choir. Your child's total time commitment will be approximately 30  
minutes. Since the survey is anonymous, there are no known risks or discomforts.

Your participation is completely voluntary. The questionnaire is anonymous so there is no way  
to identify who completed it and there is no way to withdraw your responses. Your decision  
about whether or not to participate will not jeopardize you or your child's future relations with  
Auburn University or the Department of Curriculum and Teaching.

Your child's privacy will be protected. Any information obtained in connection with this study  
will remain anonymous. Information obtained through your participation will be used for my  
dissertation to publish scholarly articles and presented at professional meetings.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Dale Farmer at 404-556-3253 or  
[farmew1@auburn.edu](mailto:farmew1@auburn.edu). A copy of this document will be given for you to keep.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn  
University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone  
(334) 844-5966 or email at [hsubjec@auburn.edu](mailto:hsubjec@auburn.edu) or [IRBChair@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBChair@auburn.edu).

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE  
WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH FOR YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE. YOUR  
CHILD'S SIGNATURE INDICATES HIS/HER WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

5040 HALEY CENTER  
AUBURN, AL 36849-5212

TELEPHONE:  
334-844-4434

FAX:  
334-844-6789

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name                                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's signature                              Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name                                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Investigator's signature                      Date

The Auburn University  
Institutional Review Board  
has approved this document for use  
from 11/20/08 to 11/19/09  
Protocol # 08-276 EP 0811

## TELEPHONE SCRIPT FOR RECRUITING CHORAL DIRECTORS

Hello,

My name is Dale Farmer and I am completing my PhD. in Choral Music Education at Auburn University. I am interested in knowing why certain high school choral music students might prefer to perform either traditional concert-type music or music of the show choir genre. I'm conducting my dissertation on this topic and am asking your assistance.

I am asking your permission to collect data from your students via an anonymous survey instrument. I will come to your school to collect all the data. Your only responsibility would be to distribute the day prior to my visit a letter obtaining parental permission. It would take about 30 minutes of rehearsal for students to complete the study

The results of this research should be valuable to high school choral directors in selection of repertoire and developing and their choral programs.

Thank you very much for your consideration.



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING  
PERMISSION LETTER FOR THE ADMINISTRATORS FOR  
THE PILOT STUDY

Dear Principal,

I am in the process of conducting research for my dissertation in music education at Auburn University. The title of my project is "Motivational Factors Which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral Ensembles in Which They Participate." I am attempting to determine what, if any, factors might influence a student's preference for performing traditional, concert-type music or show choir music.

I am requesting permission to ask choral music students from your school to complete an anonymous open ended question asking them what singing in choir means to them. The choral director would give

completed. Students who return the signed letter will be allowed to answer the anonymous question. The question would be administered anonymously during one regular class time and should take no more than 20 minutes. Your choral director will be present during this time. There will be no way to identify which student completed which question.

The results obtained from this research will help me in designing a survey to be completed by high school students at a later date. This research should help choral directors in developing choral program curriculum. I hope to complete this research by January 31, 2009.

I am required to obtain your written permission on your school stationary. If you agree to allow the choral music students from your school to participate, please use the enclosed form as a guide to provide your written consent and return it in the enclosed envelope. You may simply photocopy the letter onto your school letterhead and fill in the blanks if you wish. After it is received, you will receive a copy of the IRB-approved stamped consent document.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

334-844-6789

Dale Farmer Graduate Student, Auburn University

LETTER OF CONSENT FROM ADMINISTRATORS FOR THE PILOT STUDY

Date

Institutional Review Board c/o Office of Human Subjects Research  
307 Samford Hall  
Auburn University, AL 36849

Dear IRB Members,

After reviewing the proposed study, "Motivational Factors Which Influence High School Students' Preferences for the Types of Choral Ensembles in Which They Participate," presented by Mr. Dale Farmer, a graduate student at Auburn University, I have granted permission for the study to be conducted at (*school name*):\_\_\_\_\_ . The primary activity will be to determine what singing in choir means to them. All choral music students are eligible to participate.

I understand that the question will be answered during one scheduled class period. I expect that this project will end not later than January 31, 2009. Mr. Farmer will *contact* and *recruit* our students with the help of our choral director and will *collect data* at our school.

I understand that Mr. Farmer will receive parental/guardian consent for all participants, and have confirmed that he has the cooperation of the classroom teacher. Mr. Farmer has agreed to provide to my office a copy of all Auburn University IRB-approved, stamped consent documents before he recruits participants on campus. Any data collected by Mr. Farmer will be anonymous. Mr. Farmer has also agreed to provide to us a copy of the aggregate results from his study.

Sincerely,

Principal

## HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHOIR DIRECTORS

Dear Choral Director,

Thank you for agreeing to assist me in conducting research for my dissertation. On the day before the question is completed (pilot study) or survey is administered (for the final survey), please distribute the PARENTAL PERMISSION/CHILD ASSENT to students 18 and younger or the INFORMED CONSENT FOR ADULTS to students 19 and older. This letter explains the procedure. Please emphasize to the students that participation is voluntary and that all answers will be anonymous.

On the day the question is presented, please collect the forms from students who have parental permission and have agreed to participate. In exchange, give them the questionnaire/survey and the provided pencil. When all surveys have been distributed, please read the script provided below. Emphasize to the students that neither their names nor any identifying marks should be on the completed survey.

Please ask students to return the surveys face down and insert them in the large provided envelope. It is very important that their anonymity be protected. When all surveys have been returned, please seal the envelope.

Students who have elected not to participate or do not provide the SIGNED consent form, I have provided an alternate activity for them, or you can elect to have them do something of your choosing.

SCRIPT FOR INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPLETE THE OPEN-ENDED SURVEY FOR  
THE PILOT STUDY

I am trying to find out what singing in the choirs at your school means to you. To do that, I am asking that you answer the question at the top of the page. List as many things as you can think of. There are no right or wrong answers.

## SCRIPT FOR INSTRUCTIONS TO COMPLETE FINAL SURVEY

Please complete the survey by circling your answers 1 through 5 with 1 being completely disagree, 2 being somewhat disagree, 3 being neutral, 4 being somewhat agree, and 5 being strongly agree. There are no right or wrong answers. This is strictly your opinion. Your answers will be anonymous and confidential.



OPEN ENDED QUESTION FOR THE PILOT STUDY  
(Hylton, 1980)

As a member of your high school choral group you are a person who sings because this experience means something to you. We are trying to find out what it is about this experience that is meaningful to you. Would you list below what this singing experience means to you and the part singing plays in your life.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B  
RESPONSES TO THE PILOT STUDY

## Responses to the Pilot Study

### Achievement

Working hard at something and feeling accomplished

Working toward a goal with a group

Pushing myself to become better

Learning hard work

Doing my best

Pushing yourself to do your best

Working together

Singing your heart out

It's good that we can sing and show what we learned

It keeps me busy and helps me make good grades

Lessons are learned to better yourself

Lessons are learned to better yourself

Teaches dedication and strength

Education

Discipline

Working hard for a goal

It takes a lot of commitment

It teaches discipline

I learn something new every day

Choir has shaped me into a better person

Self discipline

Teaches you hard work and dedication

Singing teaches me work ethics and patience, about how people feel through the lyrics

Music is very rewarding. We have to work together to sound as one choir and not sixty different individuals

Improving of self discipline

Working with professionals is fun

Teaches me how to focus

Discipline

Poise

Confidence

Teaches me

Helps me grow

Learn about others

It's good practice

Loyalty

Leadership

Discipline

Promptness

Helps me grow

It helps me memorize dances better

Gives you a sense of accomplishment

Builds character

Teaches discipline

Working hard

Doing the best possible

Pushing yourself to be better

Learning new music

Not afraid to be loud

Not afraid to try

Not care what anyone thinks

Makes me a better person

It's good to practice

Teaches life lessons

Getting through adversity

Become a more well-rounded person

Becoming a mentor

I am always proud of myself after accomplishing something hard in choir

Bettering myself all around

Discipline

Creating leadership

It keeps me out of trouble

Hard work

Learning more about myself

Knowing you're a leader in your school

Self control

Life lessons

Doing and being a part of something bigger than myself

It is a challenge

Singing has drastically improved my memorization skills

I enjoy working hard and seeing the finished product

Everyone working towards one common goal

Singing is a discipline to me

I love working for something so hard and then seeing the fruits. It makes me work harder for everything else

Helping the director realize his dream

Helping the choreographer realize his vision

Learning something new every day

Learning to work hard

Very rewarding

Through singing, I've learned a lot about self discipline

Learning to adapt and grow

Self discipline

Learning to be unified but individuals also

Life lessons

Learning to work with others

### Spiritualistic

Opens your heart and mind

Singing helps me be closer to God

Next to God, family, and friends, singing is most important

Using the talent that I've been blessed with

Speaks love

Being a huge part in bringing the holiday season together

### Musical Artistic

I've learned how to read music and that will help me later on

This experience has inspired me to pursue singing as a career

Love of singing

College resume

I like music

It looks good on a college resume

Allows me to keep better rhythm

Enjoy learning about music

College resume

I have a natural talent at it

Music expands the mind

Influences creativity

Learn to sing better

Looks good for college

Appreciation for concert choir music

Music expands the mind

Music is just something else to do for me

Singing is important to me because I want to be a choral music director

Studying music is both interesting and challenging

Becoming a better singer

I come from a singing background

Singing is important in my life because I plan to major in it

It gives me a chance to experience different styles of music

This singing experience has taught me to be more appreciative of music

I want to become a performer so this helps me

I love music

### Communicative

Moving people

Singing is important because it brings people happiness

I enjoy seeing friends and family smiling when I sing

It's fun to entertain

I feel that singing can change someone's life somehow

Sends messages out to others

Being influenced by good leaders

Performing for others

Performances that allow our community to come together

Touching audiences

I can express my feelings with my voice

It not only makes me happy, it makes others happy too



It brings smiles to an audiences face

Singing on stage with butterflies in your stomach and people cheering for you is an awesome feeling

I enjoy singing to large groups of people

Putting on a show

I've learned what a huge impact singing/music can have in the listener's life

Being able to perform pieces that touch people

It is a great experience to perform in front of large audiences

Music makes a difference in many people's lives

Singing for the community

Sharing a gift

I like performing

Brings people together

I love showcasing our beautiful songs for others to enjoy

Singing is a way to reach people

I love getting on stage in front of a lot of people

Performing is so thrilling

I enjoy singing to large groups of people

Performing is one of my most enjoyable activities

Entertaining people

Making someone forget about problems they have through performing

Integrative

I love meeting new people through show choir

Friends

Meet new people

Singing is a great way to bring the community together

It's fun to get to know everybody in your show choir group

Being with friends

I am able to make new friends through singing in choir

Builds friendships with classmates

Friendships

I get to make friends from all around by being in choir

The familyness of choir

Meeting new people

You get to be with friends

The memories you make

I am able to sing with friends

Meet new people from around the US

Cute girls in show choir

Meeting new people

Friendship

Forms a bond of people

By being in this group it helps me make a lot of friends

My show choir is like a second family to me

I enjoy singing with my peers  
I love the family that we make together  
Coming together as a team  
I like the time I get to spend with friends  
Getting along with others  
I'm inspired by the people in my group  
Encores is my family  
My show choir is like a second family to me  
I have made so many friends  
It's like a family  
Builds friendship  
It let's me make social connections  
It gives me something to be a part of  
Singing is a way to bring people of all different groups together  
It helps others be compassionate  
It means I can meet new people  
Hanging with friends  
Meeting new people  
This experience allows me to meet new people  
Meeting people who do and like the same thing you do is fun  
Understanding people in the process  
Meeting new people  
Friendship

Meet a lot of people

Meet new people

Form a second family

Make lasting friendships

My choral group acts as my second family

Second family

Comradery

Team work

Get to meet new people

I love being able to contribute my voice with a chorus of others

I can make teamwork and love through being in choir

Meeting new people

Becoming part of a family

My choir is like my family

You meet all sorts of people through choir

Relationship building

Music is my family

Music connects people and creates an understanding stronger than diversities

Being in choir helps me build stringer friendships

Being part of a choral family

Collaborating with each other to create something beautiful

Being a part of a great group

Friends (my real family)

I've made so many friends that I really love  
I enjoy being a part of a group, like a family

### Psychological

Singing means a lot to me  
It took me out of my shy stage  
I love singing because it gives me a chance to express myself  
It helps me fill my time with meaningful things to do  
Have pride in one's self  
Singing makes me feel happy  
Develop ways to express yourself  
Express myself  
I love the songs we sing and the dances we do  
Stress relief  
Singing has always been a part of my life  
If I didn't have singing in my life I don't know what I would do  
Singing just makes me happy and peaceful  
Singing allows me to establish a sense of tranquility  
Show choir allows me to express myself  
Music is an escape from problems for me  
Choir is a major part of my life  
Helps me express myself  
Lets me express my love for music

I love singing  
Love of it  
It is fun  
It makes me happy  
Helps me relieve stress  
It's exciting  
It makes me happy  
Doing what I love most on a daily basis--singing  
Choir is the main activity I participate in  
Choir is another way to enjoy life  
Experiencing new things  
You never know what to expect  
Having fun  
Music is unlimited  
Doing what you love  
I feel unstressed when I sing  
Singing relieves emotions  
Singing relieves tension  
Stress relief  
Keeps me busy through high school  
It expresses emotions in ways words cannot  
It's fun  
Self expression

Singing means a lot to me  
I love singing  
Pure fun  
Unimaginable experiences and memories  
Singing upbeat music keeps me happy  
Singing newer songs is fun  
To express how I feel, I sing when I am happy  
When I am singing, all other stress goes away for a little while  
It's a way of life  
The words to describe this is indescribable  
Has opened my eyes to a lot of things  
Things I have done in choir I will never forget  
Singing means everything to me.  
I wouldn't know what to do without it  
It helps me release my feelings  
It is a lot of fun  
Singing is something I do everywhere  
My choral group is amazing  
We always sing for fun  
It's stress relieving  
Choir is my life  
Shows who you are  
Singing is a way of expressing yourself

What your values are

What you believe in

Makes me feel good about myself

Enjoyable

Gives me something fun to do

Stress relief

Relieves stress

Gets your mind off things

It is fun

It makes me happy

This singing experience means a lot to me because it is a privilege

Singing is one of the few ways I feel comfortable expressing myself

When I come to school it's what I look forward to

It takes my mind off my school work and other stressful situation.

The only thing I do besides reading books

Expressing myself

Fun

Singing means a lot because some schools don't have choirs

Improving self confidence

Expressing one's self

Singing puts me in a good mood

Break out of my shell

I'm more outgoing in choir



Integral part of my life

It allows me to express myself

It gives me something else to do

Singing is a way of expressing yourself

This program has given me memories I'll never forget

Helps me relieve stress

I love singing

It lets me express myself

Singing allows me to express my feelings with music

It is a wonderful stress reliever

People know me as one of the Encore girls—it has become part of my identity

There are certain songs you sing and dances you dance that the whole choir loves and it makes you feel just awesome.

Singing makes me feel happy

It is one of the only things I look forward to

Music plays a part second to sports in my life

It is always there for me

It brightens my day

It is never boring

Stress relief

Love of singing

Being on stage

I sing because I enjoy it

Singing is one of the main ways I express myself

I've had experiences in choir that I wouldn't have anywhere else

Being a part of something that has inspired me since I was little

Expressing myself in what I am good at

Makes me happy

It's enjoyable

You can be yourself

It's fun

### Travel

It has opened many opportunities like singing at the White House

Getting to go to amazing places and have great experiences

Travel abroad

Being in show choir and travelling you meet new people and make new friends.

In show choir we get to travel and travelling and performing are two of my favorite things

Choir gives me many travelling opportunities

Opportunities

Travelling

Travelling

Travel US

Travelling

Being in Choral music there are many once in a lifetime opportunities

Gives me a chance to experience things I otherwise couldn't

Opportunities others will never get (singing at the lighting of the National Christmas Tree)

I enjoy going on trips

I like to travel

I enjoy travelling to different places for concert and competitions

Experiencing places and events I couldn't have otherwise

This experience will take me to places I could not go without it

Travel

Takes you to places you otherwise would never go

Being a member of this group gives me opportunities that many never get

Travel abroad

Travelling

It's a huge honor to sing at the White House and on TV

Travel abroad

Choir has brought about travelling experiences beyond comparison

### Competition

That moment when you win so unexpectedly because you've performed with your heart, not just your body

Competing is fun and exhilarating

Love show choir competitions

Competitions are a way to meet new people

Being able to compete with other schools and see what others have

Winning trophies

### Dancing

Love of dancing

I love dancing

I love dancing

Release of stress through dancing

Dancing

Dancing

Learning new dances

I like the dancing in my choir

Doing what I love which is sing and dance

Love of dancing

Love of dancing

### Physical Activity

It's physical activity

Physical activity

Physically exercising

Show choir keeps me active

Weight loss

It's good exercise

It keeps me in shape

APPENDIX C  
ADDITIONAL SURVEY ITEMS

## NEW ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN FINAL SURVEY

### DANCE

1. To show my love of dancing
2. To dance while singing
3. To express my emotions through dancing
4. To learn how to sing and dance at the same time
5. To entertain using my dance skills
6. To develop my ability as a dancer
7. To use dancing to stay in shape
8. To do the type of dancing we do in choir
9. To dance as a hobby

### PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

1. To get a good work out
2. To have a way to exercise
3. To use movement as an alternate way to exercise
4. To be more active than I would be normally
5. To stay physically healthy
6. To have a regular workout routine
7. To develop my aerobic stamina
8. To sculpt my body

## COMPETITION

1. To have the feeling of exhilaration when winning a competition
2. To participate in show choir competitions
3. To win trophies
4. To experience the feeling of surprise when winning because I've performed with my heart, not just my body
5. To have competitions as a goal
6. To meet new people through competition
7. To have fun through competing
8. To attend competitions and witness the ability of other schools

## TRAVEL

1. To have the travelling opportunities I would not otherwise have had
2. To combine travelling and performing
3. To see other places
4. To take what we've learned and share it with other people in other places
5. To travel with my friends on a bus
6. To go to places I would not otherwise have gone
7. To experience the events when travelling
8. To meet new people through travelling
9. To travel with my friends on a bus

APPENDIX D  
CHORAL MEANING SURVEY



## CHORAL MEANING SURVEY

SA= Strongly Agree    A= Agree    U= Undecided    D= Disagree    SD= Strongly Disagree

Mark your responses thoughtfully. We want to find out what the meaning of the choral experience is for you. There are no right or wrong answers. You must decide how well each item describes a meaning which chorus class has for you. When you have responded to all of the items, please return the paper to your teacher.

- |     |                                                                    |    |   |   |   |    |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1.  | To enrich my musical knowledge                                     | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 2.  | To show my love of dancing                                         | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 3.  | To give people spiritual messages                                  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 4.  | To work with other people                                          | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 5.  | To get a good workout                                              | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 6.  | To find out who I am                                               | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 7.  | To have the feeling of exhilaration when winning a competition     | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 8.  | To give others a message through my singing                        | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 9.  | To have the traveling opportunities I would not otherwise have had | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 10. | To prepare for a musical career                                    | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 11. | To dance while singing                                             | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 12. | To sing many different kinds of music                              | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 13. | To have a way to exercise                                          | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 14. | To learn how to control my voice                                   | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 15. | To participate in show choir competitions                          | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 16. | To show off the potential God gave me                              | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 17. | To learn to get along with other people                            | SA | A | U | D | SD |

18.	To experience the feeling of surprise when winning because I've performed with my heart, not just my body	SA	A	U	D	SD
19.	To combine travelling and performing	SA	A	U	D	SD
20.	To get a sense of accomplishment	SA	A	U	D	SD
21.	To express my emotions through dancing	SA	A	U	D	SD
22.	To give me a good feeling inside	SA	A	U	D	SD
23.	To use movement as an alternative way to exercise	SA	A	U	D	SD
24.	To please people with our singing	SA	A	U	D	SD
25.	To win trophies	SA	A	U	D	SD
26.	To learn how to read music	SA	A	U	D	SD
27.	To fulfill God's call for me	SA	A	U	D	SD
28.	To learn how to sing and dance at the same time	SA	A	U	D	SD
29.	To relax and forget my problems for awhile	SA	A	U	D	SD
30.	To be more active than I would be normally	SA	A	U	D	SD
31.	To see other places	SA	A	U	D	SD
32.	To sing well for others	SA	A	U	D	SD
33.	To meet new people	SA	A	U	D	SD
34.	To entertain using my dance skills	SA	A	U	D	SD
35.	To be with a great group of people	SA	A	U	D	SD
36.	To stay physically healthy	SA	A	U	D	SD
37.	To train my ear	SA	A	U	D	SD

38.	To praise God for all His blessings	SA	A	U	D	SD
39.	To have competitions as a goal	SA	A	U	D	SD
40.	To convert people to a better way of life	SA	A	U	D	SD
41.	To take what we've learned and share it with other people in other places	SA	A	U	D	SD
42.	To have an experience full of feeling	SA	A	U	D	SD
43.	To develop my ability as a dancer	SA	A	U	D	SD
44.	To help me be at peace with myself	SA	A	U	D	SD
45.	To have a regular workout routine	SA	A	U	D	SD
46.	To get out in front of a crowd and sing	SA	A	U	D	SD
47.	To meet new people through competition	SA	A	U	D	SD
48.	To make and enjoy good friends	SA	A	U	D	SD
49.	To travel with my friends on a bus	SA	A	U	D	SD
50.	To bring people to Christ	SA	A	U	D	SD
51.	To use dancing to stay in shape	SA	A	U	D	SD
52.	To learn to appreciate all kinds of music	SA	A	U	D	SD
53.	To develop my self-discipline	SA	A	U	D	SD
54.	To communicate so well with an audience that they applaud	SA	A	U	D	SD
55.	To share my talent with others	SA	A	U	D	SD
56.	To hear others around me perform	SA	A	U	D	SD
57.	To try, succeed, and get better	SA	A	U	D	SD
58.	To stay physically healthy	SA	A	U	D	SD
59.	To associate with talented people	SA	A	U	D	SD

60.	To perform for others	SA	A	U	D	SD
61.	To have fun through competing	SA	A	U	D	SD
62.	To develop my musical talent	SA	A	U	D	SD
63.	To learn to sing new songs well	SA	A	U	D	SD
64.	To feel a sense of pride	SA	A	U	D	SD
65.	To go to places I would not have otherwise gone	SA	A	U	D	SD
66.	To present good concerts	SA	A	U	D	SD
67.	To work together to achieve a goal	SA	A	U	D	SD
68.	To experience spiritual uplift	SA	A	U	D	SD
69.	To find out if I have some singing ability	SA	A	U	D	SD
70.	To enjoy being part of the sounds of many voices blending together	SA	A	U	D	SD
71.	To have others listen to me	SA	A	U	D	SD
72.	To help make life go by easier	SA	A	U	D	SD
73.	To feel more at ease	SA	A	U	D	SD
74.	To do the type of dancing we do in choir	SA	A	U	D	SD
75.	To experience musical art	SA	A	U	D	SD
76.	To discover styles and patterns of music	SA	A	U	D	SD
77.	To feel rewarded	SA	A	U	D	SD
78.	To have people hear the final product	SA	A	U	D	SD
79.	To develop my aerobic stamina	SA	A	U	D	SD
80.	To contribute to a group effort	SA	A	U	D	SD
81.	To understand why other people love music	SA	A	U	D	SD

82.	To learn to sing parts other than the music	SA	A	U	D	SD
83.	To help make the world a better place to live in	SA	A	U	D	SD
84.	To attend competitions and witness the ability of other schools	SA	A	U	D	SD
85.	To feel the satisfaction of practicing long hours and getting results	SA	A	U	D	SD
86.	To experience the events when travelling	SA	A	U	D	SD
87.	To help other people enjoy music	SA	A	U	D	SD
88.	To be part of a very close group of friends	SA	A	U	D	SD
89.	To dance as a hobby	SA	A	U	D	SD
90.	To learn to appreciate the arts	SA	A	U	D	SD
91.	To share God's gift to me	SA	A	U	D	SD
92.	To help me get to know myself better	SA	A	U	D	SD
93.	To have a good time with the rest of the group	SA	A	U	D	SD
94.	To sculpt my body	SA	A	U	D	SD
95.	To express a composers and thought contained in his music	SA	A	U	D	SD
96.	To have competition as a goal	SA	A	U	D	SD
97.	To learn to sing songs well	SA	A	U	D	SD
98.	To worship God through His music	SA	A	U	D	SD
99.	To meet new people through traveling	SA	A	U	D	SD
100.	To see the faces of an audience when we perform	SA	A	U	D	SD

- |                                                                  |    |   |   |   |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| 101. To be a part of something good                              | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 102. To have the excitement and thrill<br>of presenting concerts | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 103. To be with choir people                                     | SA | A | U | D | SD |

Each of the short statements listed below represents a possible preference for choir participation. For each statement, please indicate how well it expresses your preference for choir participation by circling one of the responses.

- |                                                |    |   |   |   |    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| I would prefer participating in concert choir. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| I would prefer participating in show choir.    | SA | A | U | D | SD |

APPENDIX E

VARIMAX ROTATION OF SEVEN-FACTOR SOLUTION

VARIMAX ROTATION OF SEVEN-FACTOR SOLUTION

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	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
Item 93	.648						
Item 70	.641						
Item 66	.615						
Item 90	.575						
Item 87	.571						
Item 57	.568						
Item 56	.567						
Item 75	.553						
Item 85	.543						
Item 59	.532						
Item 97	.521						
Item 35	.499						
Item 55	.480						
Item 100	.479						
Item 103	.463						
Item 41	.395						
Item 46	.392						
Item 29	.359						
Item 58		.806					
Item 45		.793					



Item 36	.783	
Item 13	.743	
Item 5	.711	
Item 79	.710	
Item 23	.688	
Item 94	.672	
Item 30	.589	
Item 72	.446	
Item 51	.423	
Item 38		.849
Item 50		.808
Item 98		.784
Item 91		.779
Item 27		.733
Item 16		.685
Item 68		.631
Item 40		.630
Item 3		.591
Item 9		.751
Item 31		.746
Item 65		.737
Item 19		.714
Item 86		.687

Item 47		.604	
Item 49		.542	
Item 99	.381	.522	
Item 84	.366	.491	
Item 18		.474	
Item 47	.383	.463	
Item 14			.686
Item 1			.617
Item 37			.599
Item 26			.559
Item 24			.532
Item 12			.528
Item 6			.457
Item 10			.454
Item 32			.435
Item 8		.362	.423
Item 22			.381
Item 20			.352
Item 34			.780
Item 2			.767
Item 11			.722
Item 43			.699
Item 21			.698

Item 89		.611
Item 28		.568
Item 25		.649
Item 60		.543
Item 7	.353	.453
Item 54		.420
Item 4		-.397
Item 69		.355