**Focus Group Interview**

**Date: 25/06/2022**

**Signature of researcher: JL**

**Participants: Grade 10A Focus Group**

1. Explain your initial reasons for wanting to join the Kearsney College Choir.

Participant 1: I joined so that I could **experience the freedom of expression**. It gives me the chance to **express myself and my inner feelings**.

Participant 2: I **have always liked music, listening to music, and singing**. It is fun to actually be the one singing and there are **really nice people in the choir like my friends,** they are always nice people to be around. **Making music and singing is just fun to do**.

Participant 3: On the note of **expressing our feelings**, **I find music as a happy place** so if things are going bad, **I feel music is a sense of comfort**.

1. Describe your most enjoyable experiences since joining the choir.

Everybody: The **hypes and touring experiences**.

Participant 4: On the hypes, it is just the **noise we making that is really enjoyable**.

Participant 2: It is just like you can't do these things anywhere else. You can’t just go anywhere and make a big noise or jump up and down, **here you can do whatever you like**.

Participant 3: I really enjoy the **respect that is there amongst ourselves**. The **challenges** that we as a choir should overcome, some of us come from Drakies so we had that experience before of the music, but there are **others who do not have that musical experience**. The challenge of that is that we have to **reach the standards that we as a choir would like to reach.**

1. What are some of the benefits of singing in a choir for you?

Participant 1: You get to **learn new skills**. **We learn different ways of singing**, **how to project your voice, and also learn how to dance.**

Participant 2: I think the exact same thing. I have never done musical singing to this level before, so it is really interesting to **learn how to sing**. **I feel everyone should have a basic knowledge of how to sing and how to read music**. I did not know this before, so it was really interesting to learn. Also, the more **African dances**, I feel is **important to learn about the culture where it originates and that is exactly what we do in this choir**.

Participant 3: Also the **sight singing**. When I started at Drakies, they would give us new scores and my **previous musical experiences have helped me a lot to understand the art of music a bit better**.

Participant 4: **The language** is quite interesting **how you need to pronounce certain words**. Some might be difficult and some might be straightforward, but it is the language overall that we practice.

Participant 5: **You get to learn how to treat different people despite their differences**.

1. What are some of the disadvantages of singing in a choir?

Everybody: The time. **It is time-consuming**.

Participant 2: If you **make a mistake on stage, it could be quite embarrassing**.

Participant 1: **Sometimes you get to see the outside of people that you have never seen before, some people just snap**. For instance, **if you flop your movements, they would start calling you the weakest link.** The next day you really want to go and prove them wrong.

1. Do you think singing in a choir can bring diverse cultures together, and if so how, and if not, why do you think that is?

Everybody: Yes.

Participant 1: Since I have been at Drakies, whenever we had visiting choirs come to the school there, it is really fun just to teach the kids movements and the music. It is fun to see what music they are doing moving on from each year.

Participant 2: Getting back to what was mentioned earlier about **the expression of feelings, we really do that even though we are singing a song in a different language**, but **the way we perform the music is what causes us to send a message to the people who are listening to it.** That deep and understanding feeling is really special.

Participant 3: It is very easy to be at school and do things with your friends, but **in the choir, you can find so many different personalities in the choir and it becomes good to mix with people that have different backgrounds**.

1. Could you explain what you value most of being a choir member of the Kearsney College Choir? Elaborate.

Participant 1: The **passion you have for choir singing** and **seeing the vision** that is there.

Participant 2: I think it is about **being surrounded by nice people** and they are usually people that would like the same things as me and then **we all share that something we have in common.**

Participant 3: It is **the brotherhood** that the choir shares. If one person is behind, there are **people that are always there to help**.

Participant 4: I think it is cool to **show people what you are capable of** with the choir.

Participant 5: It definitely helps **force people to get out of their comfort zones** and it **builds confidence**. I used to be very scared to go on stage, but now I am much more confident.

Participant 6: What drives me to come to the choir on Monday nights, Thursday nights, and Friday afternoons, are **the different voice groups to come together to create one thing that becomes achievable**. **Movement-wise**, the music that we sing in the choir could be something different but then **we teach each other** to do the right thing.

1. Do the members of the Kearsney College Choir share a unique brotherhood (separate from the rest of the school)? Elaborate.

Participant 1: I feel **we have a very different bond compared to other groups and people in the school**. The choir is really one of a few cultural groups that go on tours etc.

Participant 2: **We share things that we have in common with one another**. The fact that **we spend a lot of time together creating music brings us together**.

Participant 3: With the choir, you always **have to rely on other people in the choir**. **People are always there to help you to become a better singer**. One of my friends always helps me to do my dances better and it is not like someone is laughing at you whenever you are flopping the movements, well, sometimes it is like that. Most of the time, **it is people that really want to help you become better and the choir.**

1. What do your friends outside of choir think of you participating in the school choir? Do they tease you, or do they support your choice to participate in the choir?

Participant 1: It varies. **Some people would support you and some might not**.

Participant 2: Whenever the choir is mentioned in classes, **they would sometimes make comments or tease you.** **Some people are chilled by the fact that you are singing in the choir**.

Participant 3: I feel that **some people do respect the fact that you are singing in the choir** to a certain extent. Our choir is quite a good choir and **once they listen to you, they realise how good you actually are**.

Participant 4: Some of them also think that it is a big commitment or something that you really enjoy. **If they realise that it is something that you enjoy, they do support your decision**.

Participant 5: My friends do this. **Whenever my friends see me in my choir uniform, they would check me out and wish me luck for the concert**.

Participant 1: I feel it also **depends on how you treat them**. If you know you have a practice and **you start speaking negatively, then they would start speaking negatively about the choir**.

1. What motivates you to continuously participate in choral singing at Kearsney College?

Participant 1: **The end goals and concerts**. When we know that there is a concert or tour coming up, **it forces us to work towards something**.

Participant 2: I want to come to practices because I know that there are **really nice people in the choir** and I know they are good friends and we **share a good time** with one another. **It is fun** to be there.

Participant 3: When I started at Drakies, I was not really strong and powerful when it came to my singing. Since **I came to Kearsney, I felt I wanted to continue and try and be better than I was before**. It is **that drive to become better at singing**.

Participant 4: There is a **bond** among everyone who is singing in the choir. **There is always somebody there to help you**.