**Focus Group Interview**

**Date: 25/06/22**

**Signature of researcher: JL**

**Participants: Grade 9B**

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

Participant 1: My brother came to Kearsney before me and I **use to come and watch the performances** and I use to like the choir.

Participant 2: The **choir came to my previous school** and they used to do gumboots and stuff and immediately I thought that it **looked pretty good** and joined the school and choir.

Participant 3: I sang in my primary school choir and my **aunt works here at Kearsney**, so when I came up to watch the choir’s performances, I thought it **looked very cool** so I joined the choir.

Everybody: We **enjoyed the gumboots.**

Participant 4: I have never seen them before. In my primary school, I sang in the choir but my teacher taught us bad songs and they were very strict. I always **heard that the choir here participates in the World Choir Games**, so I thought that I always wanted to be part of that.

Participant 5: When I came in grade eight **I heard that the choir had won the World Choir Games, which motivated me to join**.

Participant 6: I was in grade seven the year when **they won**, so when I came here.

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

Participant 1: I really enjoy the **bonds you get to make**. When I was in grade eight I did not know everybody but once you are **in the choir, you get to know people better**.

Participant 2: This does not only happen just with your grade mates in the choir but with **other grades as well**.

Participant 3: The **first performance you ever do with the choir you never forget.** I clearly remember performing a song called A Song of Peace.

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

Participant 1: **Touring**.

Participant 2: I **gain peace**. **I am a sportsman, but it feels like I become a different person when I sing in the choir**. It is a different peace and it **becomes a breakaway space**.

Participant 3: I gain the ability **to listen to others** and get direction from them. If I sing the wrong parts I can hear it from other people and if I do something wrong, **I can listen to the advice given by other people**.

Participant 4: A **better experience**. **In my primary school, we didn’t really learn things like the things we are learning in this choir**.

Participant 5: I would say **the hype you get.** People would know the Kearsney College Choir and they set high standards if they listen to us. **So when we leave to perform somewhere we always put in decent performances**.

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

Participant 1: **It takes away free time**.

Participant 2: I do not think there is anything else, it is just the **time**.

Participant 3**: Some people would say that the choir is not really something to be proud of**. **Some guys would think that it is a girly or a feminine activity**.

Participant 4: They can tune us. **They would bump you unnecessarily on the sports field**.

Participant 5: I think that some people do not know what it is like to be a part of a choir. They have never put in enough effort to do it. It plays a massive role in who you are as a person.

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?

Participant 1: It is not that you have a different background but it is about **you all having a common goal**.

Participant 2: **We all know that we have to work hard together.**

Participant 3: **I think it should be seen as a sport in South Africa**…

Participant 4: **I think that could bring us even closer**. We are already close but **teamwork brings us even closer**. People enjoy hearing that the choir competes in choir competitions.

Participant 5: It is about **desire**. **We all have a common goal and everyone works hard to achieve that goal.** **Everyone then has to put in the same amount of effort** and that **brings everyone closer to each other**.

Participant 6: With that goal, some person **may not know how to pronounce a certain word**, and once you **ask another person for help,** **you sort of gain comfort with that person and know that he would assist you whenever you need it**.

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

Participant 1: **The culture**, whether we are singing an Austrian lullaby, Ukrainian songs, or we do gumboots, it **is all about the culture behind it as well**.

Participant 2: **We sing different languages from different cultures.**

Participant 3: We have a **bigger variety of genres than most choirs** I think.

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

Participant 1: **You are in the choir because you enjoy singing with a bunch of people who enjoy the same thing as you do**. They will not tune you because you are singing.

Participant 2: **You also spend a lot of time together so you will also get to know each other better**.

Participant 3: Sometimes it can feel embarrassing if you sing in front of your mates but in front of the other choristers I do not try and impress them, **I stay true to myself**.

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?

Everybody: Some students do [argument began amongst the participants].

Participant 1: **My friends were all in the choir** at some stage, but they all **left because of a rugby festival**. I was also going to leave but I decided to stay. I still don’t know why I stayed, I just saw myself alone in the choir.

Participant 2: I have **some friends that support me and the choir**, but **some of them just bring you down.** **They don’t understand it**.

Participant 3: **They really misjudge you** because they haven’t been in a choir so t**hey are not aware of what it feels like**.

Participant 4: They have a **misperception of us just standing and singing**. But the movements and stuff we do are crazy and it takes weeks to prepare. That goes for some of the songs that we sing in different languages.

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

Participant 1: **The rewards**.

Participant 2: There was a time when I thought that it would be better if I leave the choir, but then you get **that moment that just makes you stay**.

Participant 3: It helps if **after the performance we sing and do fun stuff together**.

Participant 4: Lately, people have been over it because of the time that it is taking but they do not realise that it would always be like this, it is just because of the tour that things are rough, but after the tour things will get more chilled.

Participant 5: I think it is **the performances**, that make it worth it. **When you are done performing, the whole crowd cheers for you, and that is what makes me stay**.