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The Performance Production Process of an Outstanding High School Choir

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The Performance Production Process of an Outstanding High School Choir

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
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DEDICATION

I am thankful for all those who loved me through the tough times, supported me in prayer, and helped me to see that "For by Thee [oh God] I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall" (Psalm 18: 29, King James Version). Thank you family and friends.

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ABSTRACT

Despite the interest in and importance of producing high quality choral performance, the question "How is superior performance produced?" has not been addressed in a holistic and naturalistic way. A synthesis of previous research findings suggests that a combination of actions, interactions, relationships, and conditions produce superior choral performance. Yet a holistic examination of this multi-faceted production process has not been conducted. In order to identify all factors contributing to the production of superior performance and how these factors work together, I comprehensively examined an extreme case of superior performance. This extreme case of superior performance was one high school, mixed choir who had performed at a national ACDA convention on three different occasions. This choir had consistently earned state superior ratings and top awards in many competitions. Through grounded theory analysis of over 34 hours of interview data, three and one-half days of observation, examination of material culture and field notes, and analysis of survey data, I purposed to discover how this choir produced superior performance.

Results of my study indicated that a combination of choral performers' beliefs, values, characteristics, actions, and interactions produced superior performance. As the core explanation of the production of superior performance, the common beliefs and values of the director and his singers promoted and activated actions and interactions that produced superior performance. Choral performers (i.e., director and singers) strongly believed in and valued hard work, diligence, excellence, success, caring, responsibility,

and the music. These beliefs and values powerfully determined their identity and the quality of their performance. The director's motivational strategies and expert technical pedagogy also provided explanation for how the choir produced superior performance. The director's musicianship and musical pedagogy powerfully motivated singers. The director's musicianship inspired singers to increasingly greater performance heights. Singers' love for the music and their convictions for producing aesthetically, expressive performance, grew as they learned about and experienced the intermingling of musical and textual devices. Of lesser importance to the production of superior performance was the director's expert technical pedagogy. Through technical pedagogy, singers learned to perform with precision. Through the director's motivational strategies, musicianship, and musical and technical pedagogy, singers learned the actions and interactions necessary for the production of superior performance. Performers' beliefs and values interacting with the motivational strategies of the director propelled singers into achieving these actions and interactions and determined the intensity with which they performed.

The results of this investigation suggest examination into the effects of motivation, musicianship, and musical pedagogy on large ensemble performance quality. Results also suggest the need for investigation into the choral performers' beliefs and values and how they may impact the rehearsal and the quality of performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Choral music performance is a unique art form built upon the miracle of human sound production. The singer is the sound generator, amplifier, and resonator (Robinson and Winold, 1976) of pitch, rhythm, timing, intensity, volume, timbre, clarity, diction, style, mood, emotion, and meaning. Each singer uses his or her entire self, body, mind, spirit, and voice (Kemp, 1985), to communicate the intentions of wedded text and sound. Multiply this intimate self-engagement of singer by the number of persons in the choir and the result is a dynamic physical, mental, emotional, attitudinal, and spiritual release of energy capable of portraying, exemplifying, and motivating all human experiences and conditions. The simultaneous, unified engagement of text, music, and corporate sound supported and created by the depth and breadth of humanity is of great capacity to transform the hearts and lives of those listening as well as those singing. Thus the quality of this corporate engagement (i.e., choral performance) is of utmost importance to present and future choral performers (i.e., singers and directors) and audiences.

Historically, choral performance quality has been important to citizens of the United States of America since the early 1700s as evidenced by the inception of singing schools (Mark, 1996). Singing schools were started for the purpose of improving the singing of church parishioners. Parishioners and non-parishioners of all ages paid for singing lessons, instruction in note reading and musical rudiments, and enjoyed the pleasant social atmosphere of the singing schools. Popularity of singing schools lasted

through the last half of the nineteenth century. In addition to singing schools, many citizens participated in choral societies during the last half of the nineteenth century. Interest in music production was exhibited by inclusion of music instruction, primarily singing and note reading in some public school curricula by the early nineteenth century. By the early twentieth century, choirs at the secondary and post-secondary levels were in "abundance" (Robinson & Winold, 1976, p. 21).

The quality of performance was of interest to musicians of the United States as evidenced by those who traveled to Europe to learn the methods of the finest European choirs (Phillips, 2004). Inception of choral ensemble competitions and festivals during the early twentieth century also indicated an interest in the quality of performance. Strong concern was shown for quality choral performance production through the inclusion of ensemble singing standards in the *National Standards for Arts Education* (MENC, 1994). Ensemble singing was included in all grade level clusters. An example of the ensemble singing standards is as follows: "Students sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory" (MENC, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

Despite the importance of quality performance and the persistent interest in production of high quality choral performance in the United States, researchers have not addressed the question "How is superior choral performance produced?" in a holistic and naturalistic way. Research investigation into superior performance production has been segmented and did not suggest a model for achievement of superior performance. Researchers have found that certain director characteristics and director rehearsal

behaviors were common among settings producing superior performing choirs (e.g., Cox, 1989; Fiocca, 1989; Johnson, 2003; Rhoads, 1990). Although given much less investigative attention than director behaviors and characteristics, particular characteristics and behaviors of singers (Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996), and auxiliary supports may also influence choral performance quality (Basham, 1999; Johnson, 2003; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Research findings suggested that more than one factor contributed to performance success (Jenkins, 2005; Rhoads, 1990; Thurman, 1977; Wright, 1996). Yet there has been no holistic examination of this multi-faceted phenomenon. Synthesis of the entire body of research findings regarding quality choral performance production suggested that an amalgamation of processes resultant from various behaviors, characteristics, and possibly conditions may produce superior choral performance. Yet to my knowledge, there has been no investigation examining how these processes work together to produce superior performance.

A thorough investigation of how superior performance is produced should reveal all contributing factors to performance success and how these factors work together to produce superior performance. By examining rehearsal and non-rehearsal actions and interactions of all choral production stakeholders (e.g., directors, singers, financial supporters, emotional supporters) and the meaning of these actions and interactions, processes responsible for quality performance can be identified. Findings from an in-depth, comprehensive investigation of the choral performance production process may offer choir directors a complete picture of superior performance production. By understanding all facets of superior performance production, increased numbers of choral directors and choirs would have a better chance of creating music of superior quality.

Rationale for the Study

Findings from an investigation of the entire production process of superior performance (i.e., all that occurs and is part of producing superior choral performance before the actual stage presentation) may help explain inconsistent research findings in the present performance quality literature. The multi-faceted nature of performance production may be reason that some researchers, unlike others, have not found commonalities among superior performance settings. These researchers compared the time usage and pacing of directors of superior performing choirs. Isolating rehearsal time usage and director pacing from other rehearsal factors was difficult. Researchers found that the way time was used in rehearsal was dependent upon musical competency of the singers (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977), singers' ages (Derby, 2001), difficulty of music rehearsed (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977), singers' familiarity with music style being rehearsed (Thurman, 1977), type of rehearsal activity (Arthur, 2002; Thurman, 1977), directors' rehearsal preferences (Caldwell, 1980), and the stage of literature preparation singers were experiencing (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993). Researchers found that pacing varied by rehearsal activity (Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1998; Derby, 2001), difficulty of music literature, and singer competency (Arthur, 2002). Investigating these two rehearsal behaviors was difficult given the many differences (e.g., type of rehearsal activity, music difficulty) among choirs studied.

Director feedback ratios (i.e., the number of approvals to disapprovals given to choir members during rehearsals of superior performing choirs) were inconsistent. Some directors gave more approval than disapproval feedback (Davis, 1998; Arthur, 2002) while others expressed more disapprovals than approvals (Derby, 2001; Morgan, 1992).

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As with time usage and pacing, varying performance production characteristics among choirs under investigation influenced research findings. Research findings indicated that director rehearsal feedback depended on singers' ages (Derby, 2001), stage of repertoire preparation (e.g., learning versus polishing music) (Davis, 1997), singer competency (Davis, 1997), rehearsal objectives, and the director's prerogative (Jenkins, 2005).

The multi-faceted character of performance production also affected research findings of researchers investigating the effect of teacher talk ratios (Napoles, 2006) and movement (Holt, 1992; McCoy, 1986) on performance achievement. Findings regarding the effect of different teacher talk ratios on performance ratings were inconsistent due to the confounding factor of singers' preference for one of two music scores used in the research investigation (Napoles, 2006). Choirs receiving movement treatments received statistically significantly higher overall performance scores than those not receiving treatments (Holt, 1992; McCoy, 1986). But results of these studies were confounded by differences in singer competency among choirs.

Investigation of a single case of superior performance production, observed through specific stages of repertoire preparation eliminates the difficulties of examining more than one choir, all with varying characteristics that impact research findings. In a single case study, rehearsal behaviors of only one director and one set of singers' would be examined at a time. Time usage, pacing, feedback, and other rehearsal behaviors can be interpreted in light of specific rehearsal activities, music difficulty, repertoire preparation stage, rehearsal objectives, and director's prerogatives. Thus the holistic, single case study is sensitive to the many attributes of the production process, responding to the investigative difficulties of previous research. Findings may offer researchers and

choral directors increased understanding of behaviors, personalities, beliefs, attitudes, contexts, and their interactions necessary in production of superior performance.

Significance of the Study

A holistic (i.e., complete, comprehensive) examination of the production of superior performance is significant to researchers, choral practitioners, choral performers, and choral audiences. This study may be the first to examine superior performance production holistically. It could also be the first study to holistically examine an extreme case of superior performance production. Results of this study may (a) reveal all the processes, behaviors, contexts, conditions, characteristics, and personalities contributing to very successful performance, (b) provide new information and insights about the performance production process, (c) add to the perspective of previous research findings, and (d) suggest new lines of research inquiry. By knowing factors that contribute to performance success and how these factors function together, choral practitioners and singers may learn ways to improve their choirs' performance quality. Consideration of findings may increase the number of superior performing choirs. By improving choral performance quality, performers and audiences will experience a higher caliber of presentation.

Implications of findings of this study may also psychologically benefit choral student singers. Rehearsal of procedural knowledge (Ericsson, 1996), challenge of attainable performance goals, and opportunities to succeed in performance provide opportunities for intellectual, emotional, and social growth (Bandura, 1997). The ability to perform at a high quality level facilitates positive self-esteem (Jenkins, 2005; Wright,

1996). Thus, this study is significant because of the benefits all choral performance stakeholders may receive from its findings.

Purpose

The purpose of this case study was to discover how one high school choir produced extremely high quality performance. Participants (i.e., the music faculty, choir members, some choir members' parents, and school administrators) were studied in their regular high school performance production setting. This holistic investigation might generate a model for performance success. The central research question was "How is superior high school choral performance produced?" The sub-questions were:

- What (e.g., actions, interactions, relationships, attitudes, conditions) and who contributes to the performance success of this choir? How do these things and persons contribute to the performance success of this choir?

- What underlying personal themes emerge from research participants?

- What, if anything, is atypical about this particular production phenomenon?

Definition of Terms

Auxiliary support is a person, place, thing, or process, not including the choir director and choir members that influences or facilitates choral performance achievement.

A *choir* or *choral director* is one who (a) determines the curriculum (e.g., music literature) for a vocal ensemble, (b) may select membership for a vocal ensemble, (c) teaches and facilitates a vocal ensemble's preparation and presentation of choral music, (d) conducts a vocal ensemble through public presentation of choral music, and (e) often oversees fund raising for the vocal ensemble.

Choral performers refer to the choir director and his singers. This term is never used for

    only singers or for only a choir director.

A *choral stakeholder* is a person or a group of people who have an invested interest in the

    choir under investigation. School and school district administrators, parents, and

    community members are examples of choral stakeholders.

Extraordinary means "going beyond what is usual, regular, or customary"

    (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/extraordinary). This definition was

    based on the current study's evolving data and the dictionary's rendering.

A *feeder program* refers to a choral organization that supplies or may supply singers into

    a successive choral organization. For example singers in the middle school choir

    system may choose to sing in their respective high school choirs.

High quality performance and *superior performance* are used interchangeably in this

    dissertation to refer to performance quality of choirs who have at minimum,

    earned superior ratings over a period of three years or more at festivals and

    competitions adjudicated by a panel of choral experts. At minimum, adjudicators

    have assessed the choir's intonation, tone, blend, balance, rhythmical precision,

    musical accuracy, artistic interpretation and expressivity, stylistic authenticity,

    and diction.

Material culture refers to objects of, or associated with, the research topic. Documents,

    electronic communications, and artifacts are examples of material culture.

A *Musician* is "one skilled in music" (Merriam-Webster, 1965, p. 558).

Musicianship refers to the expression of musical skills, knowledge, and understanding.

Performance production refers to deliberate actions, interactions, processes, beliefs, and

attitudes that when combined together create a vocal sound rendition of choral

music literature. These actions, interactions, processes, beliefs, and attitudes are

manifested in particular conditions (e.g., music, curriculum, and financial

support).

Rehearsal behaviors are actions, interactions, functions, or reactions occurring during a

practice session of a choir.

A *rehearsal condition* refers to the practice session atmosphere facilitated and created by

interactions between the choir director and other practice session participants such

as the singers.

A *servant leader* is one who works with others, facilitating them to their finest

achievements and highest productivities. He is unselfish, caring, giving, and

focused on the well being of those with whom he works. (Greenleaf, 1977).

Superior performance: see *high quality performance*

Delimitations of the Study

Understanding the process of high quality choral performance production has

been delimited to the examination of one, large group, public high school, mixed choral

ensemble. This ensemble represents an extreme case of high quality performance. The

choir has been a national American Choral Director Association's (ACDA)

demonstration choir in the years 2003, 2007, and 2009. It has earned eleven consecutive

State Sweepstakes Awards. It has earned Best in Class awards at festivals in Dallas,

Houston, San Antonio, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, and Chicago.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study are organized in three categories. These categories are methodological expectations, study participants, and researcher bias and qualification.

Methodological expectations.

Case study. Because this is a case study, findings cannot be generalized to other choirs. What is learned from this study can add to what is already known about the performance production process. Findings may guide researchers in further research.

Time on the field. Due to the performance demands of the choir under examination, data collection time on the field was limited to three and one-half days. While on the field, data collection began no later than 9:00 A.M. and on full days, ended no earlier than 10 P.M. Prolonged data collection time on the field makes for credible findings. Although I was unable to return to the research site, I conducted an additional nine hours and seven minutes of interview data by phone and online connections.

The credibility of data from this investigation was strengthened through use of multiple data collection strategies, triangulation of various data sources, multiple analysts, and rigorous data analysis. Data analysis included such strategies as the constant comparison approach and cross-classification of major findings.

Study participants. Research findings are bound by the context of this case study and by the study's type of participant. Participants in this choir reside in a large suburban community in the state of Oklahoma in the United States of America. Sixty percent of participants were Caucasian.

Student and parent interview participants were limited to those who volunteered and had the time to interview. In order to control for participant reaction to data

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collection and me, the researcher, I spent time building a non-threatening rapport with the choir directors and their students. Participants were told that their natural, honest participation was necessary to attain credible findings. To encourage truthful participant responses, I explained that the study's findings could help others. I assured participants that they had already proven their performance quality therefore they had nothing to prove to me.

Researcher bias and credibility. Researchers exercise reflexivity by being conscious about biases, experiences, and values that they bring to their study (Creswell, 2007). I had been a high school choir director for eleven years. So I had ideas, experiences, and values associated with the choral performance production. It was helpful that the participant choir and choral setting were very different from my previous teaching scenario. Therefore the temptation to compare my former situation with this case sample was minimal. My choirs had not earned the opportunity to sing at a national or even regional ACDA convention. And my former choral setting was deep within the confines of an urban setting.

I had also gained insight about quality performance production through an earlier wind ensemble investigation I had conducted. Admittedly I entered this present study's research site with thoughts of the previous findings. I dismissed thoughts of the previous study and its findings, when I realized the vast differences between the two research sites and their personalities. As a researcher I knew I would glean most from my experience at the new research site by dismissing all preconceived ideas.

Each evening while on location at this present study's research site, I wrote notes about the day and reflected on what I had heard and observed. My reflection included two

questions that helped me to expel bias. These questions were "Are you putting your past experiences behind you?" and "How well are you doing at thinking of this as a brand new experience of choral performance making?" My conscious efforts to be unbiased and open-minded during data collection and analysis were supported by eleven doctoral students and six faculty members of a music education department. As debriefers from inception through the writing of this study, this group's questions and comments helped me maintain a bias free protocol.

Although I did not mingle or confuse my previous experiences, biases, and values with this present study's data or data analyses, I used my choral director and researcher experiences to give credibility to the research findings. Through choral directing experiences and knowledge of findings of previous performance studies, I was able to design efficient research questions, test research assumptions, and measure the likelihood of research findings. Previous research experiences informed me of efficient research practices (e.g., ways of organizing participant transcripts). Having been a high school choir director, participants were comfortable around me. I was cordially welcomed into the research site and permitted to experience personal and public views of this extreme case.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature addressing the production of choral performance was found in textbooks, position papers, and research documents. Due to the voluminous amount of literature addressing this topic, literature in this review was restricted to research documents. Specifically, I have restricted my review to documents whose authors (a) identified the quality of performance addressed and (b) provided clear description of their method of inquiry. Because I sought to understand the production process of particular qualities of performance, I believed it important to restrict this review to information tied to performances whose quality had been measured. Findings in this review included the following types of performance measurements: (a) festival performance ratings, (b) statistical analysis of performance scores by panels of expert judges, (c) recommendations by panels of choral experts, and (d) invitations to prestigious performance venues (e.g., Texas Music Educators Association [TMEA] or ACDA national convention).

In search of documents addressing the production of choral performance, I used the following search engines: Education Resources Information Center (Cambridge Scientific Abstracts) (ERIC), International Index to Music Periodicals, Journal Storage (JSTOR Music), Music Index Online, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, PsycInfo (EBSCO), and Web of Science. Examples of search terms used were *performance, choral performance, performance quality, superior, national performance, nationally*

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recognized, superior ratings, ACDA choirs, and *outstanding*. Research documents pertinent to the production of particular qualities of choral performance were found in peer-reviewed journals, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations.

Findings of this literature described characteristics of superior choirs, characteristics and behaviors of choral participants (e.g., director, singers), or effects of experimental treatments on performance qualities. Synthesis of findings is organized into four categories: the choral director, auxiliary support, the choral singer, and inconsistent and confounding findings.

The Choral Director

Most researchers studying directors of choirs of superior performance investigated director characteristics and rehearsal behaviors. A large body of research suggested that certain director characteristics and rehearsal behaviors were important in the production of high quality performance. Fewer researchers have examined other director behaviors that may be identified with choirs of superior performance. Findings of this literature were presented in two categories: (a) behaviors and characteristics important to the production of high quality performance and (b) behaviors that may be identified with choirs of superior performance.

Director Behaviors and Characteristics Considered Important to High Quality Performance Production.

A large body of research literature identified director behaviors and characteristics that created productive rehearsal and singer conditions important to the production of high quality performance. Researchers also found that attention to vocal pedagogy was important to the production of superior choral performance. Findings regarding this

literature were presented under the headings, rehearsal condition, personal characteristics, and vocal pedagogy.

 Rehearsal condition. Rehearsal condition in this study referred to the practice session atmosphere created and facilitated by interactions between the choir director and other practice session participants (e.g., the singers). A large body of research investigating the production and improvement of high quality choral performance exposed director behaviors and director characteristics responsible for the creation of a specific rehearsal condition. Research findings tied to performance quality suggested that director creation and management of a positive, productive rehearsal condition was necessary for the production of superior performance quality. These findings were supported by research regarding teacher intensity (e.g., Madsen, 1990; Madsen & Yarbrough, 1980). The following paragraphs describe the particulars of creating and maintaining the type of rehearsal condition that is important to superior performance production.

 Productive rehearsal conditions were created through characteristics and behaviors of the choir director. Enthusiastic (Decker, 1975; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005) and intensely focused directors (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) positively influenced singers' desire to work. Directors of successfully performing choirs inspired singer willingness to work and singer desire for excellence through (a) vision building, (b) demonstration of their own abilities, and (c) demonstration of their understanding of musical production to the students (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). In the single case studies of Jenkins (2005), Morgan (1992), and Wright (1996), directors discussed performance goals with singers and demonstrated musical expertise through

logical organization of rehearsals, efficient teaching, and musical modeling. These directors had consistently produced choirs of superior performance.

High school singers' desire to achieve was also motivated through director care and concern for singers' present and future well-being (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Two directors of national ACDA choirs built a sense of community within their choral programs that reflected genuine appreciation among all performers (director and singers) and value for a purposeful life (Jenkins, 2005; Wright 1996). These directors facilitated singer confidence and value for self through special strategies. One director shared personal, inspirational stories during rehearsal time (Jenkins, 2005). Another director facilitated thanksgiving moments (Wright, 1996). Thanksgiving moments were times when singers publically shared their appreciation for one another.

Directors of national ACDA choirs took rehearsal time to build singer vision for their future. They encouraged positive contribution to society (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). These directors and a director of years of superior performance ratings encouraged students toward lifelong music participation (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). These directors purposed to positively affect their singers' future beyond the high school music experiences. They valued their singers beyond the contribution each singer could make to their choir.

A great number of performance-successful directors, those whose choirs had consistently earned superior festival scores, performed at national conventions, or were university choral directors, consistently challenged singers with high performance goals (Basham, 1997; Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). They required singer discipline and strong work ethic (Basham, 1997; Jenkins,

2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Most created a pleasant condition in which to work (Arthur, 2002; Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Levi, 1986).

Inspiring singers to perform at their highest potential was just one part of creating a positive rehearsal condition. Directors also created productive rehearsal condition through their musical and pedagogical skills. Directors maintained singer attentiveness and positive work habit through keen awareness of and effectual responses to singer focus, singer demeanor, and singer morale (Rhoads, 1990). This finding was revealed through analysis of stimulated interviews of five high school directors of superior choirs. Directors explained their rehearsal decision-making processes while reviewing audio-visual recordings of three of their rehearsals (Rhoads, 1990). Findings from this investigation suggest that exemplary directors demonstrated a keen awareness of singer condition (e.g., demeanor, attitude, and stamina) and demonstrated a vast array of techniques for steering singer energies toward rehearsal objectives. In addition to directors whom Rhoads (1990) interviewed, other directors of superior choirs utilized these techniques. For example, efficient director error detection and correction was found in the rehearsals of a national ACDA choir (Rhoads, 1990). Directors also managed and changed singer focus, demeanor, and morale by way of humor (Jenkins, 2005; Rhoads, 1990), rehearsal structuring (Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990), a few unearned approvals (Rhoads, 1990), dual-purpose activities, pacing strategies (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990), and director proximity to singers (Wright, 1996).

Pacing strategies, including rehearsal structuring, was key in maintaining singer focus and optimum work effort. The use of a variety of activities of varying lengths (Arthur, 2002; Cox, 1987, Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990) and alternating

familiar with less familiar repertoire (rehearsal structure) was observed in rehearsals of outstandingly performing choirs (Cox, 1985; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996). Varying intensities of physical, emotional, and cognitive demands on singers were created through a variety of activities (Arthurs, 2002; Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977), music difficulties (Arthurs, 2002), and director insertions (e.g., humor and stories). Findings indicated that music difficulty (Arthurs, 2002), singer age, singer competency (Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977), and singer condition (i.e., demeanor, focus, and morale) (Rhoads, 1990) had to be regarded for creation and maintenance of optimum rehearsal condition.

In summary, director awareness of singer condition and efficient responses to these conditions facilitated singer productivity. The combination of vision building (i.e., setting of high personal and performance goals) and director recognition of singers as people with personal and rehearsal needs facilitated communal cooperation towards performance excellence. Table 1 summarizes findings regarding the monitoring and managing of singer condition.

Table 1

Director Behaviors Important to High Quality Performance Production: Rehearsal and Singer Condition

Director Behaviors	Research Studies
Challenged singers to high performance goals	Basham, 1997; Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
A variety of activities of varying lengths	Arthur, 2002; Cox, 1987, Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990
Required singer discipline and strong work ethic	Basham, 1997; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Varying intensities of physical, emotional, and cognitive demands on singers	Arthurs, 2002; Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977
Varied rehearsal structure	Cox, 1985; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Dual-purpose activities	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990
Demonstrated musical expertise through logical organization of rehearsals, efficient teaching, and musical modeling	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Discussed performance goals with singers	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Encouraged lifelong music participation	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Cared for singers' present and future well-being	Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996

(to be continued)

Table 1 (continued)

Director Behaviors	Research Studies
Managed singer focus, demeanor, and morale through humor	Jenkins, 2005; Rhoads, 1990
Built community, vision, and self worth	Jenkins, 2005; Wright 1996
Efficient error detection and correction	Jenkins, 2005; Rhoads, 1990
Director proximity	Wright, 1996
Varied music difficulty in rehearsals	Arthur, 2002
Keen awareness of singer condition (e.g., demeanor, attitude, stamina)	Rhoads, 1990

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Personal characteristics. Personal characteristics of the director also played a role in creating and developing rehearsal and overall community condition conducive to high quality performance. Although personality traits from the Cattell Personality Factor Questionnaire (1967) were significantly different ($p < .05$) among six outstanding choral directors (Levi, 1986), researchers found that directors of outstanding choirs had many personal commonalities. Qualitative findings indicated that directors were visionaries (Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996), caring (Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996), hard working (Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996), energetic (Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996), and charismatic (Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) in and out of the classroom. Seventy percent of 122 national ACDA high school and post-secondary directors exercised high relational, high task behavior primary leadership styles (Allen, 1988). This means these directors had a strong work ethic

and worked at building relationships with their singers. Primary leadership styles of high school and university choral directors were not significantly different ($p > .05$) (Allen, 1988).

Directors of superior choirs were excellent musicians (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992). Many held master's degrees in music (Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990; Wright, 1996). Directors were experienced. Their public school choral directing experience ranged from 7 to 39 years (Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Johnson, 2003; Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990; Wright, 1996). These personal characteristics of commitment, experience, and know-how nurtured singer trust, confidence, and positive attitude toward performance success (Jenkins, 2005; Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Singers trusted and felt safe with the decisions and suggestions of their leader.

In summary, caring, hard-working, musical, capable directors facilitated superior choral performance. Director awareness of singer condition and appropriate rehearsal responses to these conditions created a productive, positive learning environment. See Table 2 for a summary of the director characteristics that are important for the production of superior performance.

Table 2

Director Characteristics Important to High Quality Performance Production

Director Characteristics	Research Studies
Experienced	Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Johnson, 2003; Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990; Wright, 1996
Held master's level music degrees	Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990; Wright, 1996
Enthusiastic	Decker, 1975; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005
Inspirational	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Energetic	Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Charismatic	Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996
Excellent musicians	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992
Hard working	Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Intensely focused	Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Vocal pedagogy. Although not a part of rehearsal condition development, the director's consistent attention to sound was necessary for superior performance production. Voice building (i.e., developing of the voice) via vocal pedagogy was purposeful and important to junior and middle school directors (Fiocca, 1989), high school directors (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985), and post-secondary directors (Decker, 1975) of superior performing choirs. Directors of choirs of superior performance used exercises of various vowels and consonants to develop vocal (individual singer) and choral (group) tone (Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985). The regularity, type, and intensity of vocal pedagogy depended upon the singers' vocal maturity, experience, and education (Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003).

Directors of superior performing choirs possessed a particular aural sound image to which they geared their vocal pedagogy (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985). Singers of these choirs were given regular vocal production instruction during rehearsals (Decker, 1975; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992). Some directors utilized individual and small group music lessons to develop singer vocal technique (Basham, 1999; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996).

Two researchers investigating the vocal pedagogy of directors whose choirs had earned a reputation for fine choral tone (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992) and one researcher investigating the vocal pedagogy of four outstanding choral directors (Overturf, 1985) found that directors initiated sound production through the [u] vowel. These directors exercised the voice between [u] and [i], the most backward to forward vowels in the oral cavity. By vocally maneuvering through the entire vowel triangle, singers' full range of vocal capabilities was developed (Jenkins, 2005; Overturf, 1985).

Explanations and demonstrations of sound through tongue placement, mouth formation, and verbal imagery were the most common vocal instruction strategies among directors (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985). Directors of these outstanding choral groups insisted on singers' correct breath management (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985).

Of special interest to vocal pedagogy was a study of a director whose choirs were known for superb tone quality (Jenkins, 2005). His choirs had performed at national Music Educators National Conference (MENC) conferences and at a national ACDA convention. His choirs had consistently earned state superior performance ratings. This director dedicated the first two weeks of every school year to systematic vocal production training for all ninth grade singers. No choral literature was sung during the first two weeks. Instead basics such as posture, breath management, and vowel formation were explained, modeled, and practiced. A new vowel was introduced each day of the first week. Singers experimented with and rehearsed such processes as range extension and resonant placement during the second week (Jenkins, 2005). Basic vocal training was foundational to his choirs' successes.

Interestingly, despite all vocal pedagogy commonalities among directors of high quality choirs, directors were unique in their manner of teaching and producing vocal and choral tone (Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985). This uniqueness may be a result of the uniqueness of each rehearsal setting and/or varying levels of performance superiority. See Table 3 for a summary of vocal pedagogy behaviors important to high quality performance.

Table 3

Important to High Quality Performance Production: Vocal Pedagogy

Vocal Pedagogy Behaviors	Research Studies
Purposeful voice building	Decker, 1975; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005;Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Exercises of various vowels and consonants to develop vocal (individual singer) and choral (group) tone	Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Consistent, regular vocal production instruction	Decker, 1975; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992
Directors were unique in their teaching strategies	Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Explanations and demonstrations of sound through tongue placement, mouth formation, and verbal imagery; demand for correct breath management	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Pursuit of a particular aural sound	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Exercise of the voice between the [u] and [i] vowels	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Special attention to vocally training new choral members	Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

In summary, the literature suggested that director behaviors and characteristics facilitated productive, positive learning environments. The teaching of correct vocal production facilitated beautiful choral tone. Positive, productive learning environments and beautiful choral tone were foundational for superior performance.

Director behaviors and characteristics identified with choirs of superior performance.

Although given less research attention than director behaviors and characteristics affecting rehearsal and singer condition, synthesis of the research literature suggested that certain director behaviors might be common to choirs of superior performance. These behaviors included the utilization of warm-ups, modeling, verbal imagery, increasing rehearsal time, energetic singer recruitment and auditioning, adequate rehearsal planning, consistent rehearsal protocol, and vocal training specific to first year singers. Certain curricular behaviors (e.g., the use of a variety of music styles) were also found to be common among choirs of superior performance. The following describes and summarizes findings of these director behaviors.

Warm-ups. A warm-up is a process of preparing the voice, body, and mind for singing. Warm-ups were included in rehearsals of choirs of consistent superior performance ratings (Arthur, 2002; Fiocca, 1989; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985). Despite the importance of vocal warm-ups, only one director's warm-up activities were studied (Morgan, 1992). Through a lengthy three-month observation period, warm-up activities of a long-term, outstanding choral program were identified. Through observations and many interviews with director and singers, Morgan (1992) learned that daily warm-up exercises were utilized in this program to develop singers' ears, vocal

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tone, in-tune singing, and to remedy performance problems. Warm-up exercises were predominantly harmonic in nature. The director taught singers how to monitor intonation, modify vowels, change vowel quality, and balance and blend the tone through the singing of chord progressions.

The importance of warm-ups was conveyed through two studies examining warm-up effects on performance quality (Coker, 1984; Corbin, 1982). Choirs who warmed up with vocal exercises specific to voice building (Corbin, 1982) and repertoire requirements (Coker, 1984) earned higher performance scores than those receiving traditional, less specified warm-ups. In Corbin's (1982) study, two choirs received warm-up instruction three days a week for seven weeks. Warm-ups for one choir addressed posture, breathing, diction, resonance, and relaxation (the treatment group). Warm-ups for the other choir addressed dynamics, notes, rhythm, intonation, blend, and balance (the control group). Through a pretest, post-test protocol, the choir receiving vocal development training (i.e., the treatment group) performed significantly better ($p < .007$) than the control group (Corbin, 1982). In Coker's (1984) study, four choirs sang varied amounts of vocal warm-ups developed from their choral repertoire three days a week for eight weeks. Through a pretest, post-test protocol, choirs receiving warm-up exercises specific to the repertoire (i.e., the treatment group) performed significantly better ($p \leq .01$) than those not receiving repertoire specific warm-up exercises.

Table 4

Behaviors Identified with Superior Performance: Warm-ups

Behaviors	Research Studies
Use of warm-ups	Arthur, 2002; Fiocca, 1989; Morgan, 1992
Choirs receiving vocal warm-ups specific to voice building earned higher performance scores	Corbin, 1982
Choirs receiving vocal warm-ups specific to repertoire earned higher performance scores	Coker, 1984

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Modeling. Like warm-ups, director modeling (i.e., demonstration of correct or incorrect performance) was a usual behavior in rehearsals of most superior performing choirs (Basham, 1999; Caldwell, 1980; Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989; Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Thurman, 1977). One investigation specific to identification of modeling behaviors was that of Grimland's (2001). She observed and interviewed three directors of diverse instructional styles whose choirs were of superior performance reputation. All three directors utilized three types of modeling: physical (e.g., a cupped hand representing a raised soft palate), aural (e.g., singing a phrase of music), and process (i.e., a demonstration of a step-by-step procedure) (Grimland, 2001).

Student and teacher modeling were present in some superior choirs (Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005) and at the university level (Johnson, 2003) but not in all superior choirs (Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989). Incongruent findings regarding student modeling could indicate differences in singer competency, maturity, or both. Rehearsals having no

student modeling were mostly those of elementary, middle, and junior high school choirs (Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989).

Findings regarding the use of recorded modeling (e.g., listening to a recording of superb choral tone) among choirs of superior performance ratings were also inconsistent. Some used recordings (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996), and others did not (Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001). As far as can be determined, no researcher has examined the effect of correct and incorrect modeling on production of performance quality. Findings regarding director modeling behaviors are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5

Behaviors Identified with Superior Performance: Modeling

Behaviors	Research Studies
Use of modeling	Basham, 1999; Caldwell, 1980; Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989; Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Thurman, 1977
Student and teacher modeling were present in some but not in all choirs	Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989; Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003
Some used recorded modeling, some did not	Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005
Physical, aural, and process modeling	Grimland, 2001

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Verbal imagery. Common to directors of superior performing choirs was the use of verbal imagery (Derby, 2001; Funk, 1982; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf,

1985). Three superb university conductors utilized verbal imagery when explicit words, modeling, or gesture did not produce adequate performance quality (Funk, 1982). Figurative structures used most by these conductors were simile, metaphor, personification, and rhetorical question (Funk, 1982). Researchers examining rehearsals of superior high school choirs found that verbal imagery was often used to describe expressive aspects of musical production, such as phrase nuance or a vowel modification (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985). As modeling, the quantitative effect of verbal imagery on performance quality has not been measured in any study of superior choral groups. Findings regarding verbal imagery are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6

Behaviors Identified with Superior Performance: Verbal Imagery

Behaviors	Research Studies
Use of verbal imagery	Derby, 2001; Funk, 1982; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985
Verbal imagery often used to describe expressive aspects of the score or musical production	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Increasing rehearsal time. Researchers have found that directors of superior-rated elementary through post-secondary choirs increased rehearsal time through three types of strategies (Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Extra rehearsals beyond those regularly scheduled (Fiocca, 1989;

Jenkins, 2005), numerous, regularly scheduled sectional rehearsals at the high school level (Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005), and many full ensemble performances as the result of performance tours at the university level (Johnson, 2003) facilitated singer familiarity with and practice of repertoire and vocal techniques.

Individual and small group music lessons also provided singers with additional rehearsal of vocal techniques and repertoire (Basham, 1999; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). One director of a large, strong choral program, whose choir had performed at a national ACDA convention, did much to facilitate vocal technique and music understanding through private voice lessons (Wright, 1996). He and his wife gave lessons through the summer to many of his students, many who without request assumed leadership responsibility in his choral ensembles. The private lessons benefitted the private student and the entire choir. Furthermore, rehearsal time for this choir was increased through simultaneous soprano-alto only sectionals and tenor-bass only sectionals. These sectionals occurred during regularly scheduled rehearsals. The director's accompanist ran soprano-alto sectionals while he ran the tenor-bass sectionals. By conducting simultaneous sectional rehearsals, singers received more instruction on their individual parts. See Table 7 for a summary of how directors of choirs of superior performance increased rehearsal time.

Table 7

Behaviors Identified with Superior Performance: Increasing Rehearsal Time

Behaviors	Research Studies
Sectionals during regularly scheduled ensemble rehearsal time	Derby, 2001; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005
Individual and small group lessons	Basham, 1999; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Calling rehearsals beyond regularly scheduled times	Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005
Performance touring	Johnson, 2003

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Other director behaviors investigated. Some director behaviors were not heavily researched but were found common to superior choirs. Singer auditioning was common to some directors of superior performing choirs (Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Consistency in rehearsal protocol (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996) and adequate rehearsal planning (Funk, 1982; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992) facilitated rehearsal productivity. Enthusiastic singer recruitment assured quality personnel in university (Johnson, 2003) and high school choirs (Wright, 1996).

Through in-depth case studies, Jenkins (2005) and Wright (1996) found that two directors of ACDA, high school choirs gave specific attention to the training of first year singers. One director turned the first two weeks of choir class for ninth grade singers into a friendly "vocal boot camp" (Jenkins, 2005, p. 10). The other director did not schedule a fall concert for his ninth grade singers (Wright, 1996). During fall semester his ninth

graders learned and practiced vocal and choral techniques. They also learned and practiced note and music score reading. Ninth grade music literature was lighter (i.e., fewer classical selections) than the literature of auditioned, upper classmen choirs (Wright, 1996).

The directors in both of these studies (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) presented young singers with many recordings of quality choral tone. Given that special vocal and choral training of ninth graders was found only in these two studies, further examination as to how these behaviors contribute to performance quality is merited. See Table 8 for a summary of this section.

Table 8

Other Behaviors Identified with Superior Performance

Behaviors	Research Studies
Singer auditioning	Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996
Consistent rehearsal protocol	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Adequate rehearsal planning	Funk, 1982; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992
Enthusiastic singer recruitment	Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Vocal training specific to first year singers	Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Curricular behaviors. *Curricular behaviors* are director behaviors associated

with what is taught in the rehearsal. Researchers investigated three categories of

curricular behaviors: repertoire (e.g., Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007), comprehensive

music instruction (Hedburg, 1975), and elements of sound (e.g., intonation, tone) (e.g.,

Caldwell, 1980; Thurman, 1977).

Repertoire. Directors of outstanding performance choirs believed that it was

important for singers to perform a variety of music styles (Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007;

Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Outstanding high school and post-

secondary choirs sang more music written by master composers than by composers of

pop and rock genres (Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992;

Wright, 1996). Aesthetic value (Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007), learning opportunities

(Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Jenkins, 2005) and audience interests (Hunsaker, 2007;

Wright, 1996) were reasons for repertoire selection. One director of a very robust choral

program, whose choir had performed at a national ACDA convention, scheduled two

classical performances and two lighter performances of more popular music during each

year (Wright, 1996). Presentation of repertoire familiar to singers and the audience

helped maintain singer and community participation in choir activities.

Comprehensive music instruction. Results from an investigation of the effect of

comprehensive music instruction on the performance quality of two university choirs

were mixed (Hedberg, 1975). One, non-music major, university choir received 12

treatments of comprehensive music instruction in preparation for three pieces of

repertoire. Instruction included explanations of tone center, phrase, harmony, rhythm

durations, and stylistic practices. The control choir, also non-music major, university

choir, rehearsed and prepared the same repertoire as the treatment choir but received no comprehensive musical instruction. The choir receiving comprehensive music instruction performed one out of the three musical pieces significantly better ($p < .05$) than the choir who received no comprehensive instruction. The choir receiving no comprehensive instruction performed two out of the three musical pieces significantly better ($p < .01$) than the choir that received comprehensive instruction. The difficulty of music literature rehearsed might have played a role in these results.

The choir having received no comprehensive instruction sang the two most difficult pieces significantly better than the choir of comprehensive instruction. The treatment choir sang the easiest of the three songs significantly better than the control choir. This might indicate that additional comprehensive music instruction may facilitate higher quality singing but only when adequate rehearsal of the music is allowed. The rehearsals of the choir having received no comprehensive musical instruction were dedicated solely to learning and rehearsing the music. Therefore they had more time to perfect the difficult music. The treatment choir rehearsed the music less than the control choir. For them, rehearsal time was limited by the time taken for comprehensive music instruction.

Elements of sound. Synthesis of research findings indicated that the degree of attention given to various elements of musical sound (e.g., tone, intonation, diction, phrasing, dynamics) varied greatly among directors of superior performing choirs (Caldwell, 1980; Derby, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990; Thurman, 1977). Singer competence (Caldwell, 1980; Derby, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Thurman, 1977), music selection (Thurman, 1977), time proximity to the public performance date, and

director's prerogative (Caldwell, 1980; Thurman, 1977) influenced the amount of time each sound element was addressed.

Caldwell (1980) investigated the proportions of time used for various musical elements among directors of varying performance experiences. Experiences varied from preparing choirs for district and state festivals and national ACDA conventions to preparing individual singers for All-State choirs. He found that the amount of rehearsal time used to address pitch, time, text/diction, phrasing/dynamics, tone color, style, and vocal production was significantly different ($p < .05$) among the 15 high school choir directors.

Percentage of rehearsal time addressing pitch, style, phrasing/dynamics, text/diction, vocal production, rhythmical precision, and tone color varied among five different choral directors in Thurman's (1977) study. Choral directors were a metropolitan high school director, a rural small town high school director, a university director, a director-clinician, and a director of a professional choir. Variance among directors or their choirs in Caldwell (1980) and Thurman's (1977) studies may have influenced the amount of attention given to various musical elements.

Through interview, observation, and field notes, Morgan (1992) examined the culture of a choir with a history of state superior ratings. Although his investigation did not answer the question, "How is superior performance produced?" it identified rehearsal behaviors of the director of the choir. This director treated tone quality through a unique vowel unification system. Each vowel was sung from the space of its proceeding vowel. Furthermore interpretation was addressed through dynamics, phrasing, articulation, and tempo/rhythm. The director taught singers how to identify the beginning, middle, and end

of phrases and how to determine appropriate textual inflections accordingly. Students were given rehearsal time to apply this procedural knowledge to each new text before the first reading of the music. The director gave detailed attention to performing of all major musical sound elements (e.g., tone, phrasing, and rhythmical vitality). A replication of Morgan's (1992) study may provide additional insight into the way superior directors address elements of sound. Table 9 displays the curricular behaviors that have been identified with superior performance.

Table 9

Curricular Behaviors Identified with Superior Performance

Behaviors	Research Studies
Time spent on different musical elements varied greatly among directors as a result of the choir's characteristics (e.g., maturity)	Caldwell, 1980; Derby, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990; Thurman, 1977
Use of a variety of music styles	Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
More use of serious than pop music literature	Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Learning opportunities was the reason most given for particular music literature selection	Forbes, 2001; Hunsaker, 2007; Jenkins, 2005
Quality tone production was given much attention	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Summary of Director Findings. Researchers found that a positive, productive interaction between director and singers (rehearsal condition) and consistent, purposeful vocal training for singers was foundational to high quality choral performance. Directors monitored singers' demeanor, attitude, and stamina. Directors varied pacing, rehearsal structure, and rehearsal activities to maintain singer focus and energy. Rehearsals were peppered with moments of tension release (e.g., humorous moments or storytelling) to manage singers' attitudes and willingness to work. Purposeful vocal training seemed to build singer confidence.

Personal characteristics of the director also facilitated productive rehearsals and exceptional performance. Caring, competent, hard working, enthusiastic directors inspired singers to their maximum production output.

Although not foundational to rehearsal productivity, behaviors found common among directors of superior choirs (e.g., modeling, extra rehearsals, verbal imagery) provided instruction for the improvement of choral performance. Some behaviors facilitated rehearsal efficiency (e.g., rehearsal planning). Others facilitated educational opportunities (e.g., learning through carefully selected repertoire). Overall, superior choirs have outstanding, competent, hard working directors.

Auxiliary Support

In this study the term *auxiliary support* refers to a person, place, thing, or process, not including the choir director and choir members that influences or facilitates choral performance achievement. The importance of auxiliary support was highlighted in four high school case studies (Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996), a study of factors common to eight post-secondary choral programs (Johnson, 2003), and a

study of rehearsal behaviors of twelve exemplary middle or junior high school choir directors (Fiocca, 1989). Researchers investigating the presence or absence of support for the performance production process identified three types of support for superior choirs. The choral director and singers received support from administrators and parents, the community, and feeder programs.

      Administrative and parental support. Research suggested that supportive administrators (Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996) and supportive parents (Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996) made superior performance easier to attain. Middle/junior-high school (Fiocca, 1989) and high school administrations provided support for accompanists for rehearsals and performances (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Both high school and university administration hired non-music faculty to provide secretarial services, manage fundraisers, and plan performance trips (Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996). Middle/junior-high, high school, and some university administrators scheduled the school course of study to minimize conflict with choral classes (Fiocca, 1989; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996). Renowned university choral performance was facilitated through choral participation requirements for music majors, same-gender freshmen choirs, and quality music education faculty instruction (Johnson, 2003). Administration provided emotional support (e.g., attendance at concerts and verbal praise) to middle/junior-high, high school, and post-secondary directors (Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996).

      Evidence suggested that school budgets were inadequate to support high school and university choral programs (Basham, 1999; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996), but

parents of high school and junior-high singers provided funds for choral performance production (Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). At the university level, university administrators permitted fund raising strategies such as the sale of live performance viewing and performance recordings (Johnson, 2003). In summary, research hitherto reviewed has suggested that administrative and parental support freed directors from non-musical roles, providing directors with more time to produce superior music performance. See Table 10 for a summary of auxiliary supports in choirs of superior performance.

Table 10

Administrative and Parental Support of Choral Programs of Superior Performance

Characteristics	Research Studies
Presence of auxiliary support for choral performance	Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Supportive administrators	Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Parental support	Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Scheduling the school course of study to minimize conflict with choral classes	Fiocca, 1989; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Support for financed accompanists	Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996
Inadequate high school and university budgets	Basham, 1999; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996
Fund raising, secretarial help	Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1996

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Community support. Strong community support was found for choral programs having a long tradition of performance excellence (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Community members expected superb performance and supported it through concert attendance and finances. Community members reported a sense of ownership for the choral program, some volunteering time and services to choral events (Wright, 1996).

The fact that directors provided music programs and leadership behaviors exemplifying community values solidified community support (Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Researchers identified communities of two choral programs whose choirs had performed at a national ACDA convention valued the hard work and dedication of the directors. The communities valued the Christian beliefs exemplified by the director and the beliefs communicated in the choral literature performed (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). For one of these communities, the choral program was the only artistic event of the community (Wright, 1996). The director of this program intentionally maintained community interest through various types of music programming. Two programs a year were dedicated to the music of master composers (e.g., Bach, Beethoven). Two other programs consisted of lighter music and were supported by scenery and props.

Feeder support. Surprisingly little investigation regarding the influence of feeder programs on choral performance quality has been conducted. Wright (1996) specifically investigated the support systems of one national ACDA choir. His findings revealed that the ACDA choir had the benefit of a large successful feeder program. The feeder program's conductor successfully developed male and female choral ensembles of high quality performance. Students were enthusiastic about singing and were well instructed

(Wright, 1996). Other than Wright's (1996) investigation, little is known about the influence of feeder programs on performance quality. More research in this regard is warranted. Findings regarding feeder support are summarized in Table 11.

Table 11

Other Supports of Choral Programs of Superior Performance

Characteristics	Research Studies
Choral programs whose programs reflected community values were community supported	Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996
Community financial support and concert attendance to choirs with a history of superior performance	Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Quality feeder programs for two ACDA choirs	Wright, 1996

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

In summary, research suggested that superior performance of successful choral programs was facilitated by support from school administration, parents, community, and strong feeder programs. Administrative financial support facilitated increased musical instruction to singers (junior high through university) in the form of accompanists and increased director attention to musical responsibilities. School schedule adjustments made possible singer participation in choral programs.

Long-term highly successful choral programs had strong, active community support (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Community members generated enthusiasm and financial support for superb choral programs.

Strong feeder programs were a characteristic of national ACDA choirs. Of interest is whether or not all qualities of choirs have strong feeder programs. More research is warranted in regards to the influence of support systems on performance quality.

The Choral Singer

Few researchers examined singers' contributions to performance success. Nevertheless, singers believed that they were important contributors to their choirs' success as indicated in the work of Levi (1986), Morgan (1992), and Wright (1996). Findings clearly indicated that singers of outstanding choirs were dedicated (Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996), hard working (Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992), and team players (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Although some students of some outstanding choirs believed that their directors were too demanding or critical, they believed this demeanor was necessary for performance success (Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Table 12 summarizes the singer characteristics that have been identified with the production of superior performance.

Table 12

Characteristics of singers of superior choral performance

Characteristics	Research Studies
Singers were dedicated	Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996
Singers believed they were important to performance success	Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996
Singers worked hard	Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992
Singers were team players	Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.

Inconsistent and Confounding Findings

Findings of comparisons of certain rehearsal behaviors among two or more choir directors reflected the difficulties of examining one factor of a multi-factor, interactive process. Researchers were unable to isolate rehearsal time use, feedback ratios, instructional sequencing, and movement instruction from other rehearsal factors in the performance production process. Factors influencing time use, feedback ratios, instructional sequencing, and movement instruction were not held constant among choirs being compared. This variance among factors influencing time use, feedback ratios, instructional sequencing, and movement instruction resulted in inconsistent or confounding research findings. Consideration of these findings and the methodologies used in this literature influenced the choice of a holistic, naturalistic methodological approach for this present dissertation.

Time usage. Researchers examined how directors of superior choirs used rehearsal time. Researchers comparing rehearsal behaviors of two or more directors discovered that singer characteristics, music difficulty, and type of rehearsal activity interacted with the way directors used time (Arthur, 2002; Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977).

Directors of superior performing choirs used time very differently from one another (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993, 1998). Davis (1993) investigated rehearsal behaviors of two high school choir directors whose choirs had consistently earned state superior performance ratings. Investigations of two choirs of each director began at the beginning of preparation for an adjudicated performance festival. Investigations ended upon the choirs' receipts of their festival ratings. Although both directors' choirs received

superior ratings, directors' use of rehearsal time was different (Davis, 1993). One director diminished the amount of social and academic instruction she gave to her beginner choir as they became more performance ready, while the other director maintained the same amount of social and academic instruction to her beginner choir throughout the entire preparation time. An average of 38% of rehearsal time was utilized for student singing in both the beginning and advanced choirs of one director, while the other director's singers sang an average of 45% during beginner choir rehearsals and an average of 47% during advanced choir rehearsals. The average in which director's talked during rehearsal also varied. During advanced choir rehearsals, one director talked an average of 52.02% of the time while the other director talked an average of 45.54% of the time (Davis, 1993). Davis (1993) concluded that singer competency and director preference among the four choirs influenced research results.

In another study, two rehearsals of fifteen directors each were examined to determine the amount of rehearsal time they used for (a) choral singing, (b) director speaking, (c) simultaneous choral singing and director speaking, and (d) non-musical communications (Caldwell, 1980). The amount of time spent on these four activities was significantly different ($p < .05$) among the 15 high school directors. It should be noted that director participants varied in level of performance experience. Some had singers who had performed in All-State choruses while others' choirs had performed at national conventions (Caldwell, 1980).

Evidence suggested that academic instruction (i.e., musical instruction) during singer silence consumed more time than any other director or singer rehearsal activity in rehearsals of superior choirs (Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1998). Yet in rehearsals of directors of

various performance levels of superiority (i.e., All-State singers to nationally performing choirs), academic instruction while singers sang consumed more time than any other director or singer rehearsal activity (Caldwell, 1980). These inconsistent findings may indicate variety in director strategies, singer competence, or the stage of performance preparation.

Three researchers (Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977) did find that approximately 40% of rehearsal time of excellent performing choirs was consumed by director social and instructional talk. But this finding must be considered cautiously given the wide range of director talk percentages found among rehearsals examined per researcher. In Davis's (1993) study, director talk in beginner choir rehearsals ranged from 20% to 68% of rehearsal time. Director talk in advanced choir rehearsals ranged from 20% to 67% of rehearsal time (Davis, 1993). The amount of director talk in rehearsals of outstanding directors investigated by Thurman (1977) ranged from 29% to 58.4%. Both Davis (1993) and Thurman (1977) found that type of rehearsal activities, student competency, and directors' preferences influenced the amount of director talk in rehearsals.

Researchers found that the way time was used in rehearsal was dependent upon musical competency of the singers (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977), singers' ages (Derby, 2001), difficulty of music rehearsed (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977), singers' familiarity with music style being rehearsed (Thurman, 1977), type of rehearsal activity (Arthur, 2002; Thurman, 1977), directors' rehearsal preferences (Caldwell, 1980), and the stage of preparation singers were experiencing (Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993).

Feedback. Findings regarding director feedback ratios (i.e., the number of approvals to disapprovals given to choir members during rehearsals) were inconsistent. Observations of directors of superior choirs revealed that some directors gave more approvals than disapprovals in rehearsals (Davis, 1998; Arthur, 2002), while others expressed more disapprovals than approvals (Derby, 2001; Morgan, 1992). In a convenience sample of two high school choirs, the choir receiving feedback earned a higher mean gain performance score than the choir receiving no feedback (Dunn, 1997). Yet two studies showed that varying ratios of approvals and disapprovals made no impact on performance ratings (Murray, 1972; Walker, 1990). Murray (1972) examined the effect of three ratios of approvals to disapprovals on performance ratings. One ratio examined was the natural ratio of approvals given to disapprovals during a normal rehearsal session. The other two ratios examined were 80% approval to 20% disapproval and 20% approval to 80% disapproval. Ratios used in Walker's seventh grade chorus examination were (a) 80% approval to 20% disapproval, (b) 20% approval to 80% disapproval, and (c) 50% approval to 50% disapproval. In either study there were no significantly different performance scores ($p > .05$) among varying ratios of approval and disapproval feedback (Murray, 1972; Walker, 1990).

Inconsistencies in findings may be a result of the many factors found in the performance production process. Director feedback was found to be dependent on singers' ages (Derby, 2001), stage of repertoire preparation (e.g., learning versus polishing music) (Davis, 1997), singer competence (Davis, 1997), rehearsal objectives, and the director's prerogative (Jenkins, 2005).

Singer movement. The multi-faceted character of performance production also affected research findings regarding the effect of singer movement on performance quality. Holt (1992) examined the effect of Laban movement theory and McCoy (1986) examined the effect of various movement activities (e.g., stately walking to the beat) on the performance quality of high school choral singers. Choirs receiving movement treatments received significantly higher ($p < .05$) overall performance scores than those not receiving the treatments (Holt, 1992; McCoy, 1986). Results of these studies may have been confounded due to differences in initial quality of choirs and music selection.

Direct instruction. Direct instruction refers to specific director-singer interactions. At minimum, a complete direct instruction sequence includes director instruction, singer response to the instruction, and appropriate director feedback to singer response (Becker, Engelmann, & Thomas, 1971).

Researchers investigating the rehearsal in light of sequential instruction examined different variables. Derby (2001) examined sequences in which singers responded twice to one teacher directive. Thurman (1977) measured the length of sequences addressing certain musical elements such as pitch and intonation. Davis (1993, 1998) measured length of sequences, rate of sequences per minute and per rehearsal, and the type of feedback included in each sequence. Due to researchers' varying methodologies, little could be compared across the findings of these investigations (Davis, 1998; Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977) although valuable rehearsal behavior was revealed. Singers were found to be more successful when allowed to practice an instruction correctly more than once (Derby, 2001). Singers were also more successful when a corrected passage of music was sung within its larger context before proceeding to the next corrective sequence (Derby,

2001). Like other rehearsal variables reviewed in this section, sequential instruction was influenced by other factors of the performance production process. Sequential instruction varied by the stage of repertoire preparation (Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977), maturity of the choir (Davis, 2998), rehearsal activity (Davis, 1998), and directors' prerogatives (Thurman, 1977).

In summary, production of choral performance requires a coordination of many varied activities influenced by time, place, people, and music literature. Synthesis of the findings in this section reveals the difficulty of controlling for the many factors found in the performance production process and among varying samples. Table 13 summarizes the inconsistent and confounding findings of this section and two findings regarding direct instruction.

Table 13

Inconsistent and Confounding Findings

Behaviors	Research Studies
Singer characteristic, music difficulty, type of rehearsal activity, director preferences interacted with the way directors used time	Arthur, 2002; Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977
Directors of superior performance used time differently	Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993
Due to the variables influencing use of rehearsal time, teacher talk averages must be considered with caution	Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977
Ratio of approvals to disapprovals during rehearsal varied among directors	Arthur, 2002; Davis, 1998; Derby, 2001; Morgan, 1992
Findings regarding the effects of different approval to disapproval ratios on performance quality were inconsistent	Murray, 1972; Walker, 1990
Feedback ratios were dependent on singer characteristics, rehearsal objectives and activities, and director's prerogative	Davis, 1993; Derby, 2001; Jenkins, 2005
Rehearsal activity, director's prerogative, and singer characteristics influenced the rate, length, and content of sequential direct instruction	Davis, 1998; Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977
Singers were more successful when allowed to rehearse a passage correctly more than one time	Derby, 2001
Singers were more successful when after correcting a passage, they sang it in a larger context before proceeding to the next performance task	Derby, 2001

Note. The number of citations reflected the amount of research interest given to a topic.
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Summary

Synthesis of this research literature suggests that an amalgamation of processes resultant from various persons' behaviors, characteristics, beliefs, and attitudes may produce superior choral performance. Yet investigations into superior performance production have been segmented (i.e., focused on parts not the whole of this process). Various researchers have found that certain director behaviors (e.g., Jenkins, 2005; Overturf, 1985; Morgan, 1992; Rhoads, 1990) and director characteristics (e.g., Basham, 1999; Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) were necessary for superior performance production. Various rehearsal processes such as warm-ups (e.g., Fiocca, 1989; Morgan, 1992; Overturf, 1985) and modeling (e.g., Caldwell, 1980; Derby, 2001; Grimland, 2001) have been found in rehearsals of superior performing choirs. And singer characteristics (e.g., Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) and support persons (e.g., Basham, 1999; Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996) may play a role in production of superior performance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

A detailed description of the methodology and analytical procedures of this

current study is included in this chapter. Following these descriptions, my trustworthiness

strategies are presented.

Rationale for Methodology and Sample

Synthesis of research findings suggests that an amalgamation of processes

resultant from various persons' behaviors and characteristics may produce superior choral

performance. Findings indicate that particular interactions between singers and the choral

director facilitate rehearsal conditions conducive to superior performance production

(e.g., Jenkins, 2005; Rhoads, 1990, Wright, 1996). Characteristics and behaviors of the

director (e.g., Decker, 1975; Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005), singers (Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins,

2005; Wright, 1996), and support personnel (Basham, 1999; Fiocca, 1989; Johnson,

2003) may also be important to superior performance production. Some findings even

indicate that choirs' contexts (e.g., school district) may influence the quality of

performance produced. Findings also indicate that due to the social and multi-variable

characteristic of the performance production process, investigation of only one or few

factors is difficult and may yield inconsistent results.

Qualitative methodology is appropriate for addressing a multi-factor research

topic, contexts, and social dynamics of the topic. "N [the naturalist] elects qualitative

methods over quantitative methods (although not exclusively) because they are more

adaptable to dealing with multiple (and less aggregatable) [*sic*] realities; … and because

qualitative methods are more sensitive to and adaptable to the many mutually shaping

influences and value patterns that may be encountered" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 40).

Naturalistic, holistic inquiry facilitates observation of personal, social, and contextual

actions and interactions important to the process under investigation. Utilization of a

holistic paradigm facilitates identity of all factors contributing to the performance

production and how these factors work together to produce a particular product, in this

case superior performance.

The qualitative strategies of case study and grounded theory research are

appropriate for this present study. Case study research is "a strategy of inquiry in which

the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more

individuals" (Creswell, 2009, p.13). Grounded theory research is "a strategy of inquiry in

which the researcher derives a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction

grounded in views of participants" (Creswell, 2009, p.13).

The purpose of this study was to discover how superior performance is produced

from the standpoint of those involved. Thus, application of the grounded theory in the

methodology is appropriate. In order to identify as many factors as possible contributing

to high quality performance production and how these factors work together, a holistic,

in-depth case study was necessary. The case study researcher utilizes a variety of data

collection techniques (Stake, 1995). Collection of many forms of data (e.g., observations,

interviews, material culture) and perspectives (e.g., directors, singers) allows for thick,

rich description of the case under investigation (i.e., the performance production process).

Volumes of data generated by multiple data collection processes, provide for the

discovery of multiple realities of parts and the whole of the production process. It provides the researcher with an abundance of data from which a theory may be generated. Through a holistic, in-depth, and thorough examination of the production process of high quality performance, a model of performance success, inclusive of all aspects of the production, may be proposed.

Through examination of an information-rich case, "one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Patton, 2002, p. 46). In order to learn how to produce high quality performance, I chose to investigate an information-rich choir of extremely high quality performance. "The logic of using extreme case sampling is that lessons may be learned about unusual conditions or extreme outcomes that are relevant to improving more typical programs" (Patton, 2002, p. 232). By investigating the process by which this choir achieved extremely high quality performance, I was able to answer the question "How is superior choral performance produced?"

Choral performance researchers have suggested a broad qualitative examination of conductors of superior performing choirs to identify factors contributing to performance success (Decker, 1975; Jenkins, 2005; Rhoads, 1990; Thurman, 1977; Wright, 1996). In referring to learning about aspects of quality choral performance, Thurman (1977, p. 168) stated, "Observational research, carefully conceived and carried out may result in more valid information than is presently available."

By investigating one extreme case of high performance quality bounded by time (e.g., one stage of repertoire preparation) I eliminated the difficulties of examining more than one choir, all with varying characteristics that impact research findings. In-depth

examination of the naturalistic phenomenon of superior choral performance production

offered rich descriptions of how high quality performance was produced within one

extreme case.

Selection of An Extreme Sample

It was important to determine a valid criterion for an extreme case of high quality

performance. Such criterion helped establish credibility and transferability of my

findings. Selection of a valid criterion was discussed with a successful, nationally

recognized American choral director and with a group of music education professors and

doctoral students. Through much discussion it was determined that the national, biennial

ACDA convention or the Heritage Festival of Gold would be the most reliable sources

from which to select an extremely outstanding performing choir.

Due to the national ACDA audition criterion and the large pool of fine choirs

from which ACDA choirs were selected, I decided that participation at a national ACDA

convention indicated the highest standard of choral performance quality in the United

States of America. Choirs desiring to perform at the ACDA convention had to prove (a)

three consecutive years of outstanding performance quality and (b) performance of

quality choral literature for three consecutive years. Choirs participating at the national

ACDA convention were selected from a global base and from choirs of the largest, most

prestigious group of choral professionals (approximately 18,000 members) in the United

States. I recruited my purposeful sample from choirs performing at the 2009 national

ACDA convention.

ACDA Audition Process

Choirs desiring to perform at the national 2009 ACDA convention submitted one audio recording of three different musical pieces to the ACDA National Audition Committee. Contained on the recording was the choir's performance of one musical piece from each of the following years: 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008. Directors also submitted a copy of one of their choir's programs from each of the same years (http://acda.org/conferences/2009/2009CS-app.pdf).

The audio recording was given a blind audition by the seven members of the ACDA National Audition Committee. Choral experts of various types of choirs comprised The National Audition Committee. Each choral expert had a history of outstanding choral performance production. Recordings were rated on a scale of 1 to 20 points (M. Groom, personal communication, January 7, 2009). The totality of all aspects of choral performance (e.g., intonation, tone, rhythmical precision, diction, blend, balance, interpretation, expressivity) was considered in the rating process.

Recordings receiving an average rating of 15 or more points were presented to the 2009 National Convention Steering Committee. Considering the quality of performance and how each choir would contribute to the convention, the National Steering Committee made the final decision regarding which choirs would perform and which would demonstrate at the convention.

Recruitment of An Extreme Sample

I emailed recruitment letters to all large group high school choirs performing and demonstrating at the 2009 ACDA convention. Four choral directors were sent the same email letter requesting their participation in this present study. This letter was followed

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with a phone call or phone message. Directors of two choirs chose not to participate in the study. One choral director did not respond to the letter, phone message, a second email correspondence or second phone message. One director promised full cooperation as a participant in this study.

I chose large group, high school choirs because this type of choir was characteristic of the majority of samples used in previous research studies examining various qualities of choral performance. Twenty out of thirty research study samples had examined large group, high school choirs. By investigating large group, high school choirs I was replicating the choir size and age of singers examined by other researchers.

The Extreme Case

The purposeful sample of this dissertation was definitely illustrative of high quality choral performance. This choir, the Norman North Chorale, was an auditioned choir at Norman North High School, in the Norman, Oklahoma Public School District. The choir had not only been selected as one of two demonstration choirs at the 2009 national ACDA convention, it had also been a national ACDA demonstration choir for the years 2003 and 2007. In addition to its performance history at national ACDA conventions, it had earned a superior performance reputation in other venues. The choir had earned eleven consecutive State Sweepstakes Awards. It had earned Best in Class awards at festivals in Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, and Chicago. It had been selected as an Oklahoma Music Educators Association (OMEA) Honor Choir five times. It had performed at state, regional, and national MENC and ACDA conventions. And it had established a consistent history of state superior OMEA festival ratings. Given the many performance awards earned, including the opportunity to

participate at the 2009 national ACDA convention, this choir qualified as a case of extreme performance success.

Timeline

My first contact with the choir director was an emailed letter of request to study his choir, sent on November 21, 2008. We spoke by phone before the November 2008 Thanksgiving holiday. He enthusiastically agreed to participate in my dissertation research study.

Through email communications and two phone calls, arrangements were made for me to begin observations and interviews as soon as the University of South Florida's Institutional Review Board gave permission to conduct the research. Data collection at the high school of the ACDA choir occurred from February 17 through February 20, 2009. Most interviews, observations, and material culture collections occurred from February 17 through February 20, 2009. In addition, I observed the choir and their director one hour before and during their national ACDA presentations on March 4, 2009 and March 6, 2009. One parent was interviewed at the ACDA convention on March 4, 2009, and one parent interview was conducted by phone on April 9, 2009.

Between December of 2010 and January 2011, I conducted nine more interviews of seven participants in order to better understand the Norman North Chorale phenomenon. One participant's interview was spread over two dates for convenience sake. His second interview, due to recording problems between GarageBand and Skype, had to be interviewed a third time.

Data Collection

All data were collected by the rules and processes approved by the University of South Florida's Institutional Review Board, a Division of Research and Integrity Compliance. Proper assent, consent, and permission signatures were acquired for all observations, interviews, and researcher actions. The school district and school chose to disclose the name of the choir, school, and school district. The director and associate director chose to disclose their names. All other identities have been held in anonymity. The choir being studied was the Norman North High School Chorale, Norman North High School of the Norman Public Schools. Anonymous participants were assigned pseudonyms.

"The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing from multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, audiovisual materials" (Creswell, 2007, p.75). I collected data from interviews, observations, and material culture. The following gives a detailed description of my data collection procedures.

Interviews. In order to discover what persons thought and felt about the production of quality performance, I utilized formal and informal interviews. To assure that all perspectives regarding the performance production process were gathered, I interviewed choral members, music faculty, parents, and administrators.

Formal interviews. During the first round of data collection in February of 2009 I conducted individual interviews with ten choral members, three parents, the high school principal, and the school district music supervisor. I conducted three individual interviews with the associate choral director, hereafter called Mr. Chapin. I conducted

four individual interviews with the director of the ACDA choir, hereafter called Mr. Gonzalez. And I conducted a group interview with the officers of the choir.

As Mr. Gonzalez learned of my research purpose through simple observation and as an interviewee, he suggested that I should interview former members of this superior choir. To gain this added perspective, I interviewed three former students.

In addition to the above interviews, a first year singer of one of the Norman North Choral Department choirs, not the national ACDA choir, asked if he could be interviewed. He had observed my presence at the school and he felt he had information to impart. I gladly welcomed his participation.

Thus, formal interview data represented six perspectives of the performance production process. Parents, directors, choir members, former choir members, administrators, and one freshman member of the Norman North's men's choir shared their perspective. A total of 21 individual persons were interviewed and one group interview was conducted, equaling a total of 22 hours of recorded interview data. Table 14 displays the type of interview per person by first and second round data collection.

Table 14

Number and Type of Recorded Interview for Each Participant in the Entire Study

| Name | Role | First Round Collection | | Second Round Collection | |
| | | Interview Type | | Interview Type | |
		Individual	Group	Individual	Group
Mr. Gonzalez	Director	5	0	1	0
Mr. Chapin	Associate Director	2	0	3	0
Dr. B.	Fines Arts Supervisor	1	0	1	0
Mr. W.	School Principal	1	0	0	0
Mrs. Longsufe	Parent	1	0	0	0
Mrs. Meek	Parent	1	0	1	0
Mrs. Sharp	Parent	1	0	1	0
Ronald	Chorale Member	1	0	1	0
Ginger	Chorale Member	1	1	1	0
Paul	Chorale Member	0	1	0	0
Victor	Chorale Member	0	1	0	0
Max	Chorale Member	1	1	0	0
Byron	Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Janelle	Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Larry	Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Beatrice	Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Angelina	Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
MariAnna	Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Tom	Chorale Member	1	1	0	0

(to be continued)

Table 14 (continued)

Name	Role	First Round Collection		Second Round Collection	
		Interview Type		Interview Type	
		Individual	Group	Individual	Group
Anita	Chorale Member	0	1	0	0
Molly	Chorale Member	0	1	0	0
Marjorie	Chorale Member	0	0	0	0
Scarlet	Former Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Amos	Former Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Audry	Former Chorale Member	1	0	0	0
Barnabas	Sophomore	1	0	0	0

Between December 11, 2010 and January 6, 2011 I conducted nine more formal interviews, hereafter called Second Round Interviews, to illuminate the information I had gathered in March 2009 and to increase my understanding of the Norman North Chorale production process. "A qualitative design needs to remain sufficiently open and flexible to permit exploration of whatever the phenomenon under study offers for inquiry. Qualitative designs continue to be emergent even after data collection begins" (Patton, 2002, p.255). Data collection continues until the researcher is certain that the research questions have been thoroughly answered (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). "Sometimes the research questions change in the middle of the study to reflect better the types of questions needed to understand the research problem. In response, the data collection

strategy, planned before the study, needs to be modified to accompany the new questions" (Creswell, 2007, p.19). This was the case for this present research study.

Second round interviewees were persons who had been interviewed in February of 2009. Interviewees made up a convenience and purposeful sample. I believed it was important to gather interviews from all interview perspectives (i.e., purposeful interviewing). Those whom I interviewed were those whose contact information I had and who were willing to take another interview (convenience sample).

Second round interviews were conducted by Skype or phone. The first four interviews were recorded on GarageBand. Due to inconsistent recording compatibility between GarageBand and Skype, all remaining interviews were also audio recorded digitally with an Olympus WS-321 M and a Zoom Handy Recorder, Model H2.

Second round interviews were conducted because initial analysis of the data indicated the need to gather more information regarding the meaning(s) participants ascribed to (a) the production of superior performance, (b) the production of classical music literature, and (c) participation in the Norman North Chorale. I conducted two student interviews, two parent interviews, an interview with the Norman Public School District's Fine Arts Supervisor, and interviews with both directors of the Norman North Choral Program. A total of over 12 hours of second round interview data were collected, making a total of over 34 hours of interview data.

Participant samples. Purposeful and convenience samples were used for formal interviewing. Purposeful samples included music faculty and administrators. Due to their relationships with the national ACDA choir, I believed their perspectives regarding the

performance production process would illuminate contexts, meanings, actions, and interactions of the production process.

All other participant interviewees were convenience samples. Those who volunteered to interview and who had the time to interview, were interviewed. There was one exception to this. More choral members volunteered for interviews than time permitted. At the Norman North High School site of data collection, participants were interviewed on a first come, first serve basis.

Originally Mr. Gonzalez had agreed to recommend choral members of various musical maturities and talents for interview, providing a wide range of perspectives. But because of a shortened period of time on the field due to the choir's heavy performance schedule, purposeful sampling was changed to convenience sampling. Singers were interviewed during study hall, lunchtime, and before and after school.

Former singers of the ACDA choir were recruited from those who lived in the Norman North area. Three responded, all who were pursuing music careers. Purposeful sampling may have facilitated a more diverse population of former singers.

Formal interviews conducted during March were held in the Norman North choral department's rooms. One parent interview, one former singer interview, and some of Mr. Gonzalez's interviews were conducted in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gonzalez. Second round interviews, also purposeful and convenience samples, were conducted by phone or Skype.

Interview strategies. A combination of interview strategies was used for each formal interview. Standardized open-ended questions began each interview. Not all interviewees answered all standardized questions due to time restrictions and how

standardized questions were answered. Some interviewee responses to the standardized

questions led me to ask clarifying questions. Interview questions other than the

standardized questions were in response to interviewees' answers and/or questions that

had developed through my field perceptions and observations. A list of prompts had been

prepared for interviewees irresponsive to standardized questions. This list included topics

relating to performance success as informed by the choral performance research literature

(Appendix A). Due to the responsiveness of interviewees, the list was not used.

Each formal interview began with the same six standardized open-ended

questions (see Appendix B). These standardized questions were:

(1) One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the

opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What

makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

(2) In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

(3) In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or

people that have influenced this choir's success?

(4) In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

(5) How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success?

(Possible follow-up: "How about in rehearsals?").

(6) Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates the chorale's performing

success?

Asking the same six questions facilitated comparison of answers across the study's

various perspectives. Standardization of questions insured thoroughness of data

collection. "The purpose of gathering responses to open-ended questions is to enable the

researcher to understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories" (Patton, 2002, p. 21).

In addition to the six standardized questions, each type of interviewee (e.g., director, choral member) had one or more standardized open-ended questions specific to their relationship with performance production. For example, only the choral directors were asked, "What rehearsal techniques have you used that makes this a great performing choir?" Only singers were asked, "Let's pretend I am a new Norman North Chorale member. What is expected of me?"

Informal follow up questions were also utilized during interviews. Below are a few examples of these questions. Following Mr. Gonzalez's response to a question about the strength of Norman North's feeder programs, I ask, "What type of music do the feeder schools perform?" After discovering that one student interviewee had experienced two conductors as a singer at Norman North High School I ask, "Do you think you are getting better because you have experienced two conductors?" After the student replied, "yes," I followed with "why?"

I developed three other sets of interview questions for Mr. Gonzalez to assure accumulation of information regarding all aspects of the choral performance production. Questions in Appendices C and D included some topics that previous researchers of quality performance production had investigated. Questions in Appendix E addressed demographic data such as "What is your highest degree of education?" Some of the questions in these appendices were answered during formal interviews while others were answered through informal, conversational interviews.

All first round interviews were digitally, audio recorded with an Olympus WS-321 M or a Zoom Handy Recorder, Model H2. Rehearsals were video recorded with a Sony DCR-TRV 340, Digital Handycam. Four second round interviews were recorded on GarageBand, the remainder five interviews were recorded on GarageBand, the Olympus WS-321 M and the Zoom Handy Recorder, Model H2. Interview questions can be found in Appendices B through L.

Informal interviews and conversation. Through informal communication, participant values given to performance production were exposed and insights into personal relations among choral stakeholders were gained. For three and one-half days I was either talking with or observing a performance production stakeholder(s). Casual conversations and informal interviews usually occurred during lunches or directors' planning times. Written notes were recorded regarding the content of these interactions.

Additional phone and email conversations took place while data analysis was conducted. During these conversations I became reacquainted with certain of my research participants (i.e., two directors, two parents, two singers, and one fine arts coordinator). I verified details such as years of teaching experience and collected small pieces of information that illuminated the performance production process (e.g., "Is there a presence of Kodály training in Norman North's elementary feeder schools?").

Observations. Social and personal actions and interactions among performance stakeholders were observed within and outside of rehearsal events. Rehearsals of the national ACDA choir and other Norman North High School choirs were observed. Three consecutive rehearsals of the national ACDA choir were captured audio-visually with a Sony Handycam DCR-SR45s.

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To insure data collection thoroughness I developed and used a list of observation targets (Appendix M). Questions from this list guided observation and data analysis.

Field notes. Notes were taken during most interviews and during observations of the ACDA choir's rehearsals. Due to time restraints, all other field notes (e.g., a note about a lunch time observation) were written at the end of each data collection day.

Material culture. Material culture refers to objects of and/or associated with the research topic. Material culture included documents (e.g., choir syllabus), electronic or digital communications (e.g., choir website data), and artifacts (e.g., trophies). Most of the material culture available to me was in the form of documents, trophy and photo inscriptions, and photos.

I read the choir's numerous trophy and photo inscriptions. I noted the objects that were present and absent from the dimensions of the choral department. I read choir syllabi, rules, handbooks, travel manuals, curriculum guides, performance directives, student study guides, and performance facilitators. I read choral members' personal notes printed in performance programs for the years 2006, 2008, and 2009. I noted the choir's repertoire from year 2006-2007 through 2008-2009. I listened to a 2008-2009 audio recording of the choir. And I read a few online news articles about the 2009 ACDA choir.

Survey. Collection of survey data served as a form of methods triangulation and provided an additional means of looking at the phenomenon of superior quality performance production. Thirty-four out of sixty-five choral members (52% of the Chorale members) completed the researcher-designed survey. Demographic information such as age, grade level, and years of participation in private voice lessons were

collected. Three of the open-ended standardized, formal interview questions were asked on the survey. These questions were rephrased and asked as follows:

1. In order of influence, the first being the most influential, name five things or people that have most influenced your choir's performance success? Briefly explain your answers.

 2. Is there anything or anyone else that has contributed to your chorale's performance success? If yes, who, what and how?

3. If you have not already mentioned your contribution to the success of your chorale, what do you contribute?

Responses to the three questions were qualitative in nature and therefore were considered in grounded theory analysis. The survey may be found in Appendix N.

Information about the performance production process, choral participants, and its stakeholders (e.g., parents, administrators) was gathered through interviews, observations, field notes, material culture, and a survey. Multiple data collection strategies provided much information for analysis. Table 14 indicates the type of data that were collected per participant perspective. All perspectives were included in formal interview data and field notes. The singer's perspective was included in all data types. Each perspective was included in at least three data types.

Table 15

Type of data collected per participant perspective

| | | Interview | | | | |
Perspective	Observation	Formal	Informal	Field notes	Material	Survey
Directors	x	x	x	x	x	
Singers	x	x	x	x	x	x
Parents	x	x	x	x		
Administrators		x	x	x		
Former singers		x		x	x	
Freshman singer		x	x	x		

Note. x indicates the type of data collected from each perspective.

Qualitative Data Analysis

"Qualitative analysis transforms data into findings" (Patton, 2002, p. 432). In general, qualitative analysis includes (a) data management, (b) reading and reflecting upon data, (c) data analysis and interpretation (e.g., comparing and classifying data), and (d) expressing the interpretation of the analysis in visual or textual account (Creswell, 2007). Depending on the theoretical framework of inquiry, analysis may yield varying types of results. My data analyses produced an "in-depth picture of the case" (Creswell,

2007, p. 157) and suggested a model (Creswell, 2007, p. 157) for superior choral performance production.

Preparation for data analysis. Preparation for data analysis began by organizing the data and transcribing interviews and video recordings. For ease of transcription, I converted all recordings to mp3, digital data. For ease of reading and note taking within the texts of transcripts, transcript documents were double-spaced.

I organized the data by its methods (i.e., interviews, observations, field notes, material culture, and survey) and by perspectives (i.e., director, associate director, students, parents, principal, music supervisor, and student leadership). Transcripts of interviews and rehearsals were kept on my computer in Word files. Each interview transcript was assigned a number and general perspective label (e.g., student) to facilitate ease in identification. Rehearsal recordings were kept on a portable hard drive and in compact disc form. Material culture was kept in a cabinet file folder and in a green three-ringed binder.

Field notes were placed in a white three-ringed binder, organized by source and perspective of data. Data analysis findings were written in a lined 8.5 by 11 inch composition notebook or on lined, loose-leaf paper. Notes on lined loose-leaf paper were organized in a green three-ringed binder by source and perspective and by first and second round data collection. As new notes, information, and findings were discovered (e.g., second analyst coding) I added them to the green three-ringed notebook under a characteristically labeled tab. The deepest of thoughts and questions I had about the data I recorded in a journal or diagrammed on 8.5 by 11 inch or 8.5 by 14 inch, lined, loose leaf

paper. Drawings were kept in chronological order for self-regulation of my process and to facilitate trustworthiness of findings.

General explanation of grounded theory analysis.

Open coding. To analyze the data, I followed the procedural suggestions of Strauss and Corbin (1998), using open, axial, and selective coding processes. Coding is the in-depth examination of data (e.g., examination of each individual word, phrase, or event found in a transcript text). During open coding two major processes occurred: identification of concepts followed by identification of categories. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), open coding is "the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 101). A concept is a

> labeled phenomenon. It is an abstract representation of an event, object, or action/interaction that a researcher identifies as being significant in the data. The purpose behind naming phenomena is to enable researchers to group similar event, happenings, and objects under a common heading or classification (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 103.)

During open coding, discrete parts of the data within each concept are identified and they are

> closely examined, and compared for similarities and differences. Events, happenings, objects, and actions/interactions that are found to be conceptually similar in nature or related in meaning are grouped under more abstract concepts termed "categories" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 102).

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A category is a group of concepts that stand for a central idea in the data that has emerged as important in answering the research questions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). "Grouping concepts into categories is important because it enables the analyst to reduce the number of units with which he or she is working" (p. 113). In addition, the category, as an "abstract, higher order concept," has more ability to explain what is going on in the process being investigated than does a concept.

It should be noted that Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggested three ways to conduct open coding: line-by-line, whole sentence or paragraph, and whole document. During line-by-line coding analysts conduct thoughtful examinations of the individual words and/or phrases of the entire data set. During whole sentence or paragraph analysis, the analyst considers the data from the whole sentences or paragraphs of the data set. When coding by whole document, researchers examine the data as a whole, asking questions like "What is going on here?' and "What makes this document the same as, or different from, the previous ones that I coded" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 120). To assure credibility of findings, I used all three types of coding.

Axial coding. Axial coding is a continuation and extension of many of the strategies used in open coding but these strategies are at the categorical level not the conceptual level. "In axial coding, our goal is to systematically develop and relate categories" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 142). This is accomplished through examination and relating of both categories and their subcategories. "A subcategory is a category …. however rather than standing for the phenomenon itself, subcategories answer questions about the phenomenon such as when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 125). In layman's terms, a subcategory is a

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characteristic or dimension of a category. In the case of this present study, many of the concepts within emerging categories, contained the characteristics and dimensions that defined the categories.

During axial coding, data and findings are examined for how categories relate to categories. Analysis "occurs around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties [i.e., characteristics] and dimensions" [i.e., the degree of the characteristic, (e.g., how long, how committed, how experienced)] (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 123). Therefore the analyst examined details, processes, and relationships of categories and how they related within the category and to other categories. Such analysis illuminated processes and the structures in which and with which they did, or did not, operate and how these processes and structures related. Axial coding illuminated powerful explanations of the topic under examination and began the process of building a theory or model about it. During axial coding the amount of categories may be reduced. It should be noted that it is not uncommon when open and axial coding occurred simultaneously (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). This was the case in this present study.

Selective coding. Selective coding is "the process of integrating and refining the theory" that, in this case, explains how superior performance is produced (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 143). During selective coding, categories and subcategories were still being related. The analyst was in search of what categories, along with their subcategories answer the research question(s).

> During integration a central or core category is determined that represents the
> main theme of the research …. In an exaggerated sense, it consists of all the
> products of analysis condensed into a few words that seem to explain what 'this

research is all about.'… A central category has analytic power. What gives it that power is its ability to pull the other categories together to form an explanatory whole. Also, a central category should be able to account for considerable variation within categories. (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 146)

This integrative process encourages the reduction of categories. Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggested the following strategies for discovering major categories and their relationships. These strategies were writing or telling about your findings, diagramming, consulting notes, rereading data, and asking questions (e.g., "What comes through, although it might not be said directly?"). Although unusual for qualitative analysis, consulting previous research literature regarding the topic may assist in recognizing the core central category. I used all these strategies. Through the entire analytical process (i.e., from open to selective coding), I read and reread portions of qualitative methodology texts (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998) to guide my analytical process and assure trustworthiness of my findings. The following describes my analytical process in detail.

Data analysis.

First open coding of first round data collection. Some data analysis began on the field as I reviewed each day's experiences and observations at Norman North High School. Due to back-to-back scheduling of interviews and observations during data collection, the majority of my analysis occurred after departure from the research site.

I had originally thought my first reading of research data would be for the sole purpose of getting acquainted with it. I had planned to keep note taking to a minimum. My goal was to get a sense of the information that had been collected. But because

concepts strongly emerged during this first read by way of line-by-line analysis, this became my first open coding.

Initial coding. During this first open coding, with exception to survey data, I read through all the collected data (i.e., interview, material culture, and field notes). I listened and watched all rehearsal videos once. After transcribing them, I coded rehearsals by the whole document method. I viewed one of the Norman North Chorale rehearsals with a professor of educational psychology. Because she was well educated on effective teaching strategies I wanted to get her insight on what was happening in the Chorale's rehearsal. This fine professor identified many teaching strategies (e.g., advanced organizers, modeling, and immediate and explicit feedback). She commented on Mr. Gonzalez's musicality, visual expression, and his valuing of the singers.

Line by line coding during this first analysis was conducted with the use of the Word 2008 formatting palette on my computer. I highlighted actions/interactions, characteristics, behaviors, processes, and anything found in the transcripts that emerged important to the production of superior performance. Light grey and dark grey highlighting colors were used. Quotations pertinent to the central research question were highlighted in deep, bright yellow. The darker the highlight color, the more important I believed the topic to be. I placed a grey, 16 font, capital "C" for "concept" within the text of the data if the concept seemed strongly significant to the Chorale's performance production process. About a third of the way through the first coding I stopped coding with the capital "C," realizing the highlighting process was adequate.

Within the text of the transcripts I typed thoughts about the transcripts' contents in grey font. Very few thoughts were typed within the transcript documents. Instead I

recorded most of my thoughts and findings from the data on lined loose-leaf paper. These handwritten notes were labeled by perspective (e.g., parent), transcript number (e.g., parent one), and by coding event (e.g., first coding). My thoughts and findings from rehearsal analyses were handwritten on lined notebook paper also. All notes and findings were organized by perspective (e.g., singer) and data source (e.g., rehearsal, interview) in my green, three-ringed notebook. As far as material culture, notes were taken in pencil on the actual materials (e.g., on the choral handbook). Notes from material culture examined at the research site and/or online, were written on lined loose-leaf paper and placed in my three-ringed notebook. Questions and/or my deepest thoughts arising from the first coding were written in my journal.

Comparing and contrasting. Open coding included comparing findings (e.g., highlighted texts) across all data sources and perspectives. As common findings among perspectives or sources were identified, I asked questions such as: "How common across all perspectives and sources is this finding? In what perspectives and sources are these findings not found and why? To what degree does the interviewee emphasize this concept? Does this finding logically fit with all other findings? How important is this finding to all perspectives? To what degree does this finding answer my research questions? How does this finding explain how to produce superior performance?"

I also compared each finding with all the raw data, determining about how much of the raw data supported each finding. Answers to standardized interview questions facilitated the emergence of findings, in that many of these questions focused on how superior performance was produced. As I conducted constant comparisons of findings to findings and findings to data and findings and data to my research questions, the concepts

(i.e., possible building blocks for the model of superior performance) emerged. Nine major concepts, two minor concepts, and three mini-minor concepts emerged. The terminology major, minor, and mini-minor are not formal research terms but labels I used to communicate the perceived strength of the concept. Major concepts most strongly emerged as important to the production process whereas mini-minor emerged as the weakest.

To better understand the concepts that had emerged from this first coding I drew a diagram of how these concepts related. I made a large replica of this diagram on yellow poster board and pinned it on the office wall across from my desk so that I could thoughtfully refer to it as I conducted further analysis. I referred to this diagram throughout the entire analytical process, going back and forth from new to old findings.

Second open coding of first round data collection. With exception to survey data, I conducted a second open coding, an in-depth examination of all words, phrases, thoughts, and actions of all sources of data. I did not analyze survey data at this time because I planned to use survey findings as a credibility check for my findings. Thus, I planned to conduct analysis of survey data later in the analytical process.

A second coding. As I coded the transcripts I highlighted that which was significant to the performance production process of the Chorale on the interview transcripts. If such text was already highlighted in grey from the first coding, I surrounded it with an emboldened, double yellow line. Text highlighted for the first time during second coding was in light yellow. The use of two colors indicated my chronological thinking process and helped me evaluate the relatedness of my findings. Comments on the transcripts were recorded in regular and bold, yellow font. Bold font

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indicated the text was perhaps of greater importance to the production process. Quotes significant to the research question were highlighted in orange. Notes made on material culture were recorded in black pen. It should be noted that very few comments or highlighting was made on the text.

During second open coding of the data I spent much time thinking about the meaning of the words utilized in the data and how they related one to another. I learned that sometimes I gained clarity about my findings and the data by getting away from them. My notes about the data covered a surface area equal to about nine feet, six inches long by one foot, eleven inches wide. As the entire analytical process progressed this working area grew in height and to 11 feet, six inches by two feet, four inches. I was fortunate to own an executive sized, L-shaped desk. Against this I placed a card table. So I was not only mentally immersed in the data, I was surrounded by it. Getting away from the data by taking outdoor walks gave me time to reflect on my findings and my analytical process. As I analyzed, I learned that thinking in depth and at length about each finding was an important part of the analytical process.

As I read through the data, I recorded notes on lined notebook paper by perspective, by common, open-ended, standardized questions, and by first coding concepts. Specifically this meant the following:

- I made notes from each interviewee.
- I notated the answers of each interviewee's answers to the standardized questions.
- I began developing a sheet of notes for each emerging concept.

Notes included descriptions, quotations, and remarks about things that seemed important to the production of superior performance. This began identification of the properties (i.e., characteristics) and dimensions (i.e., the degree of characteristics) of emerging concepts. These varying ways of looking at the data helped me understand what interviewees thought was important in regards to the way superior performance was produced. Many notes referenced page numbers of specific transcripts to facilitate back and forth coding between notes and data. All notes referenced the transcript source (e.g., student transcript number one).

As I coded, I considered the frequency of concepts mentioned. I considered the emphasis of words, phrases, and thoughts. I considered the degree of emphasis the research participants and sources placed on each emerging concept. I considered the reasonableness of the conceptual findings in light of previous research findings and my own experiences as a choral director. I examined the strength of strongly emerging findings across all perspectives. When one concept emerged from just one source or perspective, I asked questions like "why." While coding I drew pictures of my understandings of the Chorale's performance production process. These pictures helped me think about the importance of emerging concepts and how and if they worked together.

During second open coding I also viewed all Chorale rehearsal videos a third time and consulted with a post-secondary choral conductor in regards to her coding of the Chorale rehearsal recordings. After converting video tape recordings to digital, I had made a compact disc of each of the rehearsals for her to view at her convenience. She whole-rehearsal coded all three Chorale rehearsals. That means instead of reading

through the transcripts of the rehearsals, she viewed all rehearsals, making notes of her perceptions of the data. *Whole rehearsal coding*, a term I coined, made sense to me, given the aural and visual nature of the choral domain.

While coding she tabulated the frequency of the following behaviors of Mr. Gonzalez: obvious monitoring, gesture communication, facial communication, error detection, error correction, disciplining, number of directives, number of suggestions, number of explanations, number of questions asked, amount of discussion, times answering a question, times of humor or diversion, change of music literature, and positive comments. She tabulated these behaviors on a researcher-designed tabulation sheet. Behaviors for this tabulation sheet were based on previous studies (e.g., Rhoads, 1990).

During our consultation, she shared with me what seemed to stand out most to her regarding the characteristics of the director (e.g., caring, great musician, great visual imagery of the score) and the singers (e.g., well-trained, focused, disciplined, tonal quality comparable to many post-secondary choirs). We also discussed the tabulation of director behaviors. This discussion gave me further insight into her perceptions of the production of superior performance represented in the three rehearsal recordings.

Periodically throughout the research analysis, I talked with her about my findings. Her listening ears and professional comments facilitated more understanding and verification of my findings. Verification of my findings encouraged me through what I was realizing was a long and at times tedious process (i.e., grounded theory research).

Conceptual findings of the second coding verified the trustworthiness of previous conceptual findings and revealed four new major, four new minor, and five new mini-

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minor concepts that were important to the production of superior performance. This yielded a total of thirteen major concepts, six minor concepts, and eight mini-minor concepts. Because previous findings were verified, I felt comfortable to proceed in examination of similarities, differences, and relationships of and among concepts.

Conceptual examination. As I coded I continued to ask the same questions I had asked during the first open coding. For example, I asked how significant each concept (i.e., major, minor, and mini-minor) was to the production of superior performance. I continued to weigh conceptual strength across perspectives and sources. I also ask, "Does the data indicate that the concepts are necessary for superior performance production?" This type of thinking, along with (a) examining the properties and characteristics of concepts, (b) determining relationships among concepts and their properties and dimensions, and (c) much diagramming led to the reduction of concepts. What I discovered was that some concepts were the properties of other concepts (e.g., the mini-minor concept, Peer Teaching was a part of Teaching: Sharing of Responsibility). Thus, I moved conceptual findings (i.e., concepts) that were properties of other concepts into their appropriate major concepts. Some concepts, when compared to the power of other concepts, were insignificant to the explanation of how superior performance was produced. These concepts were pruned from the findings. Prior to reduction processes, first and second coding had yielded thirteen major concepts, six minor concepts, and eight mini-minor concepts, a total of twenty-seven concepts of varying significance. After reduction processes five minor concepts dissolved into major concepts and one minor concept was dropped. Three mini-minor concepts dissolved into major concepts and four were dropped. This reduction rendered the same thirteen major concepts as had

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emerged from the first open coding, one minor concept from the second open coding, and one mini-minor concept from the second coding.

Similarities, differences, relationships. Further examinations of the concepts by (a) similarities, differences, and relationships, (b) strength of explanation for the production of superior performance, and (c) strength of emergence from all data sources and perspectives rendered more reduction of concepts, yielding explanatory categories. This process was a grueling process, given properties of many concepts were related and similar. Part of this process required me to understand what relationships among concepts and their properties were most important. By thinking and diagramming, a series of conceptual reductions occurred yielding eight major categories and the same minor concept and mini-minor concept resulting from the previous reduction exercises. This totaled ten conceptual findings of varying strengths. No concepts were pruned (i.e., diminishing of concepts resulted from recognizing that some major concepts were properties and/or dimensions of other major concepts).

Axial and Open Coding. At this point in the analyses I was stuck. Not all of the eight categories and two concepts related to one another. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the building of an explanation of the topic under investigation required relational statements. I compared my findings with the data, but found no discrepancies.

Second round data. I was pleased that it was at this time I had finished collection of data from a second round of interviews and was conducting a whole document open coding of it. As I was open coding this data, I put aside previous data and findings, hoping that distance from it would allow for new understandings when I returned to it.

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Results of the open coding of the second round interviews yielded four major concepts and two minor concepts. Three of the major concepts and one of the minor concepts had previously emerged from the first and second open coding of first round data collection. Interestingly three of the six concepts that had emerged strongly from this analysis of second round data were three of the concepts that had previously not related to other categorical findings.

Other analysts. While coding the second round interview data I shared a portion of my interview findings and raw data with six members of a doctoral studies qualitative research course. As a class assignment, each class member was to categorize the portion of findings that they had been given.

Using various methods (e.g., whole document or line by line coding) all but one member categorized the findings. This member could not read my cursive handwriting, so instead this member read through the raw typed data that she had been given.

With exception to one category, the findings of the members of the qualitative course supported the categories that had emerged through my analyses. This prompted me to re-examine the significance of the category that had emerged for them but that I had determined as not significant enough to include in theoretical development.

Additional open coding. Using the new data I had collected from second round interviews, I drew many pictures of how all categories and concepts from all coding might relate. With exception of survey data, I conducted a third open coding of data that had been collected during the first data collection. For this I utilized whole document coding. I conducted a second open coding of data collected during the second data collection. For this I used line-by-line coding.

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Properties and dimensions. Reduction of findings occurred as properties and dimensions of concepts and categories were examined, compared, contrasted, and related. This yielded five majors categories, no minor concepts, and no mini-minor concepts. Still remaining were three concepts that did not relate to other concepts or categories.

Survey data. At this point I coded the survey data. Each survey participant had answered three of the standardized interview questions. Because this was a survey collection, answers for each question were between three and eight handwritten lines of data. I whole-document-coded the data from each participant. Then putting all participants' answers together by question, I coded the answers, line-by-line. This allowed me to conduct a frequency count of same or similar answers. Same and similar answers were in categories that explained how participants believed superior performance was produced.

Survey to other data. By comparing, contrasting, and relating survey findings to all other findings (i.e., categorical, conceptual, and sub-categorical analyses), I finally learned how all concepts and categories related. Survey findings supported prior findings and powerfully illuminated the importance and workings of certain concepts and categories. Two categories, made up mostly of previous concepts and categories were able to explain how superior performance was produced.

Selective Coding. Although late in the process, and not considered selective coding, two professional music educators coded a portion of my raw data. An elementary music educator holding a doctoral degree in music education, line-by-line open coded the largest student interview transcript. This 14-point font transcript was 35 double-spaced pages long.

A former high school choir director, holding a master's degree in choral performance, whole-document-coded two of Mr. Gonzalez's interview transcripts and one of the associate director's interview transcripts, equaling a total of 58 double-spaced pages, at 14-point font. Their findings verified mine, although each had found one subcategory of the data more important than I. In response to these discrepancies, I reread raw data and findings related to these two subcategories. I concluded that because I was coding in light of all the data and not a small portion of it, the findings were incongruent for these two concepts.

Writing, drawing, talking. During selective coding, integration of categories yields one central category that, in this case, explained how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Although previous analyses had yielded two major categories of explanation, these categories did not relate in such a way as to bring about one final category. So analyses continued. I examined in detail every category and subcategory within the two major categories. I drew pictures of how properties and dimensions of subcategories and categories related. I considered these relationships or lack of them in light of raw data. I reviewed parts of the raw data (e.g., reading transcripts, skimming through the Chorale handbook). I thought about the importance of categories and subcategories by writing about them. I put these handwritten writings side by side, making diagrams of them.

Writing up results of my analyses became another means of analysis (i.e., thinking, relating, evaluating). By writing my findings, I learned what I knew and what I did not know about the Chorale's performance production process. Writing revealed subcategories that were more or less important than others.

Talking with people about my findings sometimes helped me think about the results in new ways. On brief occasions I would talk with the choral director who had coded the Chorale's rehearsal recordings. Four music education professors and seven doctoral students gave me input in regards to my findings and analytical process. And three of my best friends let me share my findings with them. These friends were not music or music education professionals, although two were parents of a former high school musician. I would sometimes ask these friends if my findings made sense to them in light of their understandings regarding people and business. Through diagramming, writing, and talking about findings, results indicated one central category.

Drawing a model. Analysis continued as categories and subcategories were related to the central category. During this time I wrote three different versions of what I had considered complete write ups of results only to realize that I had not finished the selective coding processes. All of these versions were very much alike but different in how some categories and subcategories related.

As I wrote about the central category I realized additional properties and dimensions of major categories were emerging. I discovered that building models of what I considered to be selective findings, helped clarify the processes within the categories. It made me think how processes flowed and how and to what degree categories and subcategories were important in and to the production process.

After designing a model of how superior performance was produced at Norman North High School I would email the model to two friends, one a mechanical engineer who had experience with designing models, and the other was a very good thinker. Our

discussions about each model increased my understanding of the production process. Before concluding with a final model, I had drawn five official models and six unofficial models.

A central category. As I continued thinking, drawing, discussing, and writing my understandings, findings became more abstract as was suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998). As a result, a new, different central category emerged. This category satisfied all central category criteria suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 147). For example, all other major categories related to the new central category were "sufficiently abstract" so that it could be used in other research examinations.

Trustworthiness

A number of strategies were used to verify the trustworthiness of my findings. I established trustworthiness of findings through triangulation by multiple methods, triangulation by multiple perspectives, triangulation by multiple analysts, analytical rigor, member checks, transferability, and peer debriefing. The following gives a brief description of these strategies.

Triangulation by multiple methods. Research data were collected from five differing types of methods. These types of methods were interview, observation, fieldwork, material culture collection, and survey. The volume of data collected from these methods was significant. I spent approximately 37 hours interviewing research participants. Thirty-four of those hours were recorded equaling 2,016 double-spaced, 14-font, pages of transcripts. Observations spanned three and one-half days and time before, after and during two ACDA performances. Survey data were gathered from 52% of

Norman North Chorale membership. Material culture varied from photos on the rehearsal walls of the Chorale to the Norman North Choral handbook.

Various data collection methods yielded different types of findings. Through observations, external behaviors were discovered. Through interviews, feelings and thoughts were expressed. Material culture verified interview and observational data, provided contextual information, and offered evidence of participant actions, interactions, goals, and beliefs. Survey data facilitated comparison of survey findings with findings from all other collection methods. By collecting data from five types of methods, I was able to gain a comprehensive understanding of superior performance production. Comparison and contrasting of findings by method, facilitated discernment of what was fact and what was fiction regarding the Norman North Chorale production process.

Triangulation by multiple sources. I interviewed, informally talked with, and observed singers, directors, parents, and administrators. Each type of interviewee (e.g., director or singer) experienced superior performance production differently. Therefore by having various sources I was able to understand the performance production process of the Norman North Chorale more completely. Examining the production process through various sources separately and holistically provided rich descriptions of the Norman North Chorale production process and everything related to it. Comparing and contrasting interviewee's data from within a like source (e.g., student) and among all methods offered opportunity to check consistency and strength of my findings. Because so many were interviewed, common findings made a strong case for the trustworthiness of my conclusions.

Collecting data from multiple and various sources facilitated a comprehensive, in-depth, holistic view of the performance production process. I was able to describe the performance production process, its context, and its participants in detail. Multiple sources and methods assured consistency and credibility of findings (Patton, 2002).

Analytical rigor. Dependability of findings was achieved by conducting a systematic, thorough plan of analysis (Patton, 2002, p. 546). I consistently consulted three different qualitative research textbooks (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to assure the integrity of my methodology.

Numerous readings of portions of my data and findings, three open codings of the first data set, two open codings of the second data set, two codings of survey data, and three codings of rehearsal recordings permitted me to assure trustworthiness of findings. Axial and selective coding also facilitated trustworthiness of findings as I was in constant comparison and contrasting of the details of my findings and data. Diagramming, drawing, notating, reflecting, talking about, and writing about my data and findings facilitated logical inductive and deductive reasoning.

My interview questions facilitated easy comparison of findings across all sources and perspectives. Constant comparison and contrasting of findings within and across perspectives and sources assured credibility of findings. Through rigorous analysis internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity was achieved. Internal homogeneity "concerns the extent to which the data that belong in a certain category hold together or 'dovetail' in a meaningful way." External heterogeneity "concerns the extent to which differences among categories are bold and clear" (Patton, 2002, p. 465). By analyzing back and forth among research questions, data, and findings (e.g., categories, properties,

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relationships, concepts), I facilitated development of a trustworthy, data-grounded theory of superior performance production.

Triangulation by multiple analysts. The dependability of my results was confirmed by the codings of nine individual analysts. These analysts coded a portion of the raw data collected during my first collection. Given the amount of data collected, it was unreasonable to ask analysts to code all the data. The following describes their contributions to my research.

First outside analysis. A university choral director whole-rehearsal coded all three Norman North Chorale rehearsals. That means instead of reading through the transcripts of the rehearsals, she viewed all rehearsals, making note of her perceptions of the data. Her findings supported the concepts that had emerged from my analyses, although she perceived the training of the singers, prior to their membership in the Chorale as more important than I had. This prompted me to return to my data, attending to the importance of previous singer training from all data sources.

Second outside analysis. Six members of a doctoral studies qualitative research course were asked to categorize my first and second, open coding findings. To do this they were given several documents. They were given digital copies of most of my handwritten notes regarding the concepts that had emerged from my first and second open coding. These notes equaled approximately 47 pages. They were given a portion of some of the notes I had taken regarding certain interviewees equaling approximately 15 handwritten pages. They were given the combined answers of all interviewees to the standardized open-ended questions, approximately 21 handwritten pages. And they were given 494 pages of double spaced transcripts (i.e., raw data) from my first data collection.

This was approximately 55% of interview data first collected and 37% of all interview data collected for this current research study. They were to read at least 25 pages of the raw data. Otherwise raw data were used as references for them during categorization.

The findings of the members of the qualitative course were encouraging. All but one of their categories supported the categories that had emerged through my analyses. They had identified all the categories that I had identified plus one more. I was aware of this category, but having the advantage of coding all the data, I had believed it to be less important than they perceived it. Their finding prompted me to revisit the data related to this category. I related it to other categories and concepts in a matrix-type flow chart. By considering all data, concepts, and how concepts related, I concluded that the category the course members had identified was a far less powerful explanation of the production of superior performance than all others that had been identified. Just as I had not included other less powerful categories in my model of production of superior performance, I believed I was justified in not including this particular category in my theoretical development.

Third outside analysis. A former high school choir director, holding a master's degree in choral performance, whole-document coded two of Mr. Gonzalez's interview transcripts and one of the associate director's interview transcripts. These transcripts represented 20% of all director and associate director data from the first data collection. The concepts that emerged from her coding were the same as mine although one concept emerged more strongly for her than for me. So I re-examined this concept and realized that had I coded just the three transcripts that she had coded I would have concluded the same thing.

Fourth outside analysis. An elementary music teacher, holding a doctor's degree in music education conducted a line-by-line open coding of the largest student interview transcript. This transcript was 35, double-spaced pages of 14-point font text. The concepts she identified were the same as mine. Her notes in the side margins of the transcript identified properties within concepts that I also had identified.

In summary, nine different analysts supported the dependability of my findings. Comparisons of researcher's findings to outside analysts' findings were conducted on director interviews, one singer interview, rehearsal recordings, and categorization of conceptual findings.

Transferability. As a result of data collection from multiple sources and perspectives I was able to provide a rich, thorough description of this case study. Such dense descriptions found in chapter four of this dissertation permit readers to determine the transferability (external validity) of my findings (Creswell, 2007).

Member checks. Accuracy, fairness, completeness, and perceived validity of data analysis can be determined through member checks (Patton, 2002). Therefore, directors, two singers, two out of three parents, and one out of two administrators checked their entire interview transcript collected from the first data collection. Two singers, two out of three parents, and one out of two administrators also checked their interviews from the second data collection. All participants stated that the transcripts were complete, fair, and accurate. In total, member checks were conducted on approximately 17% of the raw data.

Peer Debriefing. Throughout this entire research project (i.e., from conception of the research topic through selective coding) a minimum of four music education professors and seven doctoral students periodically critiqued my research process,

thinking, and findings. Their critical questions and insightful comments helped me to remove bias from my work.

Summary. The collection of data from multiple sources and perspectives yielded a large amount of data representing a comprehensive view of the Norman North Chorale's production of superior performance. Consistently, rigorous analyses rendered a model of superior performance production that represented all of this data. Strategies were used to assure trustworthiness of the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The purpose of this case study was to discover how extremely high quality performance was produced through thorough examination of the performance production process. The central question of this dissertation research was, "How is superior high school choral performance produced?" More specifically the question was, "How does Norman North Chorale produce superior performance?" Study participants were the music faculty (i.e., two choir directors), present and former Chorale members, three parents of Chorale members, two school administrators, and one member of another of Norman North's choirs. Data were collected at the Chorale's regular high school performance production setting, the 2009 American Choral Directors Association's national convention, in the home of the Chorale director, in the school principal's office, and by phone and video Skype. Research data were collected through interviews, observations, field notes, examination of various material cultures, and a survey.

Analysis of this qualitative data was achieved through (a) constantly comparing findings across all data sources and perspectives, (b) examining the details of the data and how they did or did not relate, (c) discovering the dimensions (e.g., degree of intensity) and properties (i.e., characteristics) of all findings, (d) discovering contradictions of findings, and (e) constantly considering the findings as related to the research questions, previous research, and personal experiences. Hours of thinking about the data, moving back and forth among findings and raw data, diagramming, writing, maneuvering

of findings in various process matrixes, and deductive and inductive reasoning were methods of analysis.

Results of this investigation were descriptive, conceptual, and categorical, resulting in a model of how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. Contextual information, grounded theory, and survey results were organized in this chapter under the topics entitled Descriptive Findings of the Case, Grounded Theory Findings, Survey Findings, and Summary. Although results were organized separately in this chapter, findings from all data sources, including survey data were considered equally in the emergence of a model of how superior performance was produced.

Descriptive Findings of the Case

This section is designed to give background information about this case in preparation for enhanced understanding of the explanations found in the grounded theory research results. Findings in this section are descriptions of the Norman North Chorale, the Norman North Choral Program, the program's school, its school district, and its community.

Norman North Chorale. The Norman North Chorale was a very accomplished performance group, consisting of 27 male and 38 female high school students and one main director, Mr. Gonzalez and one associate director, Mr. Chapin. The Chorale's pristine choral tone, oneness of sound, and superb technical precision surpassed some post-secondary choirs I had heard. Their sound was beautiful and as mature as some well-trained collegiate ensembles. Since the ensemble's inception, the Chorale had earned superior ratings at the festivals of the Oklahoma Music Educators Conference and eleven consecutive State Sweepstakes Awards. At the time of onsite data collection, in the

school year of 2008-2009, the Chorale had earned recognition as the Oklahoma Music Educators Conference's honor choir. This meant that they were the invited mixed performance ensemble of the school year, 2008-2009. This was the fifth time they had been recognized as the Oklahoma Music Educators Conference's honor choir.

The Norman North Chorale had earned Best in Class, First Place, and Best Overall Choir Awards in major cities around the United Stated of America. The year prior to onsite data collection, they had earned first place in a Chicago festival. During their 2008-2009 year, they won first place at the New York City Festival. Although the Norman North Chorale had performed for state and district American Choral Directors Associations, their highest honors were earning participation in three national American Choral Directors Association conventions. The Chorale's men performed as a demonstration choir during the 2003 national American Choral Directors Association Convention. The entire Chorale performed as a demonstration choir for the 2007 and 2009 national American Choral Directors Association conventions.

Singers were very enthusiastic about singing and loved being around one another. They were discreetly proud of their performance accomplishments. Mr. Gonzalez fully shared the accolades of performance achievement with his singers. He recognized that their attitudes, actions, and interactions strongly contributed to the Chorale's successes.

Thirty-four out of sixty-five Chorale members (i.e., 52% of the Chorale membership) completed a two-page survey, responding to demographic questions and three of the standardized questions asked during interview data collection. Survey findings indicated that singers excelled not only in choral music performance but also in their other academic subjects. Of the 34 respondents, 33 reported their grade point

average. Grade point averages ranged from 2.7 to 4.0 points. The average grade point average of the respondents was 3.67. Half of the respondents' grade point averages were 3.7 or higher and only 15% of respondents had a grade point average of less than 3.5. Twenty-four percent of respondents had earned 4.0 grade point averages. The distribution of grade point averages was negatively skewed and strongly leptokurtic (sk=-1.23, ku=2.14), indicating that the grade point averages leaned toward the higher side.

Respondents' participation in school choirs ranged from two to eighteen years. One participant stated s/he had participated in school choirs a total of 18 years. Since this student was 18 years old at the time of completing the survey I questioned the validity of this answer. Given this and the outlying tendency of this answer, I did not include this participant's response in the proceeding calculations. This meant that respondents' participation in school choirs ranged from two to thirteen years. The average number of years that respondents had participated in school choirs was approximately eight years (M = 7.26). More respondents had participated in school choirs for five years (*Mode* = 5) than for any other amount of time. The median number of years respondents participated in school choirs was seven and one-half years (*Md* = 7.5). Figure 1 depicts a relatively symmetrical, but platykurtic distribution (sk = .16, ku = -1.07).

Figure 1: Years in School Choirs
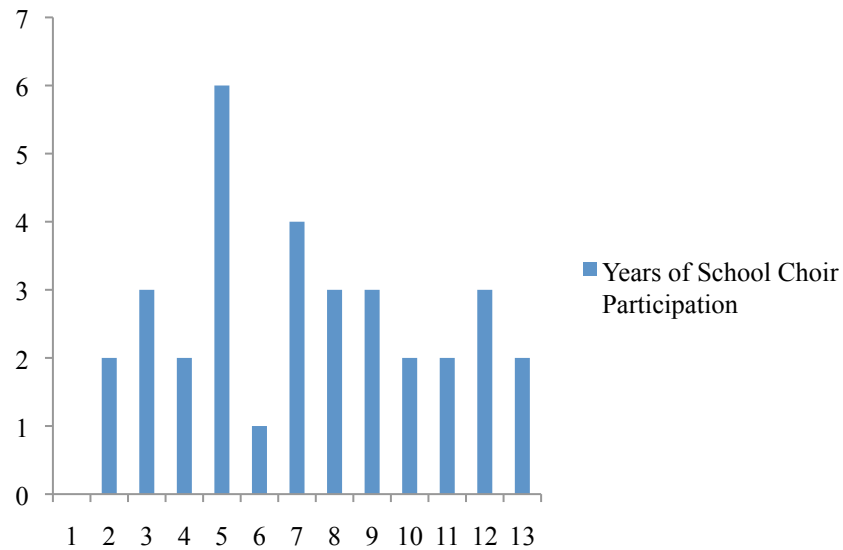
Only 17 out of 34 survey respondents (i.e., approximately 50% of those surveyed) had participated in church choirs. There was one participant outlier who had participated in church choir for 18 years. Given that this singer was 18 years old at the time of survey completion, calculations were made without this outlier. Therefore the range of years that respondents participated in church choir was 0 to 11 years. The average number of years respondents had participated in church choirs was approximately two years ($M = 2.03$). Given that almost 52% of the calculated sample had not participated in church choirs, the distribution of this sample was highly unusual with tails on both sides of the range of years (sk = 1.48, ku = 1.95). Given the unusual distribution of scores, the median score was a more accurate description of the sample's years of participation in church choir (Glass and Hopkins, 1996). The median score was ($Md = 0.5$), meaning approximately half of the respondents had been involved in church choir less than one-half of a year,

while the approximate other half of participants had not participated in church choirs for longer than one-half of a year.

Only eight of the survey respondents were taking private voice lessons at the time of the onsite data collection. Out of 34 respondents, 13 had taken private lessons. Number of years taking private lessons ranged from eight months to seven years. The average number of years respondents had taken private lessons was approximately one year $M = 1.06$). This figure was positively skewed by the approximately 62% of respondents that had not taken voice lessons. The distribution of the number of years that respondents had taken private voice was strongly leptokurtic (sk = 1.85, ku = 2.86).

Survey findings indicated that a majority of Chorale members had experienced participation in school choirs prior to Norman North Chorale participation. Findings suggested that private voice instruction was not common among the Chorale membership. Table 16 presents a summary of the demographic survey findings.

Table 16

Descriptions of Survey Participants

				Skewness		Kurtosis	
Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Statistic	Std.Error	Statistic	Std.Error
School Choir	7.26	7.00	3.29	.16	.41	-1.07	.80
Church Choir	2.03	.00	2.79	1.48	.41	1.95	.80
Private Voice							
Lessons	1.06	.00	1.80	1.85	.41	2.86	.79
Grade Point							
Average	3.67	3.70	.30	-1.23	.41	2.14	.80

Note. N=34 in calculation of those taking private voice lessons, but N=33 for all other statistics.

Norman North Choral Program. Since the opening of the Norman North High

School in 1997, Mr. Gonzalez had directed the Norman North Chorale and the Norman

North Choral Program. He designed the choral program, determining its objectives,

goals, and mode of operations. His philosophy guided all curricular decisions including

selection of music literature. He was privileged to design the choral department facilities

(e.g., the floor plan).

Mr. Gonzalez had always had an associate director. At the time of data collection,

Mr. Darin Chapin was in his third year at Norman North High School as the choral

program's associate director. Observations and interview statements indicated that the

two directors enjoyed one another's company and benefitted from each other's

professional expertise. Mr. Chapin and Mr. Gonzalez worked collaboratively to improve

singers' educational and performing experiences.

The Norman North choral program consisted of six choral ensembles, together

equaling 180 singers. Mr. Chapin taught/directed three non-auditioned choirs: a women's

concert choir, a men's concert choir, and a freshmen women's choir. These choirs were

composed of new singers, less experienced singers, and mature singers who wanted to

sing in more than one or two choirs. In addition to music literature composed for women

and men's ensembles, these ensembles combined to perform mixed choral literature also.

Mr. Chapin directed one auditioned choir, a chamber choir of mixed voices. This choir

was composed of both experienced and less experienced singers. In order for membership

in this choir, singers had to also participate in one large ensemble.

In addition to directing four ensembles, Mr. Chapin directed the Norman North

Chorale when Mr. Gonzalez was guest conducting or teaching. There was never a need

for a substitute choral director. When Mr. Chapin was absent, Mr. Gonzalez directed his ensembles. Thus, directors were acquainted with all choral program participants.

All potential choir members of both directors received vocal, mental, and emotional scrutiny through a lengthy audition or placement session. All students were allowed to participate in Mr. Chapin's choirs, despite the results of their placement sessions.

Mr. Gonzalez taught two auditioned choirs: the Norman North Chorale and the Norman North Jazz Ensemble. The Norman North Chorale was the most advanced mixed ensemble of the Norman North choral program, consisting of 65 members. The jazz ensemble, consisting of 17 singers, was considered to be Norman North's most talented singers. They were guest performers at state and community festivals and represented the Norman North choral program at school assemblies. Jazz ensemble members were required to sing in the Norman North Chorale.

Considerations for membership in the Chorale included type of voice, emotional and mental maturity, singers' desire, quality of voice, and singers' talent. In addition, Chorale members had to possess some sight-reading skills. Freshmen were not allowed membership in the Chorale during their first semester. Once earning participation in the Chorale, membership was for a lifetime.

All choirs met during the school day. Table 17 shows the rehearsal schedule for the entire choral program. Overtime was a non-choral activity occurring once a week or as designated by school administrators. During this time, students, often non-choral students were given advice regarding school activities such as scheduling.

All teachers were contracted for a seven period day. Even though Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin fulfilled their contract by working through the men's choir period, they worked through and past the last period of the school day (i.e., 3 PM – 3:55 PM).

Table 17

Norman North Choral Program Rehearsal Schedule

Rehearsal Time	Activity	Director
7:30 AM – 8:40 AM	Chamber Choir Jazz Ensemble	Chamber: Chapin Jazz: Gonzalez
8:40 AM – 9 AM	Overtime	Both
9: 05 AM – 10:05 AM	Planning	Both
10:10 AM – 11:05 AM	Concert Women's Choir	Chapin
11:10 AM – 12:05 PM	Norman North Chorale	Gonzalez
11:55 AM – 12:55 PM	Lunch	Both
1 PM – 1:55 PM	Freshmen Women's Choir	Chapin
2 PM – 2:55 PM	Concert Men's Choir	Chapin

A typical performance schedule for all Norman North choirs included approximately 17-21 pieces of new literature per choir per year. This did not include all-state, honor choir, solo, or small ensemble, competition literature. Music literature sung by the Norman North Chorale was of double A difficulty (i.e., the most difficult).

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Singers participated in a major musical during the fall. During the year of onsite data collection, singers performed South Pacific. The year prior to this they performed West Side Story. The year following onsite data collection they performed Carousel.

Choirs, with exception to the Jazz Ensemble, performed two to three concerts during the fall semester and a school concert during the spring semester. One of these concerts included a performance with the middle school choirs that fed the Norman North Choral Program. During the spring semester choirs also participated in the Oklahoma Music Educators Association's contests and competed in a minimum of one other performance festival. The latter usually included travel and a minimum overnight stay. Mr. Chapin's choirs competed separately from Mr. Gonzalez's choirs and traveled to different performance festivals for their yearly competition trip. This gave Mr. Chapin's choirs an identity of their own, separate from that of Mr. Gonzalez's ensembles.

The last performance given by all choirs with exception to the Jazz Ensemble was called the Mostly Mozart concert. A full orchestra partially consisting of members of the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Orchestra accompanied much of this concert. During this concert, each Norman North choir sang a minimum of one concert piece with an orchestra. During this concert Norman North High School singers performed solos by the great classical composers. Some non-orchestrated works were also performed. The event gave young singers an opportunity to experience and perform the greatest of classical artworks.

Due to the nature of contemporary literature and because the Jazz Ensemble literature was quite different from that of other Norman North choirs, the Jazz Ensemble did not perform at the same time other Norman North choirs performed. Instead they

presented their own concerts consisting of a Christmas concert and a spring concert. Their school related performances included singing messages on Valentine's Day to Norman North High School students and faculty and singing the United States of America's National Anthem at school assemblies. Many of their performances were community presentations such as a yearly performance at Norman, Oklahoma's Jazz in June event. They also competed in various festivals.

Twenty-four of the 180 singers of the Norman North Choral Program were taking private voice lessons at the time of data collection. Some of these singers took lessons from Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin. Parents mentioned that singers, who had taken lessons for an extended period of time, had positively impacted the Norman North Chorale.

The choral program did not have a parent support organization such as a booster's club. Instead, Mr. Gonzalez called on a handful of parents and supporters to oversee such things as fundraisers. Mr. Gonzalez did his best to limit fund raising. Singers rented their performance attire, purchased specific shoes for performance, and paid for trip expenses such as room and board.

Norman North High School. The high school in which the Norman North Choral Program resided was the Norman North High School. This school was the newer of two high schools in the Norman School District, opening in 1997. Feeding into Norman North High School were two middle schools and eight elementary schools.

At the time of onsite data collection, the student population of Norman North High School was 2,050 students. Approximately 60% of these students were Caucasian, 14% were Native American, 12% were African-American, and 12% were of Asian or

Spanish origin. Thirty-two percent of the student population was economically disadvantaged (i.e., qualified for free and reduced lunches).

Norman North High School leadership had high academic and behavioral expectations for their students. The principal was a caring, no nonsense guy who expected the best behavior (i.e., academic and social) from his students. The principal was entering his thirty-fifth year as an administrator. He had spent seven of these years at Norman North High School. Prior to being an administrator he had been a band director for six years. He was supportive of the arts, enjoyed classical music, and understood the demands and benefits of performing arts programs.

All the former principals and assistant principals of Norman North High School had energetically supported the choral program and the fine arts department. Important to facilitating recruitment of talented singers was the way the master school schedule was designed. The school schedule was designed so that major arts courses did not compete with one another. Talented students, especially after their freshman year, could take more than one arts course.

The school was a Blue Ribbon School. This meant that it was academically considered in the top 10% of all high schools in the United States of America. Eighty-percent of the assessment that determined qualification for this United States Department of Education recognition was taken from the Algebra One and English Two test scores of the Oklahoma End of Instruction Examination. The other 20% of the scoring included such things as attendance history and graduation rate. Out of an academic index of 1500, Norman North had received a score of 1437.

Eighty to eighty-five percent of Norman North High School's graduates attended university, college, or trade schools. Out of these percentages, eight to ten percent attended trade schools.

Norman Public School District. The Norman North High School was in the Norman Public School District. The district was comprised of two high schools, four middle schools, and sixteen elementary schools. The district had a long-standing tradition of classical performance excellence in its schools. Elementary music teachers utilized Kodály and Orff methodologies.

The superintendent and former superintendents and assistant superintendents were very supportive of the arts. This support was financial (i.e., fine arts budget) and psychological (i.e., concert attendance). When attending concerts, administrators were enthusiastic. They made a special effort to congratulate the performers. In addition to supporting fine arts in the schools, the district also supported a supervisor of fine arts and a fine arts department secretary.

The largest financial commitment to the fine arts was the building of a performing arts center. This state of the art facility, entitled The Nancy O'Brian Center for the Performing Arts, housed concerts produced by and for students of the school district. The Center housed a 1200-seat performance auditorium, a 200-seat studio theatre, scene and costume shops, and an art gallery. The last sentence of the mission statement of the arts center depicted the district's belief in artistic participation. It stated, "In partnership with the Norman Community and the State of Oklahoma, the Center brings us together to celebrate the ongoing power and value of the arts in our lives" (www.norman.k12.ok.us/fpa/CPA.htm).

The Community. Norman, Oklahoma was the residence of the Norman Public School District. The community was called The City of Festivals. It yearly hosted 25 festivals, at least four of which were performing arts festivals. In addition to supporting many community festivals, community members supported fine arts in the school system as evidenced by passing two bond levies to build The Nancy O'Brian Center for the Performing Arts.

The community was supported by commercial, agricultural, and professional activities. The district's fine arts supervisor believed that the presence of The University of Oklahoma and its personnel who lived in Norman, influenced support for classical arts and quality education.

Parent interviewees valued the fine arts and their adolescents' participation in arts. Observations and interview data indicated that many parents of the Norman North Chorale believed in a rigorous work ethic and supported healthy challenges for their adolescents. Academic and behavioral expectations were high, influenced by the university's presence and the values of a community influenced by the doctrines of the Christian faith.

Summary. The environment of the Norman North Chorale was positive and supportive. Parents, school district personnel, choral directors, and other community members supported students of the performing arts and cared about the quality and depth of their fine arts programs.

Grounded Theory Findings: Model of Production of Superior Performance

Through detailed examination of all data and repeated thorough immersion into the data, concepts emerged that were significant to the research question. These concepts were "the building blocks" for a model for superior performance production (Strauss & Corbin, 1998. p. 8).

As conceptual findings were broken down into their minutest forms and then compared, contrasted, and related, concepts were reduced and condensed. Some conceptual findings (i.e., concepts), when compared to other concepts, were found to be insignificant to the production of superior performance. Therefore they were pruned from the research findings. Examination of properties, dimensions, and relationships of concepts revealed that some concepts were similar in nature and worked together in the production of superior performance. These concepts were placed into one category (i.e., condensed). According to Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 125) a category is made up of more than one concept similar in nature and having "the ability to explain what is going on."

Analyses revealed that many concepts were sub-categories of categories. A subcategory is "a category that answers questions about the category such as when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 125). Dimensions and properties of sub-categories and categories were extensively examined and related as I continuously returned to the research data, previous findings, and my notes to gain understanding and monitor the trustworthiness of my findings. Monitoring included asking myself questions like (a) "Does the data really reveal this finding?" and (b) "Do all perspectives and data sources agree with this finding?"

Comparing, contrasting, and relating categories to one another resulted in condensation of categories. Fewer and fewer categories explained the Norman North Chorale production process. Finally, as recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1998) only one central category emerged in explanation of how superior performance was produced. Through the integration of major categorical findings and statements of relationship, a model for the production of superior performance by Norman North Chorale emerged.

The following text explains the components of the model and how these work together to produce superior performance. These components were beliefs and values, extraordinary characteristics, motivational strategies, musicianship, musical pedagogy, and expert technical training. This explanation of superior performance production resulted from the emergence and deep examination of 28 concepts.

Model of Production of Superior Performance

Beliefs and values: The central category. The common beliefs and values of director and singers was the central category (i.e., explanation) for how the Norman North Chorale consistently produced superior performance. Director and singers believed in and valued success, excellence, hard work, caring, servant leadership, choral performance, and music. These beliefs and values were the underpinnings of superior performance. They determined, guided, and influenced the actions, interactions, conditions, and relationships that produced superior performance.

Mr. Gonzalez strongly believed in and valued his duty to give his all and his best for the development of his singer-students. What he knew and loved most, he gave wisely, skillfully, energetically, unselfishly, and without restraint. What he knew and loved most was choral music and choral music performance.

As a servant leader, his entire professional life was focused on facilitating his singers to musical performances that would positively and personally transform them and develop in them work habits that would result in their future success. He valued the privilege of nurturing adolescents personally and musically. Mr. Gonzalez believed that through extreme efficient, correct, diligent effort, hard work, motivational strategies, musical and technical pedagogical expertise, and quality, classical music, singers' lives would be transformed and positive habits would be developed. Because of his values and beliefs, he loved himself, his singers, and his calling. His love motivated him to behave in such a way that singers were well trained and inspired to great performance excellence.

Mr. Gonzalez inspired and motivated singers through musical achievement both in rehearsal and during performance. His extreme expert musicianship and musical pedagogy inspired and motivated them. His passion for the music, performing the music, and teaching inspired and motivated singers. His deep caring and sharing of responsibility motivated them. The music that was selected for performance also motivated singers.

That which Chorale singers believed in and valued, motivated them. Prior to auditioning for the Norman North Chorale, singers were self-motivated to succeed, to care, to take responsibility, and to appreciate excellence and the positively remarkable. Some were self-motivated to succeed in choral performance, music performance, or both. The motivators that Mr. Gonzalez offered his singers were in agreement with the singers' self-motivations. He nurtured these motivations on a daily basis. Mr. Gonzalez's expert musicianship and passion for the music and for teaching was remarkable and inspiring to singers. His musical pedagogy was inspiring and motivating. The vocal and performance

success he facilitated also motivated singers. Together as a believing, valuing, and motivated force of one, singers and director achieved the actions, interactions, and relations necessary to produce superior performance.

These actions and interactions created the conditions (e.g., positive rehearsal condition) that were necessary for production of superior performance. The motivating forces of success, musicianship, musical pedagogy, caring, sharing of responsibilities, and the music selection propelled these actions and interactions. The following section, entitled Motivation describes these motivational forces and how they facilitated the production of superior performance.

Motivation.

Motivated by Choral Performance Excellence. Singers were inspired and motivated by (a) their love for singing, (b) the thrill of excellence, (c) producing gorgeous sounds and music, and (d) hard work that resulted in the production of beautiful music. They enjoyed the results of hard work, diligence, dedicated effort, and focus. Singers loved preparing and performing music. All singers who were interviewed mentioned their love for one or more of the following: singing, achieving, or performing. In stating why the Chorale was so successful, Larry (singer) said, "It all boils down to hard work and loving what we do and being extremely dedicated to what we do." MariAnna (singer) said, "I enjoy singing. I like working really hard and I like the results that come out of that …. You work at it and work at it until it is perfect. That's what I love about it." In answering "What makes your Chorale nationally recognized?" Janelle (singer) said,

We work hard every day. We practice every day. There are no free days in our

class like in some classes, and that's okay with us, because we love it. It is what

we love to do. That's why we are here. We learn the music, and we don't just

learn it robotically. We put passion into it. We put our emotions into it. We grow

attached to it.

Singers were emotionally touched and motivated by the incredible vocal production (i.e.,

a full, rich, resonant sound) of the Chorale. Upon hearing the Chorale, both middle school

and high school students were inspired to audition for the Chorale. Singer Ginger recalled

the night she heard the Chorale as a middle school student,

The sound was unbelievable. It was so touching. It is very touching. And that

being the case, it just makes you from that point on, especially when you are so

into music, strive for it. You point at it and you say, 'that's what I want to be.'

Chorale member Ronald, then in middle school, and Chorale members, Byron and Tom,

then in one of Mr. Chapin's choirs, also had Ginger's reaction to the Chorale's gorgeous

sound when they heard the Chorale perform Samuel Barber's *Agnus Dei* from

Adagio for Strings.

This sound was so important to members of the Chorale that it was a Chorale

trademark. Upperclassmen taught new Chorale members the importance of this sound

and established it as a goal for all forthcoming Chorale members.

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Singers enjoyed the benefits of singing great music. They also enjoyed singing great music well. Ginger stated,

> I mean it is like you get a group of people together and you can produce something that words can't describe. It's sort of an out of body experience, and it's very personal. It's kind of like expressing your feelings but not. It's so very hard to describe.

In program notes for the Chorale performance to the Oklahoma Music Educators Association Claire Parker (singer) stated,

> This is such an amazing opportunity and I am so blessed to be in this wonderful choir. I hope that our true love of music shines through in this concert. It is an amazing feeling to sing and express your self through music. I hope you enjoy every second.

The production of beautiful sound exhilarated singers. Each successful production of great sound perpetuated the desire to produce more sound. The following short conversation with singer Larry exemplified Chorale members' desire to produce great sound.

Larry:

Another thing that is a successful part of the choir is driven individuals, extremely

driven. Every single one of us wants to succeed and every single one of us wants

to sound as beautiful as possible."

Researcher: Are you driven in everything, like in academics?

Larry: I am to a point but not near as much. I am a driven individual. I mean, I do

the homework, I do the work, but I don't go over the top like I do here.

Researcher: Why do you go over the top here?

Larry: I think it is because I want to sound amazing because I mean some of the

sounds we have made: it's just incredible!

Motivated by Mr. Gonzalez. Motivating and inspiring singers naturally flowed

from Mr. Gonzalez's love, care, and concern for others, music, and the choral art. Mr.

Gonzalez motivated singers through his passion for the music and teaching, his

musicianship, his belief and trust in his singers, his caring, and his musical pedagogy.

Musicianship and passion. In this current study, *musicianship* is defined as the

expression of musical skills, knowledge, and understanding. Mr. Gonzalez demonstrated

(a) a deep knowledge and understanding of all aspects of music, (b) how to perform all

aspects of the written score, and (c) mastery of the skills needed to technically and

artistically teach, produce, perform, and express music.

In this current study *passion* is defined as (a) "a strong liking or desire for or

devotion to some activity, object, or concept" and (b) "intense, driving, or overmastering

feeling or conviction" (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/passion).

Mr. Gonzalez demonstrated consistently strong devotion to the music and to the music's composer and poet. His intense emotional response to the music and his emotional expression of the music was awe-inspiring to singers. His deep conviction to the accurate expression of the music and to exceptional teaching motivated singers to desire to produce the music to their greatest capabilities.

By far the data revealed that the strongest contributor to the production of superior performance was Mr. Gonzalez. Survey frequency results revealed that 23 out of 34 survey respondents (i.e., approximately 68% of survey respondents) declared Mr. Gonzalez as most influential to the Chorale's performance success. Every student interviewee talked about how either Mr. Gonzalez's passion for the music, passion for teaching, his teaching, his musicianship, his care, or a combination of these, inspired and challenged them to new heights. Singers mentioned the expressivity and passion with which Mr. Gonzalez conducted and taught the music. By intentionally and thoughtfully teaching the meaning of the choral text, the expressivity and musicality of the music, and how to achieve the performance of this musicality and expressivity, singers' love and understanding of the music and their desire to produce it to the best of their abilities was nurtured and developed. When teaching a score, Mr. Gonzalez did not teach singers how to sing the music in terms of performance deadlines. Nor did he teach for mere performance techniques or acquisition of knowledge. Instead rehearsal/performance expectations were expressed in terms of the desires of the composer and the musical aspects of the score. This type of teaching developed singer musicianship, motivation, and expressive, musical performances. The following conversation with Mr. Gonzalez

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illuminated how important this way of teaching was to Mr. Gonzalez and thus to his singers.

Researcher: Are you the one who feeds the Chorale members' love of music and their desire to perform it perfectly?

Mr. Gonzalez: Probably. This is probably a result of my pursuit of revealing the score and revealing the music and being faithful to the composer, in giving reverence to the composer. I think that is my inspiration and that has to be theirs also. We're both after the same thing.

Researcher: So how do you bring their attentions to the score?

Mr. Gonzalez: Everything begins and ends with the score, with the music. And if you have wonderful music from which to draw, the possibilities are infinite and endless as to how much of it you can bring out, how much of it you can reveal. By performing the music correctly, by being faithful, not to Mr. Gonzalez, but to the music, they are going to become closer to the composers' intentions and draw from it the wonderful value of studying these pieces, these great works of art.

Researcher: Do you ever talk to them about being faithful to the score?

Mr. Gonzalez: Yes.

Researcher: Okay. Do you actually use those words?

Mr. Gonzalez: Oh absolutely. And I sometimes say things like, "Do you think this is what Mr. Mendelssohn wanted?" or "What if Mr. Whitacre walked in the door and ask, 'Why are you doing this differently than what I wrote?' or "Can we dig a

little deeper and make this music more like what it's supposed to sound like and not what we think it should sound like" … And many times I also say, "When you go to bed tonight and when you say your prayers, thank whomever you thank for giving you these great works of art in your lives."… It's very important that they revere … The other thing I do is I refer to the music by the composers' names. "Take out the Mendelssohn. Take out the Rhineberger."

Researcher: I've heard you say these statements or similar since I have been here.

Mr. Gonzalez: The preacher has his Bible and I have my score. … And isn't it wonderful that everyone has the energy and focus to work hard at it and to work at that last 5% to 10% of detail in perfecting a performance.

Researcher: Yes.

Mr. Gonzalez: I think also when they see the conductor completely unabashed and vulnerable to the emotions of the music, that the conductor is not above being touched by the music; that they also feel and love this music and are not at all shy, embarrassed, or self conscious. They themselves open themselves up more easily.

Research participants of all perspectives believed that Mr. Gonzalez's behaviors and words were important to the creation of superior performance quality. The following quotations typify the impact Mr. Gonzalez's musical approach had on performance quality. These quotations represented the beliefs of many Chorale members.

In the group interview Ginger (singer) answered, "What makes the Chorale a nationally recognized choir?" as follows,

Well, as everyone has said, of course, it's our director. He is really hard working. He cares. He is very passionate, and his passion goes into us in a way. We want to please him. Also we want to please this art form. We want to live up to the art form that we all love so much.

Her response reflected the love of the classical choral art form that she and other Chorale members had gained from Mr. Gonzalez's instruction.

Responding to the standardized research question, "Name five people or things that most influenced the production of the Chorale's superior performance" Max (singer) unwaveringly said,

First and foremost, it is our teacher. It's the love he has for teaching and for music. It just really inspires us. Second, Mr. Gonzalez will get the poetry of the music, give it to us, and we will look at it. We will read it and he will really give us an inside thought about what he thinks it means and what it means. That to me in the past has really, really helped me understand what I am singing and (pause) third, it's absolutely the passion that HE inspires in us for the music. Most of that music, if I were singing it in any other choir I would just be singing in a different language. In this choir (pause) he explains to us what it means. He explains to us that *Agnus Dei* means Lamb of God and we are singing a praise to God. You

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know, it's, it's remarkable that we are singing this and you know we really, really get into it.

Max later reflected,

> We become so attached to this music (pause) and we love this music so much because of the dedication that we see Mr. G [Mr. Gonzalez] putting into it and because of, because of how it sounds you know when it's all put together and when it's beautiful it just sounds, you know, beautiful.

Mr. Gonzalez's love and passion for teaching inspired singers. Former Chorale member Audry said,

> I think having a teacher who loves what he does really helps. It really affects your learning. I think that we were all lucky to have Mr. G as a teacher and that shaped the majority of our talent and how we performed.

In regards to Mr. Gonzalez's love and passion for performance Audry said,

> I just enjoyed seeing the light in Mr. G's eyes and hoped that I would feel that way about something one day, whether it would be music or writing or whatever. It is being young and being wide eyed and wanting those opportunities for yourself. This may be small potatoes to some people. He is just a high school

teacher, but to kids like us he has shaped our lives forever. You don't have to be

in Hollywood or at the biggest school to make the biggest difference. He speaks

the best voice for what he does for us.

Even singers not participating in the Norman North choral program noticed Mr.

Gonzalez's passion for the music and conducting it. Singer Larry, in referring to non-

Norman North friends who had sung under Mr. Gonzalez during a festival, said,

"Everyone who has seen him says that they love watching him direct because you can tell

he just cares so much about it."

Mr. Gonzalez's musical way of teaching was one of the most powerful

explanations for how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. He did

not teach singers how to produce the score by teaching them lone performance

techniques. Instead he taught within the contexts of the score. His superb and thorough

understanding of vocal production and his thorough understanding of how the composer

musically achieved (e.g., hemiola) the composition's meanings and intentions, allowed

him to facilitate singers' technical precision and musical expressivity. In describing Mr.

Gonzalez's musicality and pedagogy, the district Fine Arts Supervisor stated,

> You can't perform that level of music at that level of performance without an
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> understanding of musicality and the music itself. There are people who can't
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> teach that because they haven't reached that level personally that they can
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> understand the complications [of the score]. He is able to make kids realize what's
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> on the page and in the music.

Describing Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Chapin said, "He is so sensitive to all periods of music. His musicality such as phrasing and word stress and how he relates these to the singers is unmatched among those I have observed in high school rehearsals."

Rehearsal activities were geared to technically correct, musical, expressive singing. Singers were taught to use simple rules such as *weak beats go to strong beats, short beats go to long beats,* and *all notes are not created equally.* Usually singers first heard a rendition of the score. Then the singers were introduced to the textual meaning of the score, adequately being acquainted to the composer and if applicable, to the poet. Mr. Gonzalez linked the compositions' textual meanings to human experiences that adolescents could grasp, thus facilitating the linking of singers' souls to the artwork and the artists' intentions.

As basic musical elements were learned (e.g., pitch), Mr. Gonzalez called singers' attentions to the intentions of the composer, such as how a particular harmonic progression was used to express an important moment in the music. While calling attention to the composer's musical devices he would guide them in the creation (i.e., vocal production) of these devices (e.g., with a slight crescendo or change of vocal timbre). While teaching the production techniques, Mr. Gonzalez's facial, arm, and hand gestures beautifully depicted how singers' were to express the sound. Gestures were clearly discernable and given as needed, for example a well timed, flowing arm or an exaggerated mouthing of a word to emphasize the word's emotional message. Mr. Gonzalez's demonstration of passionate love for the music inspired singers to love the

music. Mr. Gonzalez's passionate respect for the composers' wishes and his demand for performance adherence to these wishes motivated singer respect for the score.

Mr. Gonzalez's intense score study, experiences with life, and experiences with a large amount of music literature, facilitated his aesthetic, textual, and pedagogical strategies. He demonstrated an unusually keen understanding of the aesthetic aspects of the score. This he masterfully communicated to his singers through personal stories, words, visual cues (e.g., mouth shape and conducting gestures), and his demeanor.

Mr. Gonzalez demonstrated his musicianship in many ways. He demonstrated a deep understanding of all aspects of the musical score and how to achieve them. He demonstrated a keen sense of pitch, consistently identifying errors and correcting them quickly and efficiently. In regards to his aural identification abilities, Byron (singer) said, "Mr. G. hears things I didn't think were possible to be heard!" His pronunciation and enunciation of musical texts of all languages was impeccable. His vocal pedagogy and rhythmical precision was expert, addressing all conceivable demands, including music style and period.

In summary, Mr. Gonzalez was highly skilled at producing a technically correct product that musically described and expressed the composer's and poet's intentions. He masterfully related the score's musical and textual meaning to his singers' lives. He was an outstanding musician, musician-teacher, and conductor. He did not just teach vocal technique and elements of the music. He taught singers to perform the score musically. Thus the Chorale's performances were musical, expressive, and touching.

Motivated by music. Mr. Gonzalez selected music that, through a superior performance would facilitate singer and audience goose bumps. Directors, personally and

pedagogically preferred serious literature to light literature. In their opinion due to the layers of musical, emotional, and intellectual depth of quality classical music, serious music offered deeper aesthetic, musical, educational, and emotional experiences to singers than light music such as show choir literature. Directors were picky about music, text, and how each wedded to the other. Mr. Gonzalez desired that his singers learn from and experience the great choral arts works. He wanted his students to learn about and as he said, "get close to the musical geniuses," allowing their music to touch and influence their lives. As one of the choral programs purpose statements declared, directors wanted "to help students explore, experiment, and express the deepest aesthetic inherencies of music" (Norman North High School, Vocal Music Handbook, 2008-2009, p. 2). Both directors believed it was their responsibility to educate students in, and give them opportunity to produce and experience, the highest of art forms. Literature was chosen that would, with careful instruction, reach into the soul.

Vocal demands of serious music better supported the healthy development of the adolescent singing voice than did the demands of popular vocal production or dancing while singing. Thus, serious music supported success in its performance. Mr. Chapin the associate director of the Norman North Chorale stated,

Most of the pop music that is written or scored for choirs is not vocally healthy especially for young singers. And it's not just with the boys with parts written too high or too low for them. It is with girls, too. The alto parts and the soprano parts lie in the basement. Not all of them but for the most part, most.

Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin selected music that would resonate with their singers. Some of this literature was what Mr. Gonzalez labeled as "Contemporary Romantic" music. This was music that contained rich, luxurious contemporary harmonies and poignant texts as found in some of Eric Whitacre's compositions. When music was not of this style, directors worked to assure singer connection and acceptance with it. As survey respondent number 13 (singer) stated, "The music selected plays an important role in how well we perform. If I like a song it will be easier for me to connect with it and do my best."

Comments of two Chorale members found in the Chorale's 2009 concert program notes typified singers and directors' regard for their music literature. Kate Johnson stated,

> The music we are singing in our program tonight means a lot to me. Every piece we do can give you chills. We have worked extremely hard and I hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoy singing it. When you get chills from *Sleep* and *Rotala*, remember that we get them, too. That's why we love singing these amazing songs. (Norman North High School Chorale Program, January 30, 2009, p. 8)

Chorale member, J. D. Baugher stated, "This beautiful and majestic music that we are so honored to perform and share with others, enriches and inspires my mind, body, and spirit, creating a residual state of heaven." (Norman North High School Chorale Program, January 30, 2009, p. 7)

In answering question one of the standardized open-ended survey question, survey participant number 16 (singer) stated that the third strongest influence to

performance success was, "The music, it inspires us and creates an indescribable passion in us."

Through ensemble text study, artistic, passionate teaching, and the telling of life stories, the directors helped students understand the relevance of the artwork. If for some reason the piece wasn't connecting with singers it would be replaced by another.

Music literature selection facilitated singer motivation and the taking of responsibility and ownership of performance production and product. When singers were emotionally, musically, or mentally connected to the music, they worked harder at performing it to a level of superior quality. Allowing Chorale members to choose some of the music to be performed gave them unique ownership in the process and product. Chorale members were allowed to select three or four pieces of music a year that they would learn and perform. These pieces were chosen from ten pieces of quality music that Mr. Gonzalez had preselected. Chorale members listened to all ten pieces during class. By majority vote they chose three to four of these pieces to perform. The pieces chosen by the Chorale members were often those with which they would compete. Because Mr. Gonzalez had selected great literature from which they chose, he was pleased with whatever music was chosen. Interview and survey participants believed that choosing the music facilitated their connection to it, a greater involvement with it, and a desire to work harder to produce it artistically. Answering the question, "What makes your chorale a nationally recognized choir?" Beatrice (singer) said,

> I think our unique tone and our ability to blend with each other so well, and I think our passion for the literature that we sing. We get so connected to it. (pause) Mr. G lets us have a say in what music we sing, so I think that helps.

Mr. Gonzalez demonstrated his trust in the Chorale members by granting them decision-making power to select some of the performance literature. In turn, singers were motivated and worked harder in making these pieces performance-exceptional.

Motivated by caring. Singers were motivated by Mr. Gonzalez's love and concern for them. His words, high expectations, interest in their lives, and detail in instruction, demonstrated his desire to facilitate students to their maximum potentials. He pushed to find the best literature available for them. He diligently found stimulating performance venues for them. The degree of time and effort he contributed to the Chorale program was often described by singers, parents, and administrators as "far above and beyond" what was expected of the norm. Both he and Mrs. Gonzalez were very generous, helping singers, their families, or both.

When reproofs were necessary, Mr. Gonzalez took the time to explain his words. He gave rationale for the right behaviors and thinking that was expected.

Mr. Gonzalez gave personal attention to each singer's instrument. He listened to and gave feedback for individual voices during and outside of rehearsals. He gave each of his singers' at least one lesson per year. These lessons were designed to further the singer's vocal capabilities and improve their musical understanding.

Even auditions for the Chorale showed Mr. Gonzalez's care for singers. During auditions Mr. Gonzalez talked in detail with singers about their voice, their possible contribution to the Chorale, and ways they could improve their instrument.

Singers loved this attention. His assessments of their voice and his method of placing them in choral formation according to their vocal strengths made them realize

that each contributed uniquely to the Chorale's sound. Such attention and appreciation for each voice motivated singers to work harder toward performance excellence.

Mr. Gonzalez also cared to make students feel welcome. He cared to make students feel a part of the Chorale. During the summer before a new school year, Mr. Gonzalez met with the Chorale officers. He asked each officer to choose a group of Chorale members to mentor and befriend. Each group was to be diverse in order to develop new and strong bonds of fellowship within the Chorale ranks. Officers cared for and connected with their groups throughout the year. They shared the legacy and goals of the Chorale with their group, laying the groundwork for family-like development and member embracing of the high behavioral and performance goals of the Chorale.

The décor of the choral department displayed Mr. Gonzalez's love for his singers and vocal and choral performance. Three long shelves on one wall and the remaining wall space of Mr. Gonzalez's office held framed, photos of present and former singers' photos. Interspersed among the photos was memorabilia of various performances and musicals that his singers had performed. This not only showed singers that Mr. Gonzalez was interested in them but gave plenty of opportunities for singers and directors to remember former great times.

All available wall space of the large rehearsal room held professional photography of singers and trophies and plaques earned by choral groups. Trophies and plaques of past performances sat on shelves encircling the rehearsal space. The most recent accolades of success were displayed in an enclosed wooden case, directly behind the director's podium. Photographs included scenes from past musicals featuring specific

singers, shots of choral performances, and past Norman North choral ensembles. Singers were loved at Norman North. As Beatrice (singer) said,

> He gets to know us. It is not like another class for him. It's, we are his Chorale. He loves his Chorale. And I know that he loves each and every one of us, just special, just different. It makes us want to come to class.

Inclusion. Mr. Gonzalez cared enough about his singers to treat and respect them as team members. Directors conducted all ensemble functions as a team process. Singers were taught to "sing with their ears," monitoring themselves, those around them, and the sound of the Chorale. Singers were also taught that once on stage the performance was completely theirs. The directors gave them reminders of what they were to do but singers were in charge at that point of the final product.

Singers were also made to feel a part of the team through Mr. Gonzalez's use of particular pronouns and questions. Mr. Gonzalez used the terms "we" and "us" far more than "I" or "me." This established a cooperative learning and performing community. Often instead of using declaratory statements, he used rhetorical questions. These questions guided singer's to consider and improve their musical and non-musical behaviors, allowing singers to feel like they were a part of the decision-making, performance-making process. Other types of questions were also used to energize singers' thinking and contribution. Examples of Mr. Gonzalez's questions were "Don't you think we should diminuendo here?" and "Why do you think the last time was better

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than the first two?" Mr. Gonzalez believed that the use of questions instead of directives was kinder and led to a greater singer ownership of behaviors and performance product.

Sharing Responsibilities and Ownership. Mr. Gonzalez was purposeful in motivating singers to take responsibility and ownership for the performance production process and product. By developing close relationships with Chorale officers and his Jazz Ensemble who were also Chorale members, Mr. Gonzalez established an intimate link between he and his Chorale members.

Chorale officers were invited at least twice a year to Mr. and Mrs. Gonzalez's home. Planning sessions for the Chorale gave officers opportunity to understand Mr. Gonzalez and his vision for the Chorale at an intimate level.

Mr. Gonzalez and the Jazz Ensemble spent many traveling and performing hours together, often performing at social events. Mr. Gonzalez taught less formally during Jazz Ensemble rehearsals than during Chorale rehearsals. Jazz Ensemble members, mentored by Mr. Gonzalez, were given freedom to determine production strategies. These less formal settings and experiences with Mr. Gonzalez helped jazz ensemble members to understand their director and the vision he had for the Chorale and music production.

Upon Mr. Gonzalez's request, Jazz Ensemble members and Chorale officers shared with the rest of the Chorale about their experiences with Mr. Gonzalez. As Chorale officers and Jazz Ensemble members shared these experiences, Chorale members felt more connected to their director. Enhanced connection with their director helped singers feel like an important part of the Chorale and production process.

Mr. Gonzalez purposefully developed musical and leadership qualities in his Jazz Ensemble members and in the Chorale officers. He commissioned them to share these

qualities with the Chorale, assuming natural leadership roles. As other Chorale members learned from them and observed the leadership model they were setting, they too took on more responsibility.

Seasoned Chorale members, mostly seniors and upperclassmen, took responsibility for the personal instruction of new and less skilled members. They (a) answered members' questions, (b) taught new singers what was expected, (c) acquainted members with the ways of Mr. Gonzalez, (d) helped individuals learn their music, (e) helped others feel a part of the performance production process, and (f) set good examples. Such mentorship built positive relationships among singers and singer commitment to success. Through these mentorships, upperclassmen shared the practices and traditions of the Chorale with new members. They inspired others to embrace the responsibility of continuing the tradition of choral excellence.

Mr. Gonzalez's unique approach for selecting section leaders also encouraged the sharing of responsibility and ownership among Chorale members. He never assigned section leaders. Instead by a process that singer Max called "natural selection," section members chose their section leaders. Periodically Mr. Gonzalez would call on a capable person to lead their section in ensemble sight-reading rehearsal. This person might lead sight-reading for two or three months and then Mr. Gonzalez would call upon another person to lead it. Section members adopted these designated sight-reading leaders as section leaders. But this was not the entire natural selection process. Some upperclassmen were also adopted as section leaders. Upperclassmen who were constantly and productively helping others in their section were also adopted. Thus, there was more than one section leader in a section.

These leaders were not officially declared section leaders but they were followed as such. This type of section leadership encouraged others to contribute to the production process and not exist as an observer or non-thinking follower. It inspired younger members to become leaders. When asked "What do you contribute to the Chorale?" survey respondent number 9 (singer) said, "I want to do my best and learn from the seniors so that I can help young guys next year."

There was no animosity or rivalry among section leaders, Chorale officers, and Jazz Ensemble members. Leaders worked together and supported one another. Often strong relationships of love, respect, and camaraderie were developed among the leaders, most especially in the male sections. This increased the section's desire for excellence. More efficient production of quality performance was accomplished because instead of one section leader there were many from which to learn.

Mr. Gonzalez empowered singers by allowing them to choose their own leadership. He demonstrated trust in the decisions and abilities of his singer-leaders, allowing them to take part in determining the Chorale's success through teaching and modeling.

His trust and respect in all of his singers nurtured positive attitudes and relationships within the Chorale. When it came to making music, singers were united. There were no clicks, no overbearing egos, and no considerations about personal differences getting in the way of their performance goals and love for one another. As singers put their performance experiences into words they described a dynamic group of one voice and one emotion.

Singers developed various levels of positive relationships with each other. In describing the family type relationships among Chorale members, singer Byron stated,

I don't want to call it a brotherhood because there are women here too but (pause) it's kind of like a family. We are like a family here. We really care about each other and it makes it really easy for us to express ourselves through music (pause) you know having somebody next to you that's not going to care if you mess up. They're not going to make fun of you. Yea, they're just going to be like (pause) you know, we can do better. We will just laugh it off and get better. That's what I've always liked about being a part of Chorale is that (pause) it's more or less like a family. I think that really shows and helps in our performances because we kind of move with the music together and stuff. It's really cool. It's kind of like (pause and sigh) oh what's the word I am looking for? I don't know (pause) every time we have a concert it is just perfect. The emotion I guess of it. We are all together and it's just one.

Parent, Mrs. Longsufe mentioned how Chorale members supported each other by attending each other's outside performances. She represented the perceptions of all parent interviewees by stating, "There are a lot of relationships [in the Chorale], close, tight, good friends in that Chorale."

Relationships made an impact on performance quality. When answering the question, "In order of influence, the first being the most influential, name five things or people that have most influenced your choir's performance success?" survey respondent

number 7 (singer) at the third level of influence answered, "A certain level of friendship among all members." At the fourth level of influence, survey respondent number 23 (singer) answered, "My friendships in choir keep me involved." At the fifth level of influence survey respondent number 24 (singer) said, "We work so well together as not just a team but as a family. It's so much easier putting effort into something for people you love." In answering the second survey question, "Is there anything or anyone else that has contributed to your chorale's performance success? If yes, who, what, and how?" survey respondent number 1 (singer) stated that "Camaraderie and how much everyone is so humble to one another and we push/train each other all the time" contributed to the Chorale's performance success. Mrs. Sharp supported this belief in the importance of relationships in the Chorale. In answering, "What makes this Chorale a nationally recognized chorale?" parent Mrs. Sharp responded,

> The camaraderie that the group has as a whole and also the close relationship they have with their conductor, Mr. Gonzalez …. Mr. Gonzalez is not their buddy. He's definitely their boss. But he listens to students. He is effusive in his reaction when he sees people. He reacts positively to everyone. I think he makes everyone feel really welcome and important. … I see that the students want to please him. I also think it's their [singers' and Mr. Gonzalez's] joint connection with the music.

Mr. Gonzalez did many things to develop singers into strong, unified, committed team members. He worked to develop a team that would be respectful and kind to one another. He worked to develop a chorale that would work together, training and

supporting one another. He did this by developing and encouraging member leadership and the sharing of the responsibility for the performance production and product with his singers. His caring, inclusionary actions and attitude in and outside of the rehearsal, facilitated members' assumption of performance responsibility. This in turn developed singer' self-esteem and *I can do* attitude for their future.

Intentionally Mr. Gonzalez developed a choral condition of caring and belonging. This too encouraged singers to work as hard as they could to assume their role in choral performance production. Singers saw the choir as an important place, a home, and an identity. Former Chorale member Scarlet and singer Beatrice said that as Chorale members "they felt a part of something." Singer Max said "I've spent the last four years in this choir room. It's kind of like how athletes feel comfortable on the field. It's my territory. I come here to chill, read through musical scores, and stuff."

Motivated by success.

Challenge and Success. Mr. Gonzalez knew that singers, as he did, liked to succeed. He believed that success bred success. He worked hard to facilitate singer performance success. He selected music that was challenging, knowing that upon the singers' successful performance of challenging music they would feel great accomplishment and a healthy sense of self (i.e., self esteem). In answering the question "What happens here that causes success?" Mr. Gonzalez answered,

> I think that we have an attractive package here of hard work and results. It's an
> easy sell. I think that getting kids excited and getting kids turned on to what they
> are doing by feeling pride in what they do and by feeling that they are involved in

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something that is extremely unique in their lives is key. Being able to perform

incredibly beautiful music with other people, something they can't do on their

own is an extremely attractive component of our program here. And when they

enter the program and discover that the work involved to make it happen takes a

lot of discipline and a lot of hard work but that it pays off, that is also extremely

attractive to them.

As singers consistently achieved performance success, their self-efficacy increased.

Practicing for Success. Singers were successful due to the way in which directors

taught them. Presentation of challenging yet achievable chunks of choral literature

facilitated student success and increased singer self-efficacy. Mr. Gonzalez taught each

choral score in layers, making sure that singers understood how each layer was

constructed and why the composer constructed it as such.

Difficult literature was taught by section (e.g., section A of an ABAC form).

Literature was also taught in layers, for example singers first learned the pitches of

Morten Lauridsen's *Magnum Mysterium* on the syllable [lu]. Then singers learned the

agogic phrasing of this piece on [lu]. Following this, singers learned temporal and

rhythmical phrasing on vowels that facilitated good tone and intonation specific to the

demands of the score. This was followed by count singing and then the adding of text.

This careful layering of the score facilitated performance accuracy of all score facets,

memorization, and the opportunity for singers to experience the piece deeply.

Most music, because of its difficulty, was learned in sectionals. Mr. Chapin

usually taught the tenor and bass parts in a large practice room while Mr. Gonzalez

worked with the remainder of the Chorale in the large rehearsal room. Sectional work facilitated increased attention to individual singers and sections. It helped the Chorale learn their music more quickly and accurately.

Techniques to perform the score were taught, modeled, and practiced until correctly achieved. Singers stated that Mr. Gonzalez would have them sing one element of the music (e.g., a phrase) repeatedly until it was correct before progressing through the piece of music. Mr. Gonzalez believed that his insistence for correct production of all elements of the literature and sound made for a superior performing choir. He fixed mistakes immediately, during the learning process. He said, "Practicing a mistake just makes the mistake sound correct." Singers appreciated that Mr. Gonzalez spent much time in teaching the correct ways of performing each score. The fine arts supervisor, Mr. Chapin, singers, and he himself mentioned his persistence for perfection, refusing to move from one aspect or section of the score until it was sung musically and vocally correct.

Mr. Gonzalez arranged for singers to have many performance opportunities before major regional, state, or national performances and competitions. This gave singers many real life performance practices of the literature, facilitated automaticity, and as Mr. Gonzalez stated, "allowed all singers, including the weakest, to get to aesthetic achievement." Mr. Gonzalez's persistence to perfection and intentional, graduated performance practice gave singers a peace and confidence about their performance capabilities and quality.

Positive Affirmation of Success. Although to a much lesser degree than such things as Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship, positive affirmation motivated singers. Directors

believed in their singers and therefore singers believed in themselves. Given the musical and professional expertise of the directors that singers witnessed daily and the successes of previous choirs, there was no reason not to believe their directors' assessments of their capabilities and accomplishments.

Directors spent hours developing singer skills, knowledge, and musicianship. Feedback (e.g., assessment of singer performance) was precise, informative, and followed quickly after its stimulus. Singers knew how well they were achieving their learning goals. Feedback was often encouraging, indicating that with effort and/or strategic practice, singers would achieve their goals. Thus, singers were encouraged to continue to work hard toward their goals. Directors regularly, verbally recognized individual, section, and ensemble improvements and advancements. Words of affirmation were at times general and at other times specific. Examples of Mr. Gonzalez's positive reinforcement ranged from short words like "Yes, Better, Excellent," to sentences such as "Tenors, that was better this time." referring to intonation of a descending scale or "Joselin, will you please sing alto on this score? Your voice quality matches the demands of the composer, beautifully." Norman North choral members knew they were important to the production of high quality performance because their directors told them so and because their directors facilitated convincing learning experiences for them.

To a lesser degree singers were motivated by extrinsic motivation. Mr. Chapin mentioned that although singers did not tout their abilities and achievements, they enjoyed the attention and respect given to them by other participants at performance conventions and competitions. Singers enjoyed knowing that choirs from around the state visited Norman, Oklahoma to attend their performances. Mr. Chapin said, "They [the

Chorale members] like being part of a program that, for lack of a better phrase, walks in and commands respect even before they start singing just because of the history of this place."

Interview data indicated that what Chorale members' parents did and said encouraged and reinforced positive choral participation. Also important to singers were audience and director reinforcements. In describing one audience member, the Norman Public School District Fine Arts Supervisor, Max said,

> He is so supportive and just absolutely when he comes to our concerts he listens to us and he is the first one to stand up and clap and he is the last one to leave. He just absolutely loves everything we do and I think to see that recurring, just to see him again and again, it's really, it's reassurance that we really do things that astound people, that make people go "Whoa, that was awesome!" And ever you think that he's heard the Chorale before so he'll blow off a concert, he's there. He's always there.

Audry, a former chorale member described one of Mr. Gonzalez's performance reinforcements as follows, "I loved seeing that look on Mr. G's face when we did something right, when he was getting chills from what we were singing. You could tell."

Summary. Mr. Gonzalez and the Norman North Chorale members were highly motivated by gorgeous choral sound, excellence in all aspects of the choral domain (e.g., performance, musicianship, teaching), the music, and servant leadership. Singers' and directors' strong beliefs and values in success, musicianship, caring, taking of responsibility, hard work, and the music facilitated this high motivation and the actions and interactions necessary for producing superior performance.

The values and beliefs of singers and directors and the motivational forces present in and outside of rehearsal powerfully explained performers commitment, intensity, drive, and consistent learning and hard work for achievement of superior performance. Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship and musical pedagogy not only inspired singers, but taught singers to sing beautifully, expressively and musically. In addition to motivation and musicianship, singers needed to learn how to sing technically correctly. The next section describes the expert training they received to achieve technical precision.

Training. Essential training elements important to the production of superior performance were the setting of high expectations, director score preparation, the teaching of basic vocal, choral, and ethical skills, and appropriate vocal pedagogy.

High expectations. Training started with clearly defined, well-articulated, musical and non-musical, high expectations. Students considering participation in the Norman North Choral Program knew the degree of commitment expected of them and the type of

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music that would be performed. This knowledge was gained in several ways. The following describes the ways Mr. Gonzalez communicated his high expectations.

Mr. Chapin and Mr. Gonzalez donated one period a week to assisting the middle school choir director whose program fed into Norman North High School. There they submitted to the desires of the middle school director, in no way advancing their own philosophical and musical preferences. Mr. Chapin assisted one director. Mr. Gonzalez assisted the other director. Often they ran sectionals for the middle school directors. Through high school directors' contact with middle school singers, a combined high school-middle school concert, Mr. Gonzalez's strong, positive reputation in the community, and by word of mouth, particularly from Norman North High School choral members, students were apprised of the high expectations required of and achieved by Norman North choirs.

Mr. Gonzalez regularly articulated his expectations to audience and pre-choral members. This influenced the type of student participant in the program and thus the quality and work that was achieved. Students participating in the Norman North Choral Program knew what was expected of them and embraced the type of music performed. Thus time was spent on achieving the program's goals versus fighting against them.

Mr. Gonzalez also regularly articulated his expectations to Chorale members. Performance expectations were communicated as learning goals (e.g., singing a piece of music as the composer desired), not performance goals (singing a piece of music in a way that will gain a high performance score) (Dweck, 1999). His demeanor was kind and professional. He required self and singer discipline in and out of rehearsal. Although a disciplinarian, he was not a dictator. He urged and nurtured singers to acceptance of

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expectations by appealing to the singers' beliefs and values. He expressed expectations as behaviors necessary for the demonstration of respect and love for self, others, the music literature, and the composers. Expectations were framed as the necessities of being a fine musician and person. Given the type of singer who auditioned for the Chorale, Mr. Gonzalez's appeal to the better part of each singer was a great motivator.

Score preparation. Mr. Gonzalez was diligent in thoroughly preparing his musical scores to facilitate the most authentic and musical performances his singers could achieve. Choral performance literature was given hours of listening and study before being presented. In the quiet of his home, during the summer months, Mr. Gonzalez gave each performance score a thorough dissecting. In his words, "he lived with the piece." He examined all the elements of the score. He repeatedly played the scores on the piano and learned to sing all voice parts. He learned the deep meanings of the music and text and how the artist(s) had achieved these meanings. He identified the areas and aspects of the score that could cause difficulties. He determined how singers would produce the score (e.g., what vowel shapes and modifications were necessary) before singers saw the music. Director in-depth score study facilitated efficient, musical teaching and accurate performance.

Teaching the basics. Singers' words and actions indicated they were vocally and chorally well trained. This was the result of Mr. Gonzalez's and Mr. Chapin's teaching and influence. Mr. Chapin was the associate director of the Norman North Choral Program. Mr. Chapin directed the choirs that serviced new and less mature singers. This was not to say that all his singers were less mature than Mr. Gonzalez's singers, only that he was the director who worked mostly with new, freshmen, and sophomore singers.

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Therefore it was important that he gave his singers a solid musical and vocal foundation. Because of Mr. Chapin's understanding of personal and vocal adolescent characteristics, he divided his singers into a freshman women's chorus, concert women's chorus (non-freshmen women), and concert men's chorus. This enabled him to more efficiently address the vocal and educational needs of each type of singer (i.e., the male, female, and new singer).

He gave each singer one private voice lesson a semester. During the first semester of each year he said he spent a great deal of time helping singers "find their voice." He spent rehearsal time listening to and critiquing individual and small groups of voices. Because of Mr. Chapin's accepting personality, singers were comfortable experimenting with their voice and singing in front of each other during rehearsal. During vocal experimentation he taught singers how and what to listen for and the mechanics of bel canto singing.

Mr. Chapin gave great attention to teaching singers the importance of sounding like one and thinking in terms of what was best for the ensemble versus best for the individual singer. He helped students recognize their improvements. He taught singers to evaluate themselves and their ensemble's progress. Through discussion, modeling, explanation, and much experimentation, singers learned to monitor and regulate their own sound in respect to the ensemble. As singers grew, he encouraged them to make musical and vocal suggestions, taking on responsibility while understanding their importance to the whole.

Chorale member Max said,

I was in one of Mr. Chapin's choirs my sophomore year and he really prepared me. Mr. Chapin prepared me for Chorale, and then Mr. G has prepared me for college; and both of them have prepared me for life. Both of them have prepared me for music in the future.

The expectations Mr. Chapin set for his singers were challenging, yet appropriate. He exercised good instructional timing and balanced serious with lighter demeanor and rehearsal activities. He humanely and methodically introduced singers to sight-reading, solfege, and good vocal production.

He selected challenging, quality literature to which adolescents could emotionally and musically connect. Literature was appropriate for the adolescent developing voice. Because of his extraordinary ability to understand the musical score, he was able to discuss musical concepts, text, and musical mechanisms (e.g., harmonies depicting text) found within their choral literature in a way that was appealing, understandable, and stimulating to inexperienced singers.

Mr. Chapin's commitment for developing singers' commitment to excellence, character, and team demeanor contributed to the positive attitudes, confidence, and work ethic of Chorale members. His attention to each individual voice, his encouraging and light-hearted demeanor helped singers realize a unique, important place in the choral program. Mr. Chapin's desire to grow, take chances, and work cooperatively with and learn from Mr. Gonzalez increased singers' opportunities for performance success.

Vocal pedagogy. Vocal pedagogy was foundational to the Chorale's success. Their sound was <u>one</u> sound. Their tone was one, extremely well blended sound, appropriately produced by an open throat and lifted soft palette and supported by mature, consistent breath management. Their tone was beautiful through all singers' registers. It had great depth, character, and unity. Sound production was taught through formation of the vowel.

Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin chose to keep vocal instruction simple, using as few verbal images (e.g., sing to the wall, sing forward) as possible. Instead they approached vocal pedagogy concretely through creation of (a) space in the resonators, primarily the mouth and throat, (b) energy from and through the breath, and (c) freedom in posture such as in the neck, head, and jaw positions.

Each year was begun with a thorough explanation of resonating space, breath energy, and freedom in posture and how these three functioned to produce superb tone. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin utilized a chart of the body, verbal explanations, modeling, and singer exploration to facilitate correct singer vocal production. Singer exploration included students' listening to and feeling on and in their bodies, the various ways of producing tone.

Every day Mr. Gonzalez began rehearsals with singers' buzzing the lips. This exercise required breath, the energizing of the abdominal muscles, and sufficient space in the mouth and throat to produce a healthy, dynamic sound. Lips were not blown apart as if the singer was producing a motorboat sound but lips were loose enough and mouth and throat space were sufficient to create a healthy, free, steady tone. Mr. Gonzalez described

the mouth and throat space as the space created right before yawn. Mr. Gonzalez often had singers produce the lip buzz while ascending and descending on scales.

Because the lip buzz so efficiently facilitated singers' production of appropriate space and consistent, energized breath, it was utilized with all the Latin vowels. Singers transitioned from the lip buzz to a vowel. With the same breath energy/abdominal/space process, singers produced each vowel, monitoring breath, space, posture, tone, intonation, balance, and blend. Dynamic exercises (i.e., increase and decrease of volume) were layered atop the vowel-lip buzz exercise.

Mr. Gonzalez believed that if singers' breath and space were correct, everything else would be correct, thus producing a forward, resonant tone. The beginning of rehearsals was a time when director and singers rehearsed all the basic yet essential components of vocal production. Singers learned vowel creation through space, energy, and tongue instructions. When exercising through the vowels, singers phonated from [o] to [ɛ] and from [u] to [i]. As explained by Mr. Gonzalez, this reminded singers that the [o] and [ɛ] have the same vertical feeling as the [u] and the [i]. By phonating from back to front vowels, singers maintained a slight pucker and the space of the back vowels into the front vowels. This enabled a low larynx and high soft palette, which in turn produced the appropriate number of low frequencies in the pitch to produce a rich, full, beautiful tone. According to Mr. Gonzalez, it was the training of the low larynx, high soft palette across all vowels that created the Chorale's rich and wonderful tone. During rehearsal of music literature, Mr. Gonzalez sometimes referred back to the Chorale's warm-up experiences of breath, space, tongue, and posture management to facilitate improved performance production.

Mr. Chapin also encouraged high soft palette and low larynx positioning. In addition to his own training, Mr. Chapin had learned much from his wife, a professional, classical singer and Mr. Gonzalez. His vocal pedagogy was in harmony with Mr. Gonzalez's vocal and pedagogical philosophies and responsive to the maturity of his singers.

Each choral director believed in the importance of voice building and used it as foundation for all other rehearsal/performance activities. As Mr. Gonzalez stated, each "wanted his singers to optimize their instrument as much as possible to achieve the best sound they could for their age without causing tension."

Both Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin spent much time on vocal pedagogy. As singer Angelina stated about warm-ups, "He's just constantly got us doing something so that whenever we get to the music, we are so excited to be doing something besides [ɑ, ɛ, i, o, u]."

Summary. The setting and carrying out of high expectations, director score preparation, teaching the basics of vocal, choral, and ethical behavior, and teaching and applying appropriate vocal pedagogy were important to the production of superior performance. They were the result of values and beliefs and extraordinary directors.

Extraordinary characteristics. *Extraordinary* is defined as "going beyond what is usual, regular, or customary" (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/extraordinary). Based on my knowledge as a former high school choral director and on my observations at competitions and conferences, The Norman North Chorale singers and directors were extraordinary. The extent of their beliefs, valuing, characteristics, and behaviors were beyond the usual. They possessed strong

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values and beliefs that defined them. Because they strongly valued excellence, they sought its achievement. Because they strongly valued hard work, they worked hard. Many of their values and beliefs determined their characteristics (i.e., distinguishing traits) and the dimensions of these characteristics that were utilized in the production of superior performance. This next section describes these characteristics.

Characteristics.

Conditions. Directors created a comfortable, positive learning environment for their singers. Directors expressed a deep respect for one another. They supported one another, learned from one another, and worked well together. Thus, singers experienced a cooperative, positive work relation and condition.

Directors saw each other as equals. Each worked independently with regards to their respective choirs. But they regularly shared ideas (e.g., literature, pedagogy) and discussed the well being of students and the future of the choral program.

Directors' love of choral music, listening to and studying choral literature, producing choral music, and sharing it with their students created a positive learning environment. Both directors expressed dedication and joy in facilitating great musical moments of classical works for adolescent singers. Both loved learning about their students and speaking into their lives.

Data revealed that the love and passion directors had for the music and their singers powerfully motivated them to do what was necessary to facilitate singer personal and performance achievement. Mr. Gonzalez described the study, teaching, and performing of choral music as "the passion that held my [his] life together." He described

his students and the music as "the very air I breathe." When responding to the question, "What meaning does music have to your life?" he replied,

> Since I was in the eighth grade I have been hooked on choral music, so music is me and I am music. The teaching is the better part of it because I get to share it with a lot of lovely young people every day. I know it is kind of corny but I don't know how the two can be unintwined [*sic*]. They are so closely intertwined.

As Mr. Gonzalez and I conversed about the meaning of music and teaching, I asked, "How important are your students to you?" He replied,

> They are the air I breathe. Oh my gosh, without them, I wouldn't be able to share the impact that music can have in their lives. I have had it in my life, and music may make a positive change also in their lives. Being their mentor, being their teacher is my very first, most important goal in their lives. That's what my teachers were to me. They were my mentors. They were my teachers. … I love being around them. I love teaching them. I love seeing their growth. I love seeing them become, you know, better young people through music and better musicians because of the acquisition of skills and knowledge, and just become (pause) better human beings. They don't all turn out to be musicians or choir directors or singers but hopefully they all turn out to be better young people because of a role I may have played in their lives.

Mr. Chapin's beliefs and feelings about his students and the music were similar to Mr. Gonzalez's. Upon asking Mr. Chapin why he loved teaching he said,

I love listening to and studying choral music. Even if I didn't have this job, I would be listening to and studying choral literature …. I love learning. I love getting to know my musicians. I love seeing them grow. I love to see how their personalities develop over time.

Mr. Chapin believed that singers' self realization and personal development could be enhanced through excellent teaching, careful monitoring, encouraging, and appropriate literature selection.

When discussing how he worked to relate to his singers, he said,

I believe very strongly that the relationship with the student, regardless of the music that you are doing, the relationship with the student comes first. And it's your job as a teacher to keep them involved and to keep them feeling like they have some worth in the choir …. It is very important for me as a Christian and as an authority figure in their life that they know that I genuinely care about them and their well being regardless, I mean even outside of the music, very much so outside of the music, that I care about what they are doing in their other classes. That I care about how they are going about their business and through their life so they can continue to grow as human beings and not just as musicians.

The deep caring and love directors had for their singers and the choral music domain motivated them to act in ways that facilitated singers' personal and musical growth. Their caring qualities and dedication to service supported the creation of a safe, enjoyable learning condition.

Education and experience. It was no surprise that both directors were very knowledgeable and talented. Mr. Gonzalez had taught for 31 years as of 2009. Mr. Gonzalez had been privileged to study with Ron Shirey and the late Dr. B. R. Henson and Dr. Bruce Govich.

During his choral conducting career he had fulfilled all the course and performance requirements of a Doctor of Musical Arts in choral conducting at The University of Oklahoma. He was active in professional organizations, assuming major leadership roles while learning from many fine clinicians and colleagues. Organizations in which he was active included the Oklahoma Southern Division of the Oklahoma Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Oklahoma Choral Directors Association, and various levels of the American Choral Directors Association.

Since the time he had graduated with a Bachelor of Music Education in 1970, he had taught voice privately. He demonstrated correct singing in three and one-half octaves, ably modeling a Helmholtz a_3 through a low baritone range. He believed that the teaching of voice over many years had helped him produce superior ensemble performance. He said,

> I think the teaching of voice was a very important component of my hearing, my listening, and helping singers. It helped me very, very much become more intimately aware of the problems that young singers have, why they have them, and how to solve them.

He had directed church, community, university, and high school choral programs and served as adjudicator and guest conductor throughout the Southwest during his career years. During these years he pushed himself to improve all the skills associated with his career (e.g., piano, voice, conducting, and organizational skills). I asked him, "If you were to give another choir director advice on how to achieve the same success you have achieved, what suggestions would you provide?" Mr. Gonzalez answered,

> I think that the relentless pursuit of knowledge, the relentless pursuit of becoming a better teacher, a better educator, a better conductor, a better pedagogue, a better everything, every attendant component of your teaching, addressing it and becoming better, whether it is voice teaching, piano playing, selecting music, recruiting, building a curriculum, or classroom management, all of the attendant

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components. Just becoming better at everything that you do that affects your program as a teacher. Becoming better at it. Honestly.

During my onsite data collection, Mr. Chapin was in his seventh year of teaching music. His Norman North High School choirs had consistently earned superior ratings at state Oklahoma Music Educators Association competitions. They had also earned top awards at festivals in Memphis, Tennessee, San Antonio, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia.

Prior to taking the position at Norman North High School, he had taught at the elementary general music level for one year and at a junior high for three years. At the junior high he had taught/directed six junior high choirs and one high school choir. This meant he taught choirs for seven periods each day. His choirs had consistently earned superior ratings at state Oklahoma Music Educators Association competitions.

Through a rigorous interview process, he had earned the position of associate director at Norman North High School. He was completing his third year at Norman North High School when I first interviewed him.

The directors' desires (a) to give singers the very best singing, learning, and performance experiences, (b) to produce and experience superb choral performance, and (c) to be the very best musicians, teachers, and directors they could be energized their continued self-improvement. Mr. Chapin very much respected Mr. Gonzalez. He learned much from him and was a quick study. Both directors pursued improvement in all aspects of their teaching/music career through individual study and practice and regular attendance at professional conferences and summer workshops.

Teaching expertise. The directors were fine teachers. Mr. Gonzalez was a great and expressive teacher. Singer learning was facilitated through routine, the sharing of expectations (e.g., use of a rehearsal agenda), and through a mixture of passive (i.e., teacher directions), enactive (i.e., singer practice), and vicarious (i.e., expert demonstration) teaching strategies. His explanations and directions were well timed and understandable. He varied rehearsal activities, demands, pacing, and the rehearsal schedule to meet the needs of his singers. He frequently and simultaneously taught, modeled, or focused on more than one aspect of rehearsal behavior (e.g., learning pitches, intonation, and expressivity). He was sensitive to his singers, interspersing hard work with humor and intense diligence with relaxed moments. His musical expertise, accurate modeling, knowledge of the score, teaching thoroughness, and persistence for correct performance production, facilitated singers' performance confidence.

He exercised great pedagogical strategies such as instant feedback of quick, short words, such as "yes" or "more there, sopranos" to sculpt the sound. Short directives and verbal guides were used to depict proper vocal production, for example, during a duration in which a crescendo was necessary, Mr. Gonzalez might produce a crescendo on a phonated nonsense sound like [ʌ] as singers were singing.

Mr. Gonzalez's knowledge of sound production and vocal pedagogy was incredible. For example, I observed Mr. Gonzalez directing the altos and tenors to use one vowel while the rest of the choir sang another vowel in the production of the same word. This strategy created a specific timbre representative of the textual meaning

of the score. Singers learned to change vowel timbre and sectional balance to match the function of their pitch in a chord. Vowel shapes were utilized to gain particular overtone series'.

Other rehearsal techniques that Mr. Gonzalez used to facilitate performance precision were (a) count singing, (b) diction modifications (e.g., the use of a schwa), (c) pulsating of beats and beat segments of long notes, and (d) to assure smooth, long phrases, each singer was assigned a beat on which to breathe.

Mr. Gonzalez's pedagogical and musical behaviors depicted his musical and teaching prowess and demonstrated his many years of quality learning experiences. It was no wonder that he had earned recognition for exemplary teaching. His awards included the (a) 2003, National Association of Music Educators' outstanding music educator award, (b) 2005-2006 National Federation of High Schools, State and Regional Music Educator of the Year Award, (c) 2007 National Federation of High Schools National Music Educator of the Year Award, and (d) 2008, Oklahoma Music Educators' Association's Exemplary Teacher Award.

Mr. Chapin's great love and avid study of choral literature, prior to teaching and throughout his teaching career benefitted the Norman North Choral Program. He was constantly and intellectually studying and searching for quality, appropriate music literature. His meticulous score study guided him in stimulating singers' interests and understandings of musical devices and the composer's intent. He intelligently designed curriculum and rehearsal activities that were well paced and engaging. He demonstrated an extraordinary awareness to the needs of his students and wisdom and persistence in respectfully caring for their needs.

Both directors worked hard, spending endless hours preparing for rehearsals and performances. They were always encouraging to their singers-students. They were passionate in teaching. They spent time determining and planning engaging performance opportunities for singers. Both desired the best for their singers and chose to do what was necessary to deliver the best.

Singers. Directors were not the only choral performers to possess extraordinary characteristics. Singers were energetic, goal-oriented, focused, and willing to put the time and effort into making performance a quality, exceptional experience. I was impressed with the knowledge and ability of the singers. Students accurately gave rationale for vocal warm-ups, described various harmonic colors in Eric Whitacre's music, and comfortably and accurately used terms like schwa and breath control. I observed them accurately and easily sight-reading A-level choral music literature. Interview data indicated that they understood the importance of all major components of good choral performance (e.g., rhythmic integrity, unified sound, impeccable diction). As two, second analysts stated while watching Norman North Chorale's rehearsals, "It's obvious that these singers are well-trained." The chorale singers also demonstrated extraordinary responsibility, kindness, and caring for one another. Most exhibited a level of maturity that was unusual for adolescents of their age.

Dimensions. In this chapter, dimension refers to the quality (i.e., the peculiar property) of a characteristic (e.g., how <u>large</u> a vocal range). The dimensions of character that directors and singers possessed and displayed were essential to the production of superior performance. The following describes these dimensions.

Directors. Directors demonstrated excellent teaching and people skills. Directors were completely committed to performance excellence, possessed high self-efficacy, and strong belief in their singers' capabilities to produce superior performance. They were positively adamant, hard working directors who had an intense commitment and love for the music and their singers.

Mr. Gonzalez possessed extraordinary musicianship and skill in creating tone specific to the stylistic and expressive characteristics of the score. His intense love for the music, his extraordinarily deep knowledge and understanding of music, his extraordinary ability to communicate his love and passion for each musical artwork, his extremely technical yet artistic way of revealing and teaching the score to singers, and his extraordinary talent, knowledge, and understanding of the voice inspired, motivated, and nurtured singers to superior vocal production and great performance musicianship. He demonstrated extraordinary quality in teaching, rehearsing, score preparation, and musical expressivity. He was constantly learning, meticulous in score study, constantly searching for music literature.

Singers. Students strongly valued and believed in processes that promoted positive attitudes, relationships, interactions, and actions that brought about quality performance. They strongly valued and respected their directors' leadership, standards, expectations, and musicianship. Thus they responded respectfully and positively to them.

Singers extremely valued, believed in, committed to, and achieved hard work and excellence. They were highly motivated, confident, extraordinary performers. For high school students, they demonstrated an unusual love and appreciation for their classical

music. This was a result of directors' love for the choral literature and Mr. Gonzalez's superb musicianship and motivational techniques.

Singers were good-hearted people. They demonstrated unusual care and concern for fellow Chorale members. A large core of singers assumed leadership roles. Leaders conscientiously modeled correct behaviors and attitudes. Singers encouraged, served, trained, and responded humbly to one another. They were proud of the Chorale's accomplishments so they shared the Chorale legacy of hard work and high performance standards with new members.

For adolescents, singers showed an unusual degree of appreciation and consideration for their audiences. When describing what was expected of a Chorale member Byron said,

> You are not coming in here to just get a grade. You are coming in here to make a difference. You know, music touches people's lives. They go to these concerts and it's really great for them. Maybe it uplifts some people. Maybe it helps some through hard times. We come in here to express ourselves. I guess the community is supporting us and we are kind of giving back to the community through music.

Singers exhibited high sensitivity to their audiences and the merits of their performances. Upon explaining what he got out of participating in the Norman North Chorale Ronald (singer) said,

> Knowing that I was a part of something great that has lasted for years and that will last for years to come or at least until Mr. Gonzalez retires … I guess it is the foundation of any angst teenager to know you did something that mattered … As my high school drama teacher use to say, "The performance is larger than the sum of the performers and the audience is larger than the sum of the performance itself."

Summary. The dimensions of directors' and singers' qualities and characteristics were extreme and/or positive. Each expected much of his/herself. They maintained individual high standards, believed in consistent, diligent effort, and relished challenge. Singers and directors were committed to producing incredibly gorgeous music. Each was willing to sacrifice for the sake of ensemble achievements. Achievement of superior performance perpetuated energy to produce more superior performance.

Summary: Model for the production of superior performance. How did Norman North Chorale produce superior performance? A combination of choral performers' beliefs, values, characteristics, actions, and interactions produced superior performance. As the core explanation of production of superior performance, the common beliefs and values of director and singers unified them in the production of performance. Because choral performers strongly believed in and valued success,

excellence, hard work, caring, servant leadership, choral performance, diligence, and music, they desired and were motivated to serve, excel, care, work hard, and produce superior performance. Their strong beliefs and values propelled them to actions and interactions that produced superior performance.

The beliefs and values of the director and singers strongly characterized them. These strongly held beliefs and values facilitated extraordinary characteristics in singers and in the director (e.g., extremely caring singers and a highly skilled director). These beliefs and values motivated singers and the director to learn and constantly improve the skills necessary for the production of superior performance. Their beliefs and values motivated them to achieve their best. Enactment of the director's and singers' beliefs in and valuing of caring, supporting, and helping others created a positive, safe learning environment of encouragement and good will. Enactment of the singers' beliefs in and valuing of taking responsibility created strong emotional and musical ensemble bonding through member leadership and a team spirit. Singers enthusiastically and humbly learned from Mr. Gonzalez and from leaders within the Chorale. Singers and the director were intense, hard working, and focused on their goal of superior performance. The beliefs and values of singers and director facilitated extraordinary characteristics that facilitated the production of superior performance. Choral performers beliefs and values combined with their extraordinary characteristics, activated and energized the actions and interactions necessary for the production of superior performance.

The beliefs and values of the director and singers also strongly influenced by what and to what degree they were motivated. Choral performers were motivated by what they strongly believed in and valued (i.e., success, excellence, hard work, caring, servant

leadership, choral performance, and music). Mr. Gonzalez motivated singers with the things he and the singers believed in and valued. Mr. Gonzalez's unique motivational strategies (e.g., section leader sharing) and the exceptional singer achievements that he facilitated, motivated singers. Mr. Gonzalez introduced intrinsic and extrinsic motivation into singers lives through small (e.g., singing a phrase beautifully) and large (singing a concert well) accomplishments, creation of great choral sound, selection of engaging music, superior choral performances, demonstration of care and concern, sharing rehearsal/performance responsibilities with singers, and including singers in decision making processes of the Chorale. Of greatest motivational power were Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship and his musical way of teaching the choral music score. Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship (i.e., his deep understanding of the music, its musicality, and the artistry and passion with which he taught it) motivated singers. Because singers' valued excellence and music, they were awe-inspired by Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship and his abilities to communicate/teach the music in expressive, meaningful, aesthetic ways. Mr. Gonzalez's musical pedagogy (i.e., teaching the score through its musical devices and meanings and not through mere performance techniques) facilitated singers' musical awareness and development. The enhancement of singers' musicianship increased their desire and ability to produce exceptional performance. Because they valued music and excellence, they were inspired and motivated as Mr. Gonzalez revealed the musicianship of the score and its aesthetic meanings. Singers learned and were enthralled with the beauty of the musical composition. They were touched by the production of beautiful renditions of expressive, well-composed music literature. Each superior production of

beauty motivated singers to achieve a higher level of musicianship and to produce more superior performances.

Although not as significant as beliefs, values, extraordinary characteristics, and motivational strategies to the production of superior performance, expert training was necessary for the production of superior performance. Expert training (e.g., detailed vocal or rhythmical instruction) from Mr. Gonzalez facilitated technically correct performance. Thus it emerged as the final category explaining how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance.

As Figure 2 depicts, a combination of beliefs, values, extraordinary characteristics, motivational strategies, and expert training activated, guided, and energized the actions and interactions that produced superior performance. As indicated by the thickness and direction of the arrows, common strongly held beliefs and values of choral performers were the core explanation of how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. These strongly held beliefs and values were of greatest affect on the singers' actions and interactions that produced superior performance. Because singers and director believed in and valued excellence, choral performance, choral music, and hard work they diligently acted and interacted to produce a superior choral product. Choral performers' beliefs and values propelled development of extraordinary characteristics that were utilized to create outstanding performances. Their beliefs and values determined by what they were motivated and their response to motivational strategies. The two most powerful motivational forces positively affecting singers' actions and interactions were Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship and musical pedagogy. Mr. Gonzalez's extraordinary musicianship inspired singers to improve their own musical

skills. Mr. Gonzalez's musical pedagogy helped singers learn the deep musical meanings of the choral music score and how to produce these meanings. Of lesser explanation to the production of superior performance but necessary for production excellence was the expert technical training Mr. Gonzalez gave to his singers. Through expert technical training, singers learned to sing the score with accuracy and precision. In summary, the interaction of performers' beliefs, values, characteristics, and motivations in conjunction with and interacting with Mr. Gonzalez's motivational strategies, musicianship, musical pedagogy, and technical training produced superior performance. Figure 2 depicts this model of superior performance production.
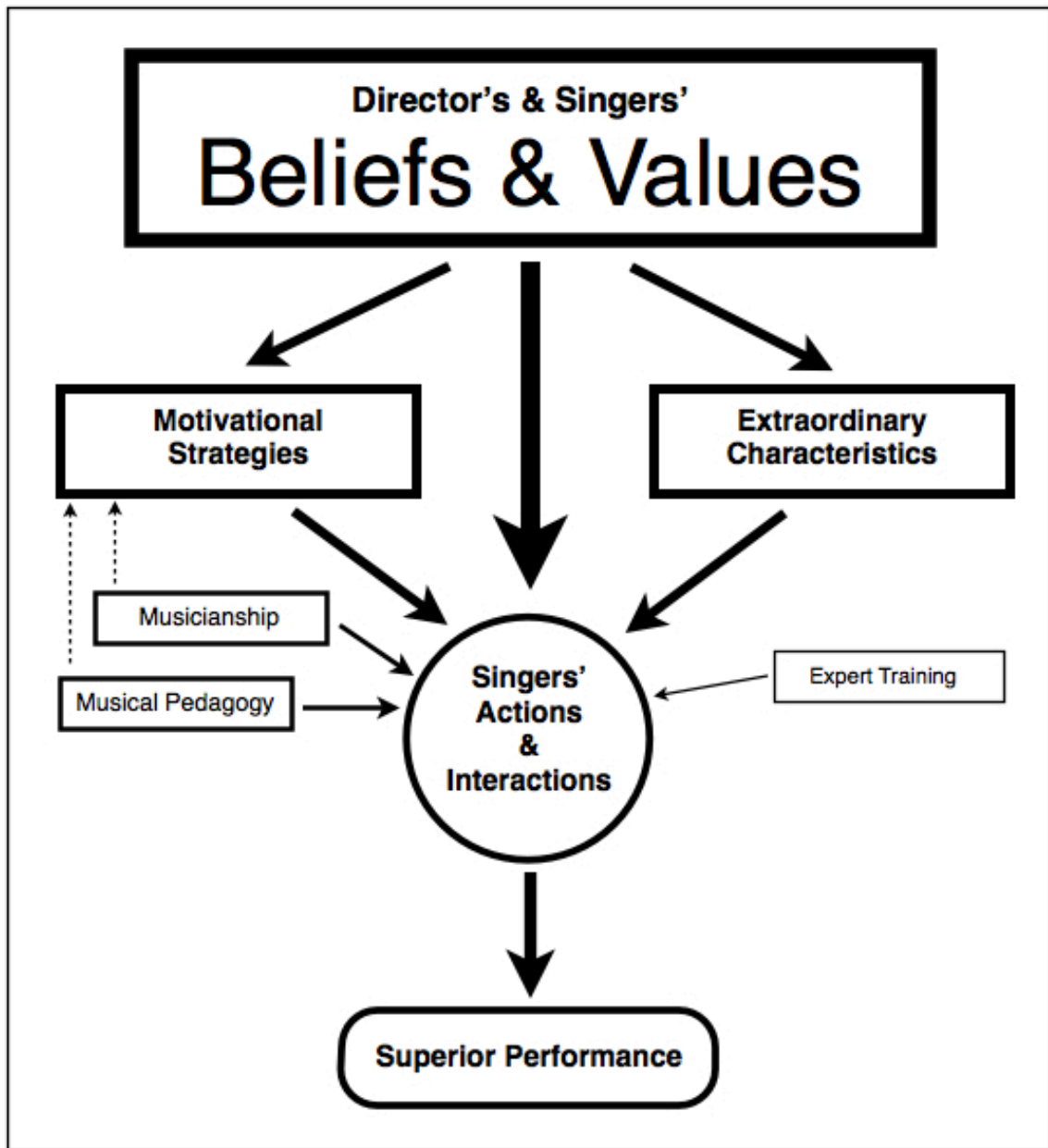
Figure 2. Model of Superior Performance Production.
Solid arrow thickness indicates the degree of affect a category had on singers' actions and interactions, the thicker the arrow the greater the affect. Broken lines indicate belonging. *Musicianship* and *musical pedagogy* are two different motivational strategies.

Survey Results

Thirty-four out of sixty-five Chorale members (i.e., 52% of the Chorale membership) completed a two-page survey, responding to demographic questions and three of the standardized questions asked during interview data collection. Survey data in response to the three standardized questions were qualitative in nature. Collection of survey data served as a means of methods triangulation. Therefore, before survey findings were subsumed in the grounded theory analysis, findings were compared with all other qualitative findings. The following are these survey findings.

Standardized questions.

Survey question one. The first survey question was: "In order of influence, the first being the most influential, name five things or people that have most influenced your choir's performance success. Briefly explain your answers." The following are the majority replies by level of influence. Percentages were calculated from the total number of survey participants responding to each level of influence (e.g., the number of respondents responding to what or who was most influential). It should be noted that as the degree of influence on performance success lessened, fewer participants responded. Only 33 gave answers for the third most influential person and/or thing. Only 26 provided answers for the fourth most influential person and/or thing. And only 22 supplied answers for the fifth most influential person and/or thing. This supports the strength of the answers supplied for the first three degrees of influence.

Frequency results revealed that 23 out of 34 survey respondents (i.e., approximately 68% of respondents) believed Mr. Gonzalez was most influential to the Chorale's performance success. Mr. Chapin was considered second most influential to

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the Chorale's performance success, receiving eight out of the thirty-four responses (i.e., twenty-four percent of respondents). The music selection of the Norman North Chorale was considered third and fifth most influential to performance success, each receiving four of thirty-four responses. Chorale members (four of thirty-four responses) were also considered third most influential. Chorale member camaraderie (five of thirty-four entries) was considered fourth most influential to performance success. Table 18 depicts the answers most given by participants.

Table 18

Perceived Influences on Performance Success and their Degree of Influence

Degree of Influence	Influencing Factor	Participant Agreement
Most	Mr. Gonzalez	23 Participants (68%)
Second Most	Mr. Chapin	8 Participants (24%)
Third Most	Chorale Members	5 Participants (15%)
Fourth Most	Chorale Member Camaraderie	5 Participants (15%)
Fifth Most	Music Selection	4 Participants (12%)

Rationale for question one answers. Participants were requested to give rationale for their answers to question one which stated, "In order of influence, the first being the most influential, name five things or people that have most influenced your choir's performance success." Rationale for answers varied greatly among participants. The only level of influence having majority agreement was that of the most influential level.

Results revealed that Mr. Gonzalez's teaching techniques were the major reason

participants believed Mr. Gonzalez was the strongest influence to performance success.

Other minor concepts emerging as rationale for Mr. Gonzalez's degree of influence were

his commitment, his musicianship, and his attention to vocal pedagogy.

Summary of results for survey question one. Examination of the answers to

question one revealed that many participants agreed on what things and/or people

influenced performance success but they did not agree as to what degree of influence

these things and/or people influenced their success. Thus disregarding all degrees of

influence, I conducted a frequency count of what and who were perceived as influential

to performance success. Frequency counts and open coding of the data revealed six

categories of influence on performance success. These categories were Mr. Gonzalez,

characteristics of Chorale members, Mr. Chapin, Chorale members, support persons, and

Chorale leaders. Results revealed that 32 out of 34 survey participants (i.e.,

approximately 94%) believed Mr. Gonzalez was influential to performance success.

Twenty-two respondents (approximately 65%) perceived that characteristics of Chorale

members (e.g., hard work, passion, pushing to do their best) were influential to

performance success. This response was different from the eleven other respondents (i.e.,

32%) who perceived Chorale members as influential but did not specify a characteristic

of the members. Eleven respondents (i.e., 32%) believed that Mr. Chapin influenced

performance success. Eleven respondents (i.e., 32%) believed support persons (i.e.,

parents, grandparents, school and school district personnel) influenced performance

success. Eight respondents (24%) believed that past Chorale leaders, present Chorale

leaders (e.g. officers), or both past and present Chorale leaders influenced performance

success. Table 19 depicts these categorical findings.

Table 19

Perceived Influences on Performance Success

Categories of Influence	Participant Agreement
Mr. Gonzalez	32 Participants (94%)
Traits of Chorale Members, not including hard work	22 Participants (65%)
Chorale Members	11 Participants (32%)
Mr. Chapin	11 Participants (32%)
Support Persons	11 Participants (32%)
Chorale leaders, past and present	8 Participants (24%)

Survey question two. Question two of the survey stated, "Is there anything or

anyone else that has contributed to your Chorale's performance success? If yes, who,

what, and how?" Only 28 of 34 survey respondents answered this question. This indicates

that six survey participants believed that their answers to Question One sufficiently

described the influences on the Chorale's performance success.

Answers for question two varied greatly (e.g., Chorale member camaraderie,

singing with an Oklahoma University chorus). Majority consensus (i.e., 14 out of 28

respondents) revealed that survey participants believed that choral stakeholders (e.g.,

parents, school administrators) contributed to their performance success. Other

categorical findings included director contribution, Chorale member contribution, and two answers that were not similar to any other answer. One participant responded that school administration and parents' contributed to performance success. Therefore one-half of his/her answer (i.e., 0.5) was counted for school administration while the other half (i.e., 0.5) was counted for parents. Table 20 displays these findings.

Table 20

Other Factors Contributing to Performance Success

Categories of Contribution	Participant Agreement
Non-musical support persons	14 Participants (50%)
Directors	7 Participants (25%)
Chorale Members	5 Participants (18%)
Other	2 Participants (07%)

Note. Percentages were estimated from those responding to the question (i.e., 28 out of 34 surveyed).

Survey question three. Question three of the survey was "If you have not already mentioned your contribution to the success of your chorale, what do you contribute?" Thirty-two out of thirty-four participants replied to this question. Given that some respondents gave more than one answer to the question, their answers were shared across topical categories. This meant that tallies of results were not always in whole numbers.

Responses to this question organized into three categories: Leadership, Intensity of Work Ethic, and Musical Qualities. Seven out of thirty-two respondents contributed

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some type of leadership to the success of their chorale. Eight and one-half persons contributed extreme, intense work effort (e.g., working hard, doing their best). Nine and one-half persons contributed a particular musical quality (e.g., a strong voice or musical knowledge). Out of the nine and one-half contributing musical qualities, six and five-sixths singers (21% of respondents) contributed vocal qualities (e.g. a strong voice) to the Chorale. Table 21 displays these findings.

Table 21

Survey Participants' Contributions to Performance Success

Categories of Personal Contribution	Participant Agreement
Musical Qualities (e.g., reading music)	9.5 Participants (30%)
Extreme, intense work effort	8.5 Participants (27%)
Leadership	7 Participants (22%)
Vocal qualities (e.g. a strong voice)	6.83 Participants (21%)

Note. Percentages were calculated from the 32 participants responding to this survey question.

Summary of survey results. Findings of survey data agreed with grounded theory results. Findings revealed that respondents believed that Mr. Gonzalez contributed most to the Chorale's performance success, followed by characteristics of Chorale members, then Mr. Chapin. A hard work ethic, working cooperatively, Mr. Gonzalez's

musicianship, music selection, and pedagogy were believed to contribute to the production of superior performance.

Chapter Summary

Findings revealed that the strong, common beliefs and values of singers and director were the underpinnings of superior performance production. The dimensions of choral performers' beliefs and values created extraordinary directors and singers (e.g., high achievers). Choral performers beliefs and values combined with their extraordinary characteristics, activated and energized the actions and interactions necessary for the production of superior performance. These beliefs and values motivated performers to successful performance. As the main and head director of the Norman North Chorale, Mr. Gonzalez's motivational behaviors and strategies contributed much to singers' enthusiastic, attentive responses that led to behaviors of performance success. His musicianship and musical pedagogy were powerful motivators for singers' production of high quality performance. His expert technical pedagogy was the last main ingredient necessary for singers' production of superior performance.

Case study results described the Norman North Chorale's context (i.e., community, district, and school) as emotionally and financial supportive of the classical arts and high degrees of superior achievement. Survey results indicated that parental and guardian support contributed to performance success. Yet when comparing these results to other grounded theory findings, the most powerful explanations of production of superior performance were performers' beliefs and values, extraordinary performers, Mr. Gonzalez's motivational strategies, Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship, and Mr. Gonzalez's musical pedagogy. Of less powerful explanation but still necessary to the production of

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superior performance was Mr. Gonzalez's expert technical pedagogy. As found by a

synthesis of previous research findings examining aspects of the production of superior

performance, interaction of choral performers' beliefs, values, characteristics, actions,

and interactions produced superior performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is divided into two main sections, a conclusion and a discussion section. In the conclusion, I present a brief summary of the findings of this current study. In the discussion, I compare my findings with previous research findings and present the limitations of my study. I suggest future research topics, methodological approaches to these topics, and present implications for choral directors and choral music educators.

Conclusions

      Summary of the Study. Despite the value that has been placed on quality performance in the United States of America and the transforming capabilities, quality choral performance has on singers, directors, and audience members, researchers have not addressed the question "How is superior choral performance produced?" in a holistic and naturalistic way. Research investigation into the production of superior performance is segmented. Researchers have examined director characteristics and rehearsal behaviors common to production of superior choral performance (e.g., Cox, 1989; Fiocca, 1989; Johnson, 2003; Rhoads, 1990). They have examined auxiliary supports to the production of superior performance (Basham, 1999; Johnson, 2003; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). Some researchers have investigated the characteristics and behaviors of singers of superior performance (Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996). Researchers have also examined specific aspects of the rehearsals of choirs producing quality performance (e.g., Arthur, 2002; Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993; Thurman, 1977). Synthesis of findings of this

literature revealed that multiple factors simultaneously contributed to performance success. Findings indicated that an amalgamation of processes resulting from various behaviors, characteristics, and possibly conditions may produce superior choral performance. These findings suggested the need to investigate superior performance production holistically. Yet to my knowledge, such a thorough investigation of superior performance has not been conducted. Therefore the purpose of this dissertation research was to conduct an in-depth, comprehensive examination of the production of superior performance. Specifically, through a case study, grounded theory framework I sought to discover how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance.

Participants of this study included members of the Norman North Chorale. This chorale was an extreme case of superior performance. In addition to earning many top ratings and placements at competitions across the Unites States of America, members of this Chorale had also performed at three national American Choral Directors Association conventions. Other participants of this study were the two directors of the Norman North Choral Program, parents of the Norman North Chorale, former members of the Norman North Chorale, one Norman North sophomore who performed with a less experienced Norman North choir, and two school district administrators. Research data were collected through interviews, observations, field notes, examination of various material cultures, and a survey.

Findings by Research Questions. This section presents and discusses the current study's findings in light of its research questions (i.e., main and sub-questions). One central question guided the research of this dissertation. Three sub-questions helped to further tease out findings regarding the central question. The following are findings by central question and sub-questions.

The Central Question. The central question of this research study was "How is superior high school choral performance produced?" Through emergence and analysis of thirteen major concepts, seven minor concepts, and eight mini-minor concepts, this question was answered. Major concepts were the love of what they were doing, love of choral performers, training, vocal pedagogy, sharing of responsibility and ownership, music literature, directors' and singers' abilities and knowledge, teamwork, unity, teaching strategies, rehearsal techniques, expressivity, and motivation. Minor concepts were expectations, director demeanor, singer formation, choir as place, recruitment, characteristics of singers and directors, and context (e.g., community). Mini-minor concepts were peer teaching, singers, physical exhilaration from superior performance, score preparation, director as voice teacher, feeder contribution, the director's freedom to lead, and publicity. In the case of the Norman North Chorale, a combination of choral performers' personal beliefs, values, characteristics, actions, and interactions produced superior performance. As depicted in the *Model of Superior Performance* (see Figure 2), of greatest impact on the production of superior performance were the beliefs and values of the choral performers. Choral performers' common beliefs and values motivated them to excel, work hard, care, serve, and to achieve at their maximum capabilities. Mr. Gonzalez's beliefs and values propelled him to constantly improve his musical, personal,

and teaching abilities. He was constantly looking for new and better ways to facilitate

singers' personal, musical, and professional successes. Singers' beliefs and values

activated and energized hard work, diligence, focus, and singer adherence to Mr.

Gonzalez's instructions on how to produce superior performance.

As depicted by the two diagonal arrows proceeding from the category "Director's

and Singers' Beliefs and Values," choral performers beliefs and values propelled the

development of extraordinary singer and director characteristics with which to produce

superior performance. These beliefs and values determined by what and to what degree

performers were motivated. Choral performers were motivated by what they believed in

and valued (e.g., success and choral performance). As Mr. Gonzalez motivated singers'

by what they believed in and valued, his unique motivational strategies, such as

developing a unified team through singer leadership, increased singers' desire to act and

interact in such a way as to produce superior performance. As indicated by the broken

arrows, Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship and musical pedagogy were the two most powerful

motivational forces propelling singers to the production of superior performance. Mr.

Gonzalez's expert musical skills, deep understandings of the music and its musicality,

and his artistic way of presenting the musicality (i.e., musicianship), inspired singers' to

improve their own musicianship. His musical pedagogy (i.e., the teaching of the choral

score through its musical devices and not through performance techniques) improved

singers' musical understandings, increased their appreciation for the music, and deepened

their convictions for accurate and beautiful expression of the music.

As indicated by the thickness of the arrow proceeding from the category "expert

training," expert training (i.e., expert technical instruction) was necessary for the

production of superior performance, but it was not the most powerful explanation of how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. Mr. Gonzalez's expert technical instruction facilitated accuracy and precision in singers' performances.

In summary, a combination of choral performers' beliefs, values, characteristics, and motivations in conjunction with and interacting with Mr. Gonzalez's motivational strategies, musicianship, musical pedagogy, and technical training activated, guided, and energized singers' actions and interactions that produced superior performance. It should be noted that despite the high skill level of the singers and the director, the beliefs and values of choral performers were the strongest explanation of how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance.

Sub-question one. The first sub-question for this research was "What (e.g., actions, interactions, relationships, attitudes, beliefs, conditions) and/or who contributes to the performance success of this choir? How do these things/persons contribute to the performance success of this choir?" Answers to this question have been organized by contributors, actions and interactions, relationships, conditions, attitudes, and beliefs.

Contributors. Results indicated that Mr. Gonzalez, the Norman North Chorale Members, and Mr. Chapin contributed to the Chorale's performance success. Survey frequency results revealed that 23 out of 34 survey respondents (i.e., approximately 68% of survey respondents) declared Mr. Gonzalez as most influential to the Chorale's performance success. All interview, observational, and survey results declared Mr. Gonzalez as the prime source of performance success. His musical, pedagogical, motivational, and vocal expertise guided performance decisions and Chorale behaviors.

Synthesis of findings revealed the importance of the Chorale members to performance success. They humbly responded to their directors, worked diligently, and desired to perform at the highest levels of performance quality. Their beliefs and values supported the commitment and work ethic necessary for superior performance achievement. Singers' whole-hearted work ethic, desire to excellence, and team efforts in response to Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin's directions brought about superior performance. Their caring, encouraging nature made the production process and the audience receipts more enjoyable.

Mr. Chapin, although not as involved a contributor as Mr. Gonzalez and the Chorale members, due to his role in this choir, also contributed to the Chorale. He ran Chorale sectionals, directed the Chorale when Mr. Gonzalez was away on business (e.g., a festival clinician), and supplied moral support and encouragement to Chorale members. Most importantly, he began building a love of music, individual member responsibility, and good choral and vocal skills in his beginning choirs. He successfully prepared singers for the demands of Norman North Chorale participation.

Actions and Interactions. Certainly the musical and vocal actions and interactions of and among directors and singers contributed to performance success. Specifically Mr. Gonzalez's deep understandings, modeling, and teaching of expressive and musical devices in the choral score developed and activated musical actions and interactions. This musical manner of teaching was one of the powerful procedural mechanisms responsible for the Chorale's production of superior performance. Singers responded emotionally, mentally, and musically to Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship. Although other pedagogical actions were necessary to the production of superior performance (e.g., teaching and

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daily practice of good vocal technique), his musical modeling and presentation/teaching of the literature was of greatest importance in facilitating singers to produce exquisite, musical performance.

Relationships. Singers' actions of respect, caring, and responsibility promoted development of positive relationships among Chorale members. Chorale members worked cooperatively to perform at their highest abilities. After a good performance they rejoiced together. Singer Ronald stated that after a superior performance, males regularly formed a clasped arm circle and chanted a traditional Norman North victory cheer. Close friendships, family-type mentoring (e.g., big brother-little brother bonds), and camaraderie were evident in the Norman North Chorale.

As I observed the Chorale in rehearsal, it was clear that Mr. Gonzalez and his singers were a team. The relationship between singers and Mr. Gonzalez was developed out of Mr. Gonzalez's and singers' beliefs and values. Singers responded positively to Mr. Gonzalez's respectful and caring pedagogical mannerisms. Singers demonstrated their care and deep respect for Mr. Gonzalez through their respectful behaviors and focused efforts during rehearsals and performances. Mr. Gonzalez's musicality and pedagogical behaviors and singers' responses to these made them a unit of one in process, heart, and performance.

Rehearsal conditions. Highly motivated singers and directors created a condition of excitement, expectation, commitment, and energy for the production of superior performance. Mr. Gonzalez understood how to motivate singers through small (e.g., singing a difficult phrase in tune) and large (singing a concert well) accomplishments, creation of great choral sound, sharing rehearsal/performance responsibilities with

singers, selection of engaging music, and including singers in decision making processes of the Chorale. These sources of motivation built great desire for performance excellence in Chorale members. Members became committed to producing increasingly better performances. Mr. Gonzalez's motivational strategies powerfully impacted Chorale members' decisions and efforts toward production of superior performance. The motivational factors and processes responsible for motivated singers, was one of the prime powerful forces responsible for the Chorale's production of superior performance.

The Norman North Chorale's rehearsal environment was very positive. A tradition of past performance successes supported Chorale members positive self-esteem. Plenty of trophies and performance photos on the walls of the rehearsal room reminded performers of the Chorale's and perhaps their own past successes. Singers knew that with Mr. Gonzalez's leadership, teaching, and his insistence on performance accuracy, they would learn accurately and perform well.

Mr. Gonzalez had created a safe, enjoyable place for singers in the choral rehearsal room. Chorale member photos and performance memorabilia filled Mr. Gonzalez's office. These objects of history told singers that they were important and that Mr. Gonzalez cared about them. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin's open door policy also confirmed to singers that their lives beyond singing were important to their directors.

Mr. Gonzalez's insistence to not proceed from a section of music until it was learned and practiced accurately, assured singers in their performance actions. His pedagogical techniques such as chunking of tasks and short, consistent assessments of rehearsal segments built singer confidence and security. His actions and words told singers that he believed in them. Directors' diligence and focus to facilitate singers'

success, their efforts to help each singer's vocal development, their efforts to place singers in the choral formation that best utilized their talents, and directors' caring manners (e.g., asking about a singer's day) assured singers that they were appreciated and cared for in the Norman North choral domain. In summary rehearsal conditions were positive, safe, caring, energized, and motivating. These conditions developed a singer condition of commitment.

Non-rehearsal conditions. School and school district administrators, parents, and community were supportive of the Norman North Chorale. The school district and community valued the classical arts as evidenced by passing two bond levies to build a performance arts center for the school district.

The school district supported the Chorale and other performing ensembles in the district by financing a district fine arts supervisor and his secretary. The school district fully equipped the Norman North Choral Department when it was built. They financed an arts budget from which the Norman North Choral Program's bussing expenses were paid and much of their music was purchased. The Norman North High School principal, a former band director, also supplied the Norman North Choir Program with monies to purchase supplies and when possible, equipment. Of greatest significance to performance quality were school and school district administrators' attendance at choral performances and their positive comments to and about singers. Administrators' verbal support encouraged singers and directors and built positive morale among the Norman North Chorale performers.

Parents were also supportive of the Chorale. Although some singers worked after-school jobs to pay for choral expenses (e.g., trip expenses), others' parents/grandparents

paid these costs for their adolescents. After naming five persons or things that had most influenced performance success, survey participants were ask to answer the following question, "Is there anything or anyone else that has contributed to your chorale's performance success? If yes, who, what, and how?" Fifty percent of those responding to this question stated that non-performing, auxiliary persons contributed to the Chorale's performance success. Out of the 50% responding in this manner, 20% identified these auxiliary persons as their parents. Despite the importance of financial support, more singers who declared their parents as contributors mentioned parents' emotional support and attendance at concerts rather than their financial contributions.

As a researcher and former choral director, I wondered if the Norman North Chorale would have achieved their high standard of performance success without non-musical auxiliary supports. I asked this question to Mr. Gonzalez who stated, "Yes." But he qualified his statement by saying such achievement of this caliber without auxiliary supports might take a longer time to achieve. Mr. Gonzalez believed that when singers received expert vocal and musical pedagogy and were motivated with great choral art and experiences of performance success, they could thrive in performance without emotional and financial support from auxiliary sources.

I asked the fine arts supervisor a similar question. I asked, "Could Mr. Gonzalez produce the quality performance he is producing now on a consistent basis without his present community support (i.e., without school district finances and parents' assumption of some financial expenses)?" The fine arts supervisor replied,

No, even in regards to somebody as good as Mr. Gonzalez. I would have to say "no" because resources do make a difference. If I believed that resources didn't, I would say 'yes,' but even the best teacher in the world without resources will not have as much impact. Would Mr. Gonzalez be successful? "Yes, absolutely!" Would the kids get a lot out of the program? "Yes, absolutely!" Would he be as successful? "No, because those resources allow you to do more to reach people and to do things better." And that's not to diminish his teaching ability or Mr. Chapin's or their situation. I don't mean that at all, because they would be successful. They just would not be as successful.

In summary, findings revealed that the Norman North Chorale received substantial financial aid and emotional support from their choral stakeholders. In-depth examination indicated that the emotional support from parents, friends, siblings, and administrators influenced the Chorale's performance quality more than financial contributions. Auxiliary supports definitely were a part of the Norman North Chorale's condition. But through diagramming the relationships among auxiliary support persons, the directors, and Chorale members, I found that auxiliary supports was not a powerful force in the production of superior performance.

Attitudes. Singers and directors maintained positive attitudes about self, fellow performers, the Chorale, performance, and the work needed to achieve high quality performance. Self-esteem and self-efficacy was developed as Mr. Gonzalez used process and task oriented praise. Singers believed that their efforts and the intensity of their efforts impacted the quality of performance. As members of the Chorale and the Chorale

as a whole produced quality sound, singers' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and enjoyment regarding performance increased.

Beliefs The beliefs of singers and directors were important to performance success. An amalgamation of actions, interactions, conditions, values, motives, and beliefs of directors and members of the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. Beliefs are discussed further in the following sub-question.

Sub-question two. Sub-question two asked, "What underlying personal themes emerge from research participants?" Answers to this question revealed the most powerful of explanations as to how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. This powerful explanation was that the beliefs and values of the Norman North Chorale performers determined, activated, and energized the actions and interactions that produced superior performance. These values and beliefs also characterized singers and directors, giving them the traits they needed to achieve the actions and interactions necessary for performance success. Singers and directors believed in and valued hard work, excellence, music, caring, giving, superior choral performance, success, and the assumption of responsibility. Therefore they, in unity, chose to work hard, take responsibility, care, and give to others thereby achieving superior choral performance. Singers were easily motivated by their values and beliefs (e.g., hard work, succeeding) and these were the things by which Mr. Gonzalez motivated them.

Specifically, Mr. Gonzalez's life had been positively transformed by his experiences as a junior high choral member. These experiences taught him the positive power of music, the importance of an expert, hard working director, and work habits that facilitated success in any area of life.

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Because of Mr. Gonzalez's valuing and belief in giving back to others what he had beneficially received, he chose to give music and wonderful choral experiences in the way that he had received them. He chose to give the best choral experiences he could provide to his students. His singers and music were his life.

Because of his love and dedication to his singers and his commitment to serving/teaching them in the best possible ways, the dimensions of his work effort were great. He worked long hours to facilitate great vocal production. He was continually seeking to learn and grow for his own benefit and the benefit of his students. He improved all of his professional skills and personal characteristics that were associated with the choral process. He learned to motivate singers and facilitate superior performance.

Norman North Chorale members valued many of the same things that Mr. Gonzalez valued. This made Chorale members and Mr. Gonzalez a great team and facilitated faster, more efficient production of superior performance. Singers valued the performance of classical choral music. They believed in and valued hard work and achievement of high standards. As evidenced by the average grade point average of those surveyed (i.e., a 3.67 grade point average) and comments by singers, the valuing of hard work was a part of many of their upbringings.

Respect and caring was also a part of many of the singers' personal upbringings. They valued and believed in respecting authority and those who had earned their respect (e.g., Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Chapin, section leaders). They followed Mr. Gonzalez's directions and believed in his decisions. Seldom was time and energy wasted in disciplining.

Singers valued and believed in helping others. This also made them great team players. It supported their acceptance of responsibility for training and mentoring of fellow Chorale members. Singers enjoyed being a part of a closely-knit, family-like organization. They also loved being in an organization that was highly recognized for its exceptional accomplishments. This gave them a "place to be" and a positive identity with others of their same age. They thrilled at being a part of something "worthwhile," something that "made a difference in people's lives." As developing adolescents, being a significant part of the production process of superior performance satisfied some of the needs of Chorale members. They needed to be contributors in something of value to others. Participation in the Norman North Chorale fulfilled that need.

In summary, Mr. Gonzalez's beliefs and values motivated him to facilitate singers to produce superior performance. The singers' values and beliefs matched Mr. Gonzalez's values and beliefs (e.g., valuing classical music and hard work). This matching of values and beliefs made for faster achievement of learning and performance goals. It facilitated a greater sense of team victory when performance was superior. Singers and director worked together to achieve like goals of performance excellence. Singers believed in and trusted Mr. Gonzalez's leadership. Mr. Gonzalez believed in his singers. Singers and director were unified in believing and actions to achieve a beautiful performance product.

Sub-question three. Sub-question three was, "What, if anything, is atypical about this particular production phenomenon?" Several things were atypical about the Norman North Chorale's production phenomenon. I believe it was the atypical characteristics of this phenomenon that made it such an extremely superior performing choir.

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An atypical director. Mr. Gonzalez was a highly skilled, extremely talented musician and vocal and music pedagogue. Because of his expert skills and abilities he was able to teach and motivate students to high quality vocal/choral production.

Mr. Gonzalez was also a very self-motivated man. He thought highly of himself and therefore pushed himself to increasingly higher personal and professional standards and achievements. This helped him bring about consistent improvement in his choirs and in their performance achievements.

Mr. Gonzalez's regular, honest assessment of his professional progress and his humility helped him to set realistic performance goals for self and his singers. He very much desired to achieve and produce great, musical performances. Because of his care to others and his belief that he was to serve and give to others, he expended great amounts of time and energy to facilitate superior performance experiences for his singers.

Atypical singers. Norman North Chorale singers were atypically responsible, caring, and motivated. They were highly desirous of performance excellence. They were highly motivated by classical music, achievement of superior performance, and Mr. Gonzalez's demonstration of passion for music and teaching. Because they were so motivated they were highly disciplined.

A large majority of members were very caring. All took responsibility and ownership for the production process and product. A great deal of peer mentoring, encouraging, and training took place in the Norman North Chorale ranks. This led to great strength in positive group believing for performance success.

A second director. Not all high school choral programs have the benefit of a second director. Because Mr. Chapin taught Chorale sectionals while Mr. Gonzalez

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taught the remainder of the Chorale other music, faster learning of music was facilitated. Two directors gave singers double the resources from which to learn and understand. Although Mr. Chapin's contribution to the Chorale was important, emerging as stronger contributors to the production of superior performance were the Chorale members and their primary director. This current investigation was not designed to determine whether or not Mr. Chapin's contributions were necessary for the production of superior performance.

Motivation. Mr. Gonzalez motivated singers through performance excellence, his musicianship, musical pedagogy, inclusionary mechanisms, and the music literature. The following gives details regarding these ways of motivation.

Mr. Gonzalez's motivational prowess and skills were extraordinary. His consistent calling of attention to singers' rehearsal successes, his scheduling of many opportunities for singers to practice their performance skills, his positive affirmations to singers, and his caring words and actions facilitated high singer self-efficacy. High self-efficacy promoted expectancy for achievement and the achievement of challenging goals.

Things of excellence motivated Chorale members. The well-blended sound, the high degree of excellence with which the Chorale consistently sang, and the many awards the Chorale had earned, motivated singers. Singers loved being a part of something that was "astounding." Mr. Gonzalez knew that performance success was a great motivator. He did all he could as a musician, teacher, and director to facilitate as many successes as possible for his singers.

Singers were motivated by Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship and his musical pedagogy. Because of Chorale members' beliefs and values (e.g., their valuing of

excellence), they very much respected Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship. They were awe-inspired by it.

Mr. Gonzalez's musical pedagogy nurtured and inspired singers' love of and for the music and musical performance. Production of the score was taught in light of creating the most beautiful, authentic expressions of the musical work. He taught singers how to achieve production of the score by calling their attentions to the musical aspects of the score (e.g., an emotionally, musically and textually ascending line). With words and detailed concern for accurate production of the score, he exemplified respect for the composer's and the poet's intentions. Singers were regularly reminded of singing for the sake of the art and/or the artist's intentions, never to earn a high competition score. Mr. Gonzalez appealed to singers' highest self-imposed standards, encouraging them to commit to their finest production of each score.

The music literature of the Norman North Chorale also motivated singers. Some of the literature Mr. Gonzalez selected for performance related to the urges and needs of adolescents (e.g. romantic love). Adolescents related to the texts and contemporary harmonies of this music and thus sang them to the best of their abilities.

Mr. Gonzalez also wisely allowed singers to select some of their performance literature. This motivated them to work harder to better produce what they had selected. It also motivated them to work harder for someone who had allowed them the privilege of being a part of the music selection.

Mr. Gonzalez understood how to motivate singers. He knew that if singers took responsibility in the performance production process and ownership of the final product, they would work harder to achieve performance superiority. Therefore he devised

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methods that facilitated singer participation in the accepting, mentoring, and training of

fellow Chorale members. Officers were commissioned to play major leadership roles.

They were commissioned to develop a family-type, welcoming environment in the

Chorale. Officers were to model exceptional behavior, share their musical and vocal

knowledge, and share the Chorale's performance tradition with Chorale members. These

responsibilities were in addition to their regular official duties (e.g., organizing music as

the librarian officer).

Jazz Ensemble members were also encouraged to lead in the Chorale. They were

to model exceptional behaviors, share their musical knowledge and expertise, and share

what they had learned from Mr. Gonzalez in the more intimate setting of a small

jazz ensemble.

Section leadership was rotated among capable Chorale members and eventually

determined by the section members. Rotation of personnel and member selection of

leadership developed great camaraderie and friendships among section members. It

developed a strong sense of positive, section identity and pride.

As Chorale members observed section leaders, Jazz Ensemble members, and

officers taking responsibility for process and product, this encouraged them to take

responsibility, too. Singers encouraged singers to take responsibility. An unusually large

amount of upperclassmen mentored and trained Chorale members. This engagement

powerfully impacted the strength and quality of performance.

Mr. Gonzalez's servant leadership inspired and motivated his singers. Atypical

was the extent to which Mr. Gonzalez displayed professional photos of his singers.

Professional photos of choral performances and action shots of the yearly musical graced

the walls of the rehearsal room. Students' pictures and performance memorabilia filled

Mr. Gonzalez's office. The photos reminded students of fun, musical times. By looking at

the photos, singers gained glimpses the Norman North Choral Program's history. The

photos gave students incentive for continuing the great performance heritage of the

Norman North choral program.

The photos in the rehearsal area and in Mr. Gonzalez's office also gave singers a

place of identity. Scarlet, a former Chorale member had moved to Norman, Oklahoma

from another city. She told me how she had been intimidated by the performance caliber

of the Norman North Choral Program and was concerned about participating in it as a

new student. But the gallery of photos helped relieve her concerns. Scarlet said, "I

remember coming into this room being a new student and seeing all these pictures and

feeling like, 'Okay, well all these kids fit in. They have a home here so I should be able to

have a home here, too.'" The photos demonstrated Mr. Gonzalez's love and appreciation

for his students. Students in turn loved being a part of an organization whose directors

recognized them as special and important.

Summary of findings by research questions. In summary, Mr. Gonzalez and the

Norman North Chorale members produced superior performance. They produced

superior performance by acting upon their beliefs and values. They worked hard and

diligently, caring for and helping one another. Mr. Gonzalez's motivating actions and

words moved singers to do what was necessary to produce superior performance. Mr.

Gonzalez's exceptional musicianship and his musical way of teaching the choral score,

motivated singers to perform at an exceptionally, high musical, aesthetic standard. Expert

training facilitated singers' excellent technical performance. Singers' responses to the

extraordinary instruction and Mr. Gonzalez's caring resulted in the production of superior performance. In summary, a combination of director and singers' values and beliefs, actions, and interactions produced the extremely superior performance that was required for national American Choral Director Association presentation.

Discussion

In this discussion section I compare my findings with the findings of previous choral researchers and researchers of other domains. The limitations of my investigation, suggestions for further research, and implications for choral directors and choral music educators are also included in this discussion section.

Comparison of Findings with Previous Research Findings.

Director Rehearsal Behaviors. Synthesis of previous research regarding the production of high quality performance suggested that certain director rehearsal behaviors might be important to the production of high quality performance. Mr. Gonzalez possessed all but one of the behaviors revealed to be important. In regards to monitoring and managing singers' conditions during the rehearsal, he varied activities (e.g., Arthur, 2002), length of activities (e.g., Rhoads, 1990), singer demands (e.g., Derby, 2001), music difficulty (e.g., Arthur, 2002), proximity (e.g., Wright, 1996), and rehearsal structure (Cox, 1985). He was keenly aware of his singers' condition (Rhoads, 1990). Humor was one of the ways he managed the singers' condition (Jenkins, 2005). He demonstrated musical expertise through logical organization of rehearsals, efficient teaching, and musical modeling (e.g., Morgan, 1992) and efficient error detection and correction (e.g., Rhoads, 1990). Mr. Gonzalez challenged singers to high performance goals (Jenkins, 2005), discussed performance goals with his singers (Wright, 1996), and

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required discipline and a strong work ethic (e.g., Basham, 1999). He cared for singers' present and future well-being (e.g., Basham, 1999) and built in his singers, community, vision, and self worth (e.g., Jenkins, 2005).

Mr. Gonzalez daily gave singers what he called a *mini-voice lesson.* He gave regular vocal production instruction (e.g., Decker, 1975). Special vocal training was given to new choral members (e.g., Jenkins, 2005). He exercised singers' voices between the [u] and [i] vowels (e.g., Overturf, 1985). His vocal pedagogy strategies were unique to others' (e.g., Overturf, 1985). Directors taught vocal production through correct breath management, tongue placement, mouth formation, and verbal imagery (e.g., Overturf, 1985) whereas Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin rarely used verbal imagery. They believed verbal imagery had the potential to confuse singers' understanding of the actions being pursued. Instead of verbal imagery, Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin used modeling and concrete terminology and explanations to instruct their singers.

Previous researchers found that consistent use of warm-ups (e.g., Fiocca, 1989), modeling (Thurman, 1977), verbal imagery (Funk, 1982), and serious quality music (Forbes, 2001) was identified with choirs of superior performance. Warm-ups were definitely a part of the Norman North Chorale's daily regiment. Mr. Gonzalez utilized physical, aural, and process modeling as was found in the rehearsal of three high school directors whose choirs demonstrated exceptional performance quality (Grimland, 2001). And the Norman North Chorale sang quality serious music as was found in rehearsals of other directors of superior performing choirs (e.g., Forbes, 2001). But as stated

earlier, verbal imagery was found only minimally in Mr. Gonzalez's rehearsals. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Chapin used verbal imagery only when all other more concrete methods were not working.

Critical to the Norman North Chorale's production of superior performance, was the musical way in which Mr. Gonzalez taught. This finding supported the findings of other researchers who had found that directors of exceptionally superior performing choirs, taught musically and taught their singers to think and perform musically (Grimland, 2001; Jenkins, 2005; Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992). As Mr. Gonzalez, high school (Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992) and university directors (Johnson, 2003) discussed interpretative meanings of the score/text with their singers. These directors were creative and taught singers how to communicate musical and textual emotion. These directors and Mr. Gonzalez went beyond the comprehensive musicianship described in Hunsaker (2007). In addition to teaching aspects of music materials (e.g., terminology of music elements, sight reading) as was the case in Hunsaker (2007), directors of superior choral performance explained, modeled, and taught the score from its musical and emotional aspects.

Review of findings regarding production of superior performance revealed one director who seemed as conscientious about teaching his singers to be musical as Mr. Gonzalez was (Morgan, 1992). In regards to musicianship and musical teaching, this experienced teacher of many years of superior performance ratings had many of the same qualities Mr. Gonzalez possessed. The following describes these qualities. The director was enthusiastic about the music and fastidious about the refinement of every detail of the score (Morgan, 1992). His singers had learned the basics of vocal and music

production, so they were able to appropriately respond to his short-fix rehearsal statements. Warm-ups included practice of intervals, intonation, various scales, choral balance, blend, dynamics, and phrasing. Singers were taught musical devices such as agogic accents, inflections, word stress, various articulations, and some chord functions. Singers were expected to apply what they had learned and in so doing they developed their individual musicianship.

Important differences existed between Mr. Gonzalez and the director whom Morgan (1992) studied. Singers perceived Mr. Gonzalez as kind, caring, and expertly musical. They were awed by Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship. Singers perceived the director investigated by Morgan (1992) as harsh and technical. It appeared that the director, whom Morgan studied, taught musical devices and how to achieve them without demonstrating respect for the composer's intentions or the musical work. Mr. Gonzalez's demonstrated reverence for the choral art, the composer, and the musical work. This along with his musicianship and caring ways of teaching gained him his singers' respect and admiration that the other director did not receive.

As Mr. Gonzalez, directors of choirs of superior performance increased singers' rehearsal time through sectionals (e.g., Derby, 2001). Unlike other directors (i.e., Ficoaa, 1989; Jenkins, 2005), he rarely scheduled rehearsals beyond the normal rehearsal times. This may have been due to the musical and emotional maturity of his singers, the intensity of Chorale rehearsals, and Mr. Gonzalez's expectations for his singers. If singers were not keeping pace with learning the music during rehearsals they were expected to learn the music on their own. The intensity of rehearsals facilitated solid and quick learning of the music, perhaps making extra rehearsals unnecessary. Norman North

Chorale members were for the most part, not beginning choral members. They were well trained and experienced, thus facilitating quick, efficient learning of music. This too may have made extra rehearsals unnecessary.

Some directors whose choirs sang at a superior quality increased singer rehearsal time through individual and small group lessons (e.g., Basham, 1999). Other than the one lesson per year and special attention during audition, Mr. Gonzalez did not conduct individual or small group lessons.

As I observed Mr. Gonzalez direct both a beginner choir and the most advanced Norman North High School choir, the Norman North Chorale, his rehearsal behaviors modeled previous findings regarding direct instruction, rehearsal time usage, and feedback ratios. As was found by these researchers, type of rehearsal, singer characteristics, and music difficulty influenced the way Mr. Gonzalez (a) used time (e.g., Caldwell, 1980; Davis, 1993), (b) gave sequenced instruction (e.g., Derby, 2001; Thurman, 1977), and (c) his ratio of approval to disapproval feedback (e.g., Arthur, 2002; Caldwell, 1980; Thurman, 1977). His pacing was often slower for the freshmen ladies than for Chorale members. Complete direct instruction sequences contained less content and were shorter in length for the more experienced Chorale members than for the freshmen ladies. The freshmen ladies chorus received more disapprovals to approvals than did the Norman North Chorale. These pedagogical differences were due in part to the singers' characteristics (i.e., Chorale members were more musically mature than freshmen ladies). Pedagogical differences were also due to the type of rehearsal activity in which each ensemble was engaged. The Chorale members were polishing music literature while the Freshmen Ladies Chorus was learning literature.

As other directors of superior choirs, Mr. Gonzalez conducted singer auditions (e.g., Basham, 1999), adequate rehearsal planning (e.g., Funk 1982), maintained consistent rehearsal protocol (e.g., Jenkins, 2005), and gave much attention to tone quality (e.g., Jenkins, 2005). Unlike the directors studied by Johnson (2003) and Wright (1996), Mr. Gonzalez did not conduct enthusiastic singer recruitment. Instead the Chorale's reputation, Mr. Gonzalez's reputation, the production of a top-notched musical each year, Chorale members, and to some degree Mr. Gonzalez's and Mr. Chapin's weekly visit to feeder schools attracted students into the Norman North choral program.

Director Characteristics. Synthesis of previous research also suggested that certain director characteristics were important to the production of high quality performance. Directors producing superior choral performance were experienced (e.g., Arthur, 2002) and held at least a master's degree in music (e.g., Grimland, 2001). They were inspirational (Jenkins, 2005), energetic (Johnson, 2003), charismatic (Decker, 1975), hard working (Johnson, 2003), intensely focused (Wright, 1996), and enthusiastic (e.g., Fiocca, 1989). Mr. Gonzalez possessed all but one of these characteristics. He did not exhibit the bouncy, perky demeanor that typifies enthusiasm. He definitely exuded much energy, focus, intensity, and attention to all matters of performance production and to his singers. Such characteristics have been recognized as effective teacher traits (e.g., Madsen, 1980; Yarbrough, 1975). Given the maturity and commitment of his singers, Mr. Gonzalez may not have needed to be the typically enthusiastic director. His maturity, experience, confidence, musicality, and expertise may have made up for lack of a bouncy enthusiastic outward appearance. Mr. Gonzalez's enthusiasm was inner enthusiasm. It

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was enthusiasm he had for the music and teaching. According to Madsen (1990, p. 45) "Some of the most intense teachers are very quiet."

The findings of this current study, revealed the importance of choral performers' values and beliefs on performance quality. As in this study, researchers investigating directors of national ACDA choirs found that choir directors believed in and valued serving, supporting, encouraging, teaching, and caring for their students. These directors worked to develop the whole person not just singers' musical and ensemble skills. Directors spent time developing individual singer's self worth, making each singer feel important to the ensemble. They developed family-like atmosphere in their choral program. They modeled and taught mutual appreciation for all choral performers. They provided musical/choral, professional, and personal vision to their singers (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). They shared personal stories during rehearsals that taught musical and life lessons. Each acted as a servant leader (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). They developed positive relations with their students. This finding supported the findings of Allen (1988) who found that 70% of 122 national ACDA high school and post-secondary directors exercised high relational, high task behavior primary leadership styles (Allen, 1988).

It is interesting that personal themes were found only in studies of national ACDA choirs. This may suggest differences between national ACDA choral directors and other directors of superior performing choirs who have not earned performing privileges at a national ACDA convention. With exception to Allen's (1988) study, findings regarding personal themes were the result of in-depth case study research. This may indicate the benefit of examining choral production settings over time, on the field, and in-depth, in order to discover some of the more personal themes possibly associated with the

production of superior performance. The congruence of findings between the three case studies and Allen's (1988) statistical investigation supports the benefit of examining one topic through many methodological strategies.

   Auxiliary Support. Previous researchers found that choirs of superior performance had strong auxiliary support (e.g., Basham, 1999). They had supportive administrators (e.g., Fiocca, 1989) and strong parent support (e.g., Fiocca, 1989). Some choral programs were benefitted as their school administrators scheduled all courses around the scheduling needs of the music program (e.g., Wright, 1996). Two national ACDA choirs had the benefits of strong feeder programs (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996). With exception to strong feeder programs, Norman North Chorale had the benefits of all these auxiliary supports. In regards to the Chorale's feeders, they did not supply considerable numbers of singers to the Norman North choral program.

   Singers. Although few researchers investigated choral singers in regards to superior performance, some found, as was found in this study that singers were dedicated (Fiocca, 1989; Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) and hard working (Johnson, 2003; Morgan, 1992). They were team players (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) that believed in their importance to the ensemble (Levi, 1986; Morgan, 1992; Wright, 1996).

   Summary. With exception to director enthusiasm, enthusiastic singer recruitment, the use of extra rehearsals, the use of individual small group lessons, the use of verbal imagery, and pedagogical respect to composer's intentions and the choral art form, my findings supported the findings of previous researchers examining the production of superior choral performance. Topics of these findings were primarily in the category of expert pedagogy.

Comparisons beyond choral performance research. In addition to findings that supported previous research findings, my findings indicated that a combination of particular beliefs and values of choral performers (i.e., directors and singers), unity of these beliefs and values among choral performers, certain extraordinary qualities of choral performers, motivation, musicianship, and expert pedagogy produced superior performance. No such combination of findings was discovered in previous investigations of choral performance production. I believe this was because previous researchers had not investigated the whole process of the performance production.

Through my comprehensive investigation of an entire production process of a superior choir, findings emerged that were new to the choral performance research literature. Therefore the following briefly compares my findings with findings from other research domains (i.e., domains of general education, music education psychology, or general music education).

Beliefs and values. Norman North Chorale members and Mr. Gonzalez embraced the same beliefs and values regarding superior performance production. They believed in and valued success, musicianship, choral music, and caring. These beliefs and values initiated, influenced, and supported the actions, interactions, and relationships necessary for superior performance production. This finding is supported by Hope's (1992) statement regarding the success of professional organizations. He said, "By definition, only one set of ideas/values can hold first priority as the basis for individual or organization action at a given time. When operational decisions must be made, values and ideas have overriding influence (Hope, 1992, p. 726)."

As stated previously, the common values and beliefs of the Norman North Chorale and their director determined their actions and interactions that produced superior performance. Because they valued and believed in hard work, choral performance production, and the achievement of high quality performance, they worked hard to achieve these things. Findings from social psychology research support this relationship between student values and academic accomplishments. Social-cognitive researchers have found that students who value an academic task (e.g., balancing the choral sound) or the outcome of accomplishing the task (e.g., a great performance) tend to be more motivated to accomplish the task (Bandura, 1997). The more that students value the task, its outcome, or both, the harder they work to accomplish it and the better they accomplish it (Wigfield, 1994). Although choral music education researchers of superior choirs have not ventured into the topic of values and beliefs, some music education researchers have. As the social-cognitive researchers, they have examined expectancy beliefs (e.g., self-efficacy beliefs) and academic values and/or interests. These investigations will be covered in the next section, entitled Motivation.

Director and singer values and beliefs and Mr. Gonzalez's motivational strategies energized choral performers to accomplish the actions and interactions necessary for production of superior performance. Singers and director were motivated by choral performance, choral music literature, hard work, performance success, positive reinforcement that included the thrills of performance success, and the sharing of performance production responsibility.

Motivation.

Interests/Values. Chorale performers valued and were interested in hard work, achievement, choral performance, and choral music. As was found in exceptional solo performers, Chorale members' values/interests motivated more efficient (e.g., focused, diligent) rehearsal (McPherson & McCormick, 1999; Renwick & McPherson, 2002; O'Neill, 1999b) and predicted the quality of performance achievement (McPherson & McCormick, 2000).

Achievement goals: Learning and performance goals. Although both types of achievement goals (i.e., learning and performance goals) were at play in the Norman North Chorale, learning goals were more heavily relied upon than performance goals. Mr. Gonzalez and the Norman North Chorale members valued and believed in effort. They believed that hard work and efficient strategies helped them succeed. This finding was supported by a review of achievement goal research in non-music environments. Synthesis of this research suggested that learning goals produced a greater level of positive outcomes than did performance goals (Midgley, Kaplan, Middleton, 2001). This and my findings regarding the Norman North Chorale were incongruent with Austin's (1988, 1991) findings. Austin found that elementary band students of performance goals performed at comparable levels to those of learning goals.

Consideration of learning and performance goal literature suggested that the discrepancy of my findings and Austin's (1988, 1991) might have been the result of the differences between performers (i.e., elementary versus high school, inexperienced versus experienced). Review of achievement goal literature indicated that difficulty of tasks, the type of task (e.g., competitive or non-competitive), and the age of the student

interacted with the degree each type of goal benefitted or harmed the student. Considering the roles of achievement theories to motivation, personality, and development, Dweck (1999, p. 16) stated that both learning and performance goals are natural but "an overemphasis on performance goals is a danger signal."

In the case of Norman North Chorale, Mr. Gonzalez's teaching strategies encouraged intrinsic motivation through support of learning goals. His words and actions encouraged singers to achieve vocal and musical accomplishments, not performance scores. He taught singers that with effort or a particular strategy, they could achieve each musical accomplishment, no matter how great or small. This type of learning-goals orientation developed singer motivation. This finding was congruent with a study of individual middle school band members (Sandene, 1998).

Individual middle school band members who perceived their classrooms were learning goal oriented were significantly motivated in their band activities (Sandene, 1998). In contrast, band members perceiving pedagogy to be performance goal oriented were significantly negatively motivated in their band activities.

Self-efficacy. The many performance successes in and out of the Norman North Chorale's rehearsal setting built their self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Mr. Gonzalez worked to facilitate singers' successes through presentation of achievable chunks of musical/vocal challenges. His feedback was usually specific to singers' actions, thus giving them encouragement for further attempts to succeed. Singer self-efficacy supported increased motivation for achievement. This finding supported Bandura's self-efficacy model (1986). Bandura hypothesized that self-efficacy affects task choice, effort, persistence, and achievement (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Bandura (1994)

suggested four strategies to build self-efficacy. All four strategies were present in the Norman North Chorale program. These strategies were (a) achievement of success, (b) vicarious learning (i.e., learning by observation), (c) facilitating success and calling attention to it in a positive way, and (d) creating a positive, energizing environment for students (Bandura, 1994).

In summary, the Chorale's values and interests, the type of achievement goals primarily utilized during rehearsal, and pedagogy supportive of self-efficacy development, facilitated superior performance production. With exception to Austin's (1988. 1991) findings, these findings support the findings of previous researchers' examining motivation in light of achievement outcomes.

Motivated by music. Norman North Chorale members were motivated by the music selection and the effects the music had on them. This finding was congruent with the findings of Saunders (2005). He investigated the beliefs and motivations of three college conductors and one hundred and sixty-six choral singers from three different post-secondary institutions (Saunders, 2005). It was found that the most influential, motivational factor on singers and conductors was their love for music (Saunders, 2005).

To my knowledge, the effects of motivation on ensemble performance quality have not been studied. Researchers have examined the influence of motivation on participation in musical activities. Researchers have found that the love of music and/or positive music experiences motivate people to participate in individual music making (Lehmann, Sloboda, Woody, 2007; McPherson & Renwick, 2001). Factors motivating high school students' participation in choir and the meanings of high school choral participation were examined by Neill (1998) and Hylton (1981), respectively. Using a ten

point Likert scale, 1,020 high school singers of 13 different high schools indicated to what degree nine reasons for choral participation had on their actual decisions to participate in choir (Neill, 1998). The reason given the most points, indicating the reason most influencing participants choral participation was *the opportunity to sing*. Second to this answer was *the opportunity to perform* (Neill, 1998).

Six hundred and seventy-three high school singers of fourteen choirs indicated how strongly they agreed with or disagreed with seventy statements regarding the meaning of choral participation (Hylton, 1981). Responses organized into six major categorical reasons. One of these reasons was labeled "musical-artistic" (p. 292). In expressing singers' meaning given to choral participation from this category, Hylton (1981, p. 292) explained, "In a certain sense, the meaning of high school choral singing experience may be viewed as inherent in the music itself." Although Hylton (1981) and Neill (1998) did not investigate the effects of motivation on performance quality, their findings indicate the importance of music, singing, and/or choral performance to the choral singer as was found in my study.

Although not examining the effect of motivation on performance quality, teacher effectiveness researchers found that participation in music activities during the music classroom time yielded more student-on-task behavior (e.g., Forsythe, 1977; Madsen, 1980). Indirectly this finding could imply the use of music as a motivator and as an influence on performance quality. Teacher effectiveness researchers have concluded that music is its own motivating reward (Madsen, 1980).

In summary, my findings indicate that the music literature of the Norman North Chorale motivated singers to achieve high standards of performance quality. Although I

believe many choral directors understand the importance of music selection in regard to singers' willingness to produce at high performance levels, this topic has not been the subject of choral or music education research literature.

Shared responsibilities. Norman North singers were motivated by the opportunity to share the responsibilities and ownership of the performance process and performance product. Sharing the responsibility of music making, energized them to work harder in each musical endeavor. Thus the possibilities of producing consistent high quality performance were increased. These findings supported Ryan and Deci's (2000) Theory of Self-Determination.

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), competence, autonomy, and relatedness facilitate intrinsic motivation that in turn facilitates quality achievement outcomes. Members of the Norman North Chorale experienced self-determination by (a) assuming responsibility for their production choices and the production product, (b) training and mentoring peers, (c) and being a decision maker in music literature selection. Singers were given plenty of opportunities to experience competence and autonomy as partners in the production process. Singers were made to realize that they belonged (i.e., need for relatedness) to and within the Chorale.

As Chorale members mentored, encouraged, and trained one another, some friendships or dyads developed. As was found in this current investigation, Deci, LaGuardia, Moller, Scheiner, & Ryan (2006) found that when a dyad supported autonomy in one another, this support facilitated performance quality, psychological health, and more autonomous behavior in each member of the dyad. For the Chorale the

dyad consisted of Mr. Gonzalez and singer or singer and singer as each encouraged and mentored the other.

Summary. Mr. Gonzalez's words and behaviors facilitated intrinsic singer motivation. This motivation propelled singers to extraordinary performance achievement. Findings of this current investigation are congruent with findings regarding motivation and achievement of individual instrumental performers and non-music students. To my knowledge choral researchers have not examined the associations, influences, or effects of motivation on superior performance production or vice versa. Given that quality achievement outcomes (i.e., performance) and motivation are related, examination of the relationships between these factors should be conducted in the area of large group choral performance.

Limitations.

Time. Increased time at the research site and more interviews may have revealed more information about the influence of parents and the community on the Norman North Chorale's performance quality. Although my findings regarding the significance of overall auxiliary support upon superior performance production are credible, I believe the aspect of parent and community support on superior performance production needs further examination.

My findings indicated the importance of singers' values and beliefs on performance quality. Traditionally such beliefs and values are the result of parent and community influences. If the Chorales' beliefs and values were a result of parental and community influences, then my findings imply that the upbringing of singers influenced some if not all of their behaviors that made the production of superior performance

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achievable. A lengthier, in-depth investigation would have facilitated more interviews with Chorale members, parents, and community members. Data from these interviews, depending on the interview questions, could have provided more information regarding parental and community influence on performance production.

Increased time in Norman, Oklahoma may have also provided time to visit the middle school feeder programs of the Norman North Choral Program. Observations and interviews at the middle school feeder sites may have helped me understand the feeder programs' role, if any, in the Norman North Chorale's production of superior performance. My understanding of this relationship was limited to interviews of Norman North Chorale directors and the school district's fine arts supervisor.

Limited time on the field hindered me from collecting data regarding some factors that previous choral researchers had examined. These factors were specific use of time (e.g., Arthur, 2002; Caldwell, 1980), feedback ratios (e.g., Murray, 1972), and sequential direct instruction (e.g., Davis, 1998).

Survey participation. My findings indicate that the choral singer was very important to the production of superior performance. A more thorough description of singers could have been achieved had all Norman North Chorale members volunteered to complete the survey. Perhaps had I given singers an opportunity to complete the survey online, this would have facilitated more student participation.

In summary, this current in-depth comprehensive investigation yielded many findings. But more time spent on the field and more participant involvement might have added to our understanding of Norman North Chorale's production of superior performance.

Suggestions for Further Research. Findings from this current investigation suggested many avenues of research. Given the impact that choral performers' beliefs and values played in the production of superior performance, examination of performers' beliefs and values as related to the quality of large ensemble performance is needed. Such an investigation could be achieved through statistical analysis of data collected through a researcher-designed survey. Gathering data from directors of various performance qualities could illuminate differences of beliefs and values among these directors.

Director motivational strategies and how these strategies interacted with singers' values, beliefs, and characteristics were significant to Norman North Chorale's production of superior performance. Motivational strategies and their relationships to the production of superior performance have not been investigated in large group choral performance settings. Given the degree of variation among choral performers and choirs, I recommend several in-depth, case study, qualitative investigations of motivational strategies of directors of choirs of like performance quality. With many replications of this type of study, a meta-analysis of findings may indicate the role motivational strategies have on performers of that particular quality. Once a body of literature is developed regarding one particular quality of performance, motivational strategies of directors of choirs of other levels of performance quality can be examined.

Aesthetic musical pedagogy motivated and greatly impacted the performance quality of Norman North Chorale members. With exception to a study by Morgan (1992), little is known about musical pedagogy strategies in rehearsals of superior performing choirs. In-depth case study or grounded theory research could illuminate the behaviors that produce choirs earning performance privileges at prestigious national venues such as

the ACDA national convention. Eventually the musical pedagogy of a large sample of directors of varying performance quality could be investigated.

Findings from this current investigation, suggested that a deeper investigation of the role of choral singers in production of superior performance is warranted. This could be achieved by replication of this current study and by long-term, onsite examination of choral singers' contributions to the performance production process of choirs of varying levels of performance quality. Researchers could begin by comparing choral participants' traits with those participants in my study.

The new choral performance findings emerging from this current investigation, suggest the value of grounded theory methodology. By using grounded theory research strategies, I was able to learn the when, where, why, who, how, and with what consequences of the Norman North Chorale's production process. The answers to these questions facilitated deep examinations of the Chorale's processes and thus a deep understanding of the Chorale's production of superior performance.

In regards to qualitative research, some questions cannot be answered by qualitative research methodology. I believe survey research would be one way to discover the number of national ACDA choral directors who have assistant or associate directors, strong feeder programs, or strong auxiliary supports (e.g., parent support).

This present study as well as other in-depth examinations of national ACDA choral directors (Jenkins, 2005; Wright, 1996) yielded many findings regarding the production of superior performance. I suggest replication of these investigations. Jenkins (2005) specifically examined the vocal pedagogy of a national ACDA choral director. Wright (1996) examined auxiliary supports of a national ACDA choir. This study

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examined how a national ACDA choir produced superior performance. Many replications of these studies may provide strong evidence of commonalities among choirs or choir directors of national ACDA performance status.

Given the importance of quality performance for audiences and performers, more investigations of the production of performance in light of performance quality is warranted. Replication of this present investigation and descriptive comparisons of choirs of varying performance qualities could illuminate our understanding of the production of superior performance. Many of the research examinations found in chapter two of this document are worthy of replication. Such replications could add to our understanding of superior performance production. Examinations should clearly identify the performance quality under investigation in order to support accurate comparisons with other researchers' findings.

Implications for the Choral Director and the Choral Music Educator. The findings of this case study, grounded theory investigation cannot be generalized. Nevertheless, just as practitioners learn from expert teachers and directors, choral directors and educators of choral directors may learn from the findings of this study. Findings of this current study could act as a list for director self-assessments. Tables 22 through Table 25 display questions and considerations that can be utilized during director self-assessment.

Table 22

Questions and Considerations for Director Self-Assessment: Beliefs and Values

Beliefs and Values

How deeply do you believe in and value success, excellence, hard work, servant leadership, caring, choral performance, and choral music?

Are the beliefs and values of your singers congruent with your beliefs and values and with your motivational strategies?

Table 23

Considerations for Director Self-Assessment: Characteristics

Personal Characteristics	Professional Characteristics
Servant leader	Well-educated
Caring, sensitive, respectful to others	Expert musician, vocalist, teacher, conductor, vocal pedagogue
Diligent, intense, focused, hard working, dedicated	Diligent, intense, focused, hard working, dedicated
High self-efficacy	High self-efficacy
Belief in choral members	Belief in choral members
	Committed to performance excellence
	Thorough understanding of musical devices and styles
	Thorough understanding of how to produce music accurately and expressively

Note: Items are in no particular order.

Table 24

Questions and Considerations for Director Self-Assessment: Motivational Strategies

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Motivational Strategies

How well do you call your choral members' attentions to their successes?

Do you display accolades of your choral members' achievements (e.g., trophies, photos)?

Does your rehearsal feedback regularly and specifically acknowledge singers' small and large accomplishments?

Do your rehearsal words indicate confidence and trust in the choral members?

Do you set challenging, achievable, small and large learning goals (Dweck, 1999)?

Do you inspire singers by your (a) musicianship, (b) passion for teaching, (c) passion for choral performance, (d) passion for music, (e) leadership, and (f) respectful, caring example?

Does the extent of your choir's achievements or the beauty of their choral production motivate them to further success?

To what degree does the music inspire choral members?

Do you have systems in place to develop leadership within your choir?

Do you include singers in musical and non-musical decision-making?

Do you design ways of making singers feel they are important contributors to and members of the choir?

Do you facilitate a safe, positive, family-like environment?

Do you facilitate a cooperative learning and performance environment?

To what degree do you show each choral member respect and appreciation?

Note: Items are in no particular order.

Table 25

Considerations for Director Self-Assessment: Teaching Strategies

Teaching Strategies

Thoroughly study and prepare the music and text.

Clearly set and communicate high behavioral and musical expectations (e.g., expect singers to take responsibility).

Teach and secure singers' vocal, choral, and ethical basics.

Model accurately.

Teach proper diction and pronunciation.

Insist on correct member singing (do not practice mistakes).

Use concrete explanations and examples.

Give personal attention to each choral member's instrument.

Teach difficult music literature in layers.

Ask questions to generate singers' thinking and responsibility.

Utilize the pronouns "we" and "us" instead of "I" and "me" to develop singer responsibility and inclusion.

Exemplify respect and appreciation for choral performers, the composer, the poet, and other professionals.

Take time to explain reproofs, corrections, instruction, and the music when needful.

Include detailed instructions when appropriate.

Be expressive.

Arrange multiple performance opportunities to facilitate multiple practices.

(to be continued)

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Table 25 (continued)

Teaching Strategies

Be aware of your singers' condition (e.g., attitude, focus, health, demeanor).

Vary rehearsal activities, pacing, and the rehearsal schedule to meet the needs of your choir members.

Short, quick directives can be effectual.

Learn to simultaneously teach, model, or focus on more than one aspect of rehearsal/performance behavior.

Include a mixture of passive, enactive, and vicarious learning experiences in the rehearsal.

 Learn and teach count singing or an efficient way to assure rhythmical precision.

When possible teach two sections at a time to wisely utilize valuable time.

Sectionals may be helpful in the learning of the score.

Learn from other successful professionals.

Note: Items are in no particular order.

Findings of this study suggest that the choral director should understand ways of intrinsically motivating singers. Motivational strategies and behaviors were important to the Norman North Chorale's production of superior performance. Therefore directors should consistently act in ways that motivate their singers.

Director self-assessment of musicianship and pedagogy may be necessary for facilitating singers to the production of superior performance. Directors may want to evaluate how musical they are during rehearsals. They may want to evaluate their level of

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expertise in (a) musical ways of teaching the choral music score, (b) score preparation, (c) vocal pedagogy, and (d) the use of singer performance expectations. Directors may want to assess (a) to what extent they are sharing the production process with their singers and (b) what type of condition (e.g., caring) they are creating in the rehearsal.

Findings suggest that directors and singers who desire to produce superior performance should look within. They should evaluate their beliefs, values, and motives and determine how these impact their behaviors for production of quality performance. Directors and singers should be lifetime learners, particularly responding to and valuing the lessons learned from other successful choral directors.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this current examination was to discover how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. Previous researchers investigating performance production in light of performance quality had identified rehearsal factors and director behaviors of choirs of superior performance (e.g., Jenkins, 2005; Morgan, 1992). A synthesis of previous research findings of choral performance in light of performance quality suggested that superior performance was produced by a combination of actions, interactions, relationships, and possibly conditions. By comprehensively examining the performance production process of a choir of extreme superior performance, I purposed to identity the factors contributing to their performance production and how these factors worked together to produce superior performance. Through observation, interview, survey, and material culture, a rich thick description of the production process of this choir was collected. Rigorous grounded theory analyses revealed that a combination of choral performers' values, beliefs, characteristics, actions, and interactions produced

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superior performance. Findings of this current study supported and added to results of previous research. The beliefs and values of singers and director emerged as the most powerful explanation of how the Norman North Chorale produced superior performance. Also powerful forces in the production of superior performance were choral performers' extraordinary characteristics (e.g., expert musicianship, extreme dedication) and the director's motivational strategies. Mr. Gonzalez's musicianship, the musical way he taught, and his expert technical instruction was important and necessary to the production of superior performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Rolsten Interview Prompter

Choir members

Curriculum

Expectations, including behavior modifications

Extra rehearsals

Feeder programs

Fundamentals training

Goals/objectives

Modeling

Motivation

Movement

Musical emphasis: tone, precision, ensemble, intonation, musicianship, articulation,

diction, style, balance, blend

Music faculty

Pacing

Philosophy

Private lessons

Recruitment

Rehearsal organization

Rehearsal planning

Singer formation

Teaching sequence

Time usage

Verbal imagery

Vocal pedagogy

Warm-ups

Support systems:

        School district

        School

        Faculty

        Community

        Parents

Appendix B

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

(1) One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the

opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What

makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

(2) In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

(3) In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or

people that have influenced this choir's success?

(4) In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance

success?

(5) How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success?

(Possible follow-up: "How about in rehearsals?").

(6) Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates the chorale's

performing success?

Choral director only

(7) What techniques have you used that makes this a great performing choir?

(8) How have they facilitated ensemble success?

(9) (Possible follow-up: "What about **rehearsal** techniques?")

(10) (Possible follow-up: "What about **motivational** techniques?")

(11) (Possible follow-up: "What about **pedagogical** techniques?")

(12) What **planning** strategies, if any, have facilitated vocal performance success?

(13) Do you have a particular **curriculum** or particular **curricular timeline** in

place for facilitating performance of national recognition?

(14) Are there any behavioral or performance **expectations** that positively

influence the performance caliber of your choir? (**Director expectations**)

(15) Are there any school, community, district, or parent expectations that

influence performance success?

School and district administration, faculty, parent and <u>choir director only</u>

(16) What are your perceptions of parent support for the Norman North Chorale?

(17) What are your perceptions of school support for the Norman North Chorale?

(18) What are your perceptions of school district support for the Norman North

Chorale?

(19) What are your perceptions of community support for the Norman North

Chorale?

Appendix C

Choir Director: Follow-up Interview Questions

1. How does your educational **philosophy** lend itself to your choir's success?

2. How does the Norman North Choral **Program** function to bring about choral performance success? For example, how many choirs does your program have? Are any of the choirs training choirs for the chorale? How do you work with your assistant?

3. How do your **feeder** schools contribute to Norman North's choral success?

4. Are the **monies** from the school and/or district enough to run the chorale?

5. If no, how do you financially support the chorale?

6. Do you have a parent organization or boosters' organization?

7. How does it function?

8. Describe the typical **student** in your chorale, please.

9. Are members of the chorale encouraged and/or expected to take private voice lessons?

10. Approximately how many members take or have taken private voice lessons?

11. Are students participating in solo/ensemble contest given private and/or group lessons for this event? If yes, how?

12. If you were to give another choir director **advice** on how to achieve the same success you have achieved, what suggestions would you provide?

Appendix D

Director Priorities: Musical Elements
Take Home Questions

Tone quality, intonation, vocal technique, balance, blend, expressivity,
rhythm accuracy, pitch accuracy, dynamic, tone color, diction,
listening, style, ensemble, exhibitory finesse.

1. From the above list, please identify which musical elements you most emphasize in rehearsal? If you feel some elements are strongly related and could be considered one element, please state this.

_____
_____
_____

2. If emphasis on particular musical elements varies per piece or how well students know the piece, briefly explain. _____
_____
_____
_____

3. Your chorale has consistently achieved national performance status. If any of the above musical elements are **more important** to a choir's performance success than others in the same list, please indicate this by placing them in order of importance. Please place the most important element or elements next to the # 1, and so on.

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

Appendix E

Choir Director Demographic Questions

1. How many years have you been at Norman North?

2. What is your job here and for the district?

3. What other positions have you held?

4. For how long have you held these positions?

5. What is your highest degree of education?

6. Does the chorale participate in the OMEA contest/festivals?

7. If yes, how many state superior ratings have your received with the chorale in the last ten years?

8. How regularly do you participate in OMEA contests and/or other competitions?

9. What is your approximate age (e.g., are you in your 20s or 30s)?

10. How many students are in your chorale?

11. How many students are in your choir program?

12. Is there a particular student training/curriculum (K-12) implemented that helps facilitate high school performance success? If yes, what is it? How well does it facilitate performance success?

13. Approximately how many students in the choral program participate in solo/ensemble contest?

13. Approximately how many students in the chorale participate in solo/ensemble contest?

15. Do you ever host clinicians? What is the outcome of this?

Appendix F

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

1. One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

2. In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

3. In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or people that have influenced this choir's success?

4. In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

5. How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success? (Possible follow-up: "How about in rehearsals?").

6. Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates this success?

Students only

7. Let's pretend I am a new Norman North Chorale member. What is expected of me?

Appendix G

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

1. One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

2. In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

3. In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or people that have influenced this choir's success?

4. In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

5. How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success? (Possible follow-up: "How about in rehearsals?").

6. I am really interested in how your chorale has become so successful in performing choral music. Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates this success?

Students only

7. Let's pretend I am a new Norman North Chorale member. What is expected of me?

Student leadership group only

8. As leaders what has your part been in the success of this chorale?

Appendix H

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

1. One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the

    opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What

    makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

2. In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

3. In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or

    people that have influenced this choir's success?

4. In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

5. How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success?

6. Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates this success?

School and district administration, faculty, parent and choir director only

7. What are your perceptions of parent support for the Norman North Chorale?

8. What are your perceptions of school district support for the Norman North

    Chorale?

9. What are your perceptions of community support for the Norman North Chorale?

School demographics

10. According to the Norman School district website, there are ___ schools in the

    district, is this correct?

11. How many middle schools and elementary schools feed into this high school?

12. What is your high school's student population?

13. What is the ethnic makeup of this school?

14. What is the Social Economic Status of families of students at Norman North?

15. How many years have you been at Norman North?

Demographics, <u>school</u> and district <u>administration</u> only

16. How many years have you been in the community?

Appendix I

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

1. One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

2. In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

3. In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or people that have influenced this choir's success?

4. In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

5. How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success?

6. Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates this success?

School and district administration, faculty, parent and choir director only

7. What are your perceptions of parent support for the Norman North Chorale?

8. What are your perceptions of school support for the Norman North Chorale?

9. What are your perceptions of school district support for the Norman North Chorale?

10. What are your perceptions of community support for the Norman North Chorale?

<u>**Music supervisor only**</u>

11. How many years have you been the Supervisor of Music for the Norman school district?

12. How many years have you been in the community?

13. How long have you been familiar with Tony Gonzalez's work?

14. Possible: How does the Norman North Choral Program function to bring about

choral performance success?

Appendix J

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

1. One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the
    opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What
    makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

2. In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

3. In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or
    people that have influenced this choir's success?

4. In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

5. How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success?

6. Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates this success?

School and district administration, faculty, <u>parent,</u> and choir director only

7. What are your perceptions of parent support for the Norman North Chorale?

8. What are your perceptions of school support for the Norman North Chorale?

9. What are your perceptions of school district support for the Norman North
    Chorale?

10. What are your perceptions of community support for the Norman North Chorale?

Appendix K

Standardized Open-ended Interview Questions for All

1. One of your most recent and prestigious accomplishments has been to earn the
    opportunity to sing at the national ACDA convention. Congratulations. What
    makes your chorale a nationally recognized performing ensemble?

2. In your opinion what occurs in this program that causes success?

3. In order of influence, the first being the **most** influential, name five things or
    people that have influenced this choir's success?

4. In what ways have these things or people influenced their performance success?

5. How do you feel you have contributed to the ensemble's performing success?
    (Possible follow-up: "How about in rehearsals?").

6. I am really interested in how your chorale has become so successful in performing
    choral music. Can you think of anything or anyone else that facilitates this
    success?

District music administration, <u>faculty</u>, parent, and choir director only

7. What are your perceptions of parent support for the Norman North Chorale?

8. What are your perceptions of school support for the Norman North Chorale?

9. What are your perceptions of school district support for the Norman North
    Chorale?

10. What are your perceptions of community support for the Norman North Chorale?

<u>Music faculty only</u>

11. How many years have you been at Norman North?

12. What other positions have you held?

13. For how long have you held these positions?

14. What is your highest degree of education?

15. How does your educational philosophy lend itself to the choral performance success of Norman North?

16. Possible: How does the Norman North Choral Program function to bring about choral performance success?

17. How do you work with Mr. Gonzalez?

18. Do the feeder schools of Norman North contribute to the chorale's success? If yes, how?

Appendix L

Examples of Second Round Interview Questions

For Administrator

1. What do you hope members of the Norman North Chorale will gain by participating in the Chorale?

2. Does the school district or community show more appreciation to performance of classical arts than to performance of the entertainment arts?

3. What meaning do you ascribe to high school students' performance of quality, classical music?

For Directors

4. What meaning does music have in your life?

5. What value do you place on students singing quality classical music at a superior level?

6. I'm going to give you a scenario. Your choir has just sung a superb performance of great music literature. They have just come off stage. What are you thinking or doing at this time?

For Singers

7. Music is very important to you. Why?

8. Why did you participate in the Norman North Chorale, it required so much time, energy, and some money?

For Parents

1. What did your adolescent gain from participating in the Norman North Chorale?

2. In your last interview you indicated that the relationship your daughter had with Mr. Gonzalez and other choir members was very important. Can you describe the relationship she had with Mr. Gonzalez and others and how this was important to her?

Appendix M

Things to Observe

1. "Is the class run efficiently?

2. Is there a use of questions to develop music understanding and performance excellence?

3. Is the rehearsal well organized?

4. How does the teacher motivate students?" (Dugle, 1991)

5. "What is innovative about the director's techniques?

6. What are the director's outstanding attributes?" (Dugle, 1991)

7. Does the rehearsal provide comprehensive musical training?

8. What actions or interactions occur to facilitate the performance production process?

9. What actions or interactions are not occurring in the performance production process?

10. What types of interactions (personal and professional) occur in and outside rehearsals?

11. What type of vocal pedagogy is used for this production process?

12. Describe the production process context(s).

13. How does the context of this production setting affect the production process?

14. Rapport: teacher-student; teacher-parent; teacher-faculty

15. What meanings do the producers of performance bring to or take from the production process?

16. What is the essence of the performance production phenomenon?

Appendix N

Nationally Recognized Choir Member Survey
Complete the below and/or circle the appropriate responses.

1. Your chorale has earned the opportunity to sing at a national ACDA convention. Congratulations. This testifies of your fine performance quality. In order of influence, the first being the most influential, name five things or people that have most influenced your choir's performance success? Briefly explain your answers.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. If there is anything or anyone else that has contributed to your chorale's performance success? If yes, who, what and how?

_____

_____

_____

3. If you have not already mentioned your contribution to the success of your chorale, what do you contribute?

_____

_____

_____

4. How many years have you sung in the Norman North Chorale? _____

5. How many years have you sung in the Norman North Choral Program? Include your chorale years, please. _____

6. How many years have you sung in a public or private high school choral program other than Norman North's? _____

7. How many years have you been singing in school choirs (K-12)? _____

8. How many years have you been singing in a church choir (K-12)? _____

9. How many years have you been singing in a community or private choir (K-12)? Do not include church choir experience in this answer. _____

10. If you take or have taken private voice lessons, how many years or months of lessons have you taken? _____

11. If you take or have taken group voice lessons, how many years or months of lessons have you taken? _____

12. Are you presently taking voice lessons? Please circle the appropriate answers.

     No lessons   Private individual lessons   Group lessons

13. Do you receive professional assistance in preparation for vocal solo and/or ensemble festival?
Yes   No

14. If yes, what type of assistance?

_____

15. How many years have you taken private piano lessons? _____

16. How many years have you taken group piano lessons? _____

17. How many years have you taken private lessons on a musical instrument other than voice or piano? _____
List all instruments, years of lessons per instrument, and the number of years you have played each instrument.

Instrument	Years of Lessons	Years of Playing

18. How many years have you taken group lessons on a musical instrument other than voice or piano?
List all instruments, years of lessons per instrument, and the number of years you have played each instrument.

Instrument	Years of Lessons	Years of Playing

19. Grade level _____   **20. Gender**: Male Female
21. Age in years: ____   **22. Average GPA** _____

23. Ethnicity: American Indian or Native Alaskan   Asian or Pacific Islander
Black (not Hispanic origin)   White (not of Hispanic origin)
Hispanic   Other:_____

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathy K. Rolsten earned her bachelor and master of music degree in music education at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. She earned a master of education in administration and supervision from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. She taught general elementary music education for the Oklahoma City School District, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and for Toledo Public Schools in Toledo, Ohio. She directed a high school choral program for the Toledo Public Schools. She has been recognized in Who's Who in American Education, Who's Who of American Women, Who's Who in America, and Who's Who Among America's Teachers.