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The Role of Ensemble Competitions in Choral Music Education

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FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF MUSIC

THE ROLE OF ENSEMBLE COMPETITIONS IN CHORAL MUSIC EDUCATION

By

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To my family and the people who clap for me.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the reasons choral directors take their ensembles to competitions. Choral directors ($N=183$) in ten states were surveyed to determine the reasons they and their students participate in competitions; the importance of competition participation to themselves, their students, administrators, and parents; their preferences for award systems; their competition budget; the influence on their repertoire choices; and their required personnel for competition participation. Additionally, responses were compared by choir type (concert choir and show choir). Results indicated that educators participate in competitions in order to motivate students toward their musical achievement goals, while the educators' perceived their students prefer to attend competitions to attain ratings and recognition. Show choirs were shown to spend substantially more time and money on competition participation and attend twice as many competitions. Implications for choral music educators and areas for future research are addressed.

INTRODUCTION

What is motivation? The answer is elusive, posing an extra challenge to music educators poised to instill it in their students. Identifying the motivational process with specificity is compounded because the humans to whom it applies vary so greatly; no set of circumstances pertains to all or even most because each situation varies by activity, age, personality, and numerous other factors. Beyond these specifics, modern music educators face the general trend of a routine and fading commitment to music as students grow older (Covington, 1983). They are tasked to develop various methods of imparting motivation in musical study. As music educators work to develop activities to engage students having a variety of motivation levels, ensemble competitions have emerged as an appealing option. Given the human fascination with competitive activities, ensemble competitions appear as a reasonable solution. However, research regarding extrinsic motivation and token economies provide a context for concern as to the appropriate role of ensemble competitions in music education.

Competition Overview

In the 1755 *Dictionary of the English Language*, Samuel Johnson defined competition as “the act of endeavoring to gain what another endeavors to gain at the same time; rivalry; contest” (p. 426). Case (2008) asserts that since Johnson’s definition, lexicographers have done little to improve on its definition. Today, according to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), competition is defined in a general sense as the act of trying to win something, such as a prize or higher level of success that someone else is also trying to win. In a sociological sense, Kohn (1992) defines competition as a special arrangement in

which some participants must fail for others to succeed. Competition is often used with specifically quantifiable, objective activities, because a clear-cut winner can be determined; however, competition is also found within subjective activities where a winner is determined by opinions or personal preferences. Case (2008) alleges that forms of competition originated as training exercises for war. He notes that all of the original Olympic events, with the exception of discus, have an obvious connection to useful skills in wartime.

Harvey (1917) described two types of competition as deliberate and involuntary. Deliberate competition describes situation where people strive to do better in some fashion, perhaps by obtaining more power or possessing more wealth. It is the intention to acquire more than others. Involuntary competition involves striving for something that cannot be possessed in common. Kohn (1992) similarly references two types of competition: structural competition and intentional competition. Structural competition is characterized by an external win/lose framework and involves a mutually exclusive goal attainment (i.e., one person's success requires another person's failure). The essence of structural competition is that multiple individuals are trying to attain a goal that cannot be achieved by all of them. Conversely, intentional competition involves an internal framework. It is based an individual's desire to be the best, even when no external parameters have been placed upon him or her. The two types of competition can exist in a number of scenarios, appearing alone or together (Kohn, 1992).

Competition Justifications

Kohn (1992) believed competition is so prevalent in society he described it as the

“common denominator in American life” (p. 1). Furthermore, competition is often justified and embraced by society to substantiate its constant presence. There are many reasons people give to justify competitions, but most can be grouped within four central categories: (1) expresses human nature, (2) increases productivity, (3) builds character, and (4) increases motivation (Kohn, 1992, p. 8).

Contemplating the impact of competition on interpersonal relationships, Kohn (1992) offers the following:

How can we do our best when we are spending our energies trying to make others lose—and fearing that they will make us lose? Can this sort of struggle really be the best way to have a good time? What happens to our self-esteem when it becomes dependent on how much better we do than the next person? Most striking of all is the impact of this arrangement on human relationships: a structural incentive to see other people lose cannot help but drive a wedge between us and invite hostility. (p. 9)

Ruben (1980), however, believes that while competition may be widely despised, anthropologists have yet to identify a society in which it does not exist. Indeed, some social Darwinists consider competition the lifeblood of self-preservation. Furthermore, Duina (2011) argues that within the context of competition, people in society are better able to find their place in the world.

Competition in Education

Competitive activities are commonly employed in American classrooms as a means of encouraging students to try harder and work to their fullest potential. As a natural

consequence, students learn to strive to triumph over each other educationally and further regard their classmates as hindrances to their own success (Kohn, 1992). Of the three classroom goal structures, this approach describes competitive educational goals where students work against others. The other two approaches include working cooperatively (with others) and independently (without regard for each other) (Medway & Cafferty, 2013). However, it is unclear of whether competitive goal structures tend to motivate students to achieve their best (Cameron, 2001) or if this type of competition only motivates the students to achieve the specific goal and not beyond it, which produces less creative work (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999a).

Characteristics of Motivation

The relationship between competition and motivation is complex since the results of a competitive event can have an effect on motivation (Salili & Hoosain, 2007). Educational psychology researcher Martin Maehr has investigated the definition of motivation, theorizing that motivation is essentially indicated by a person's choices, a person's persistence, and the difficulty of the activity (1983). In attempting to define a motivational cycle, Maehr makes several essential points. First, he notes that personal investment is of primary importance in determining an individual's effort (choice, persistence and activity level.) Effort is affected by its own results, including the resulting quality of the performance and any evaluation that might accompany it. Second, personal investment and effort do not directly translate to performance level. Further, factors such as the skill of the performer and the organization of the task also play a motivational role. Third, the performance is typically accompanied by an evaluation or appraisal that often

defines the performance. Finally, the performer's perceptions of the outcome influence decisions regarding their continued involvement with the task.

Motivation in Music Education

Research in the psychology of music competition has revealed two areas of concern for music educators. First, there is a relationship between music competitions and student motivation (Austin, 1988; Bailey, 2006; Schmidt, 2005; Werpy, 1995); second, the concept of attribution theory emerged as a concern for participants in music competitions (Asmus, 1986, Austin & Vispoel, 1992; Chandler, Chiarella, & Auria, 1987). Research into motivation in music students frequently addresses ways in which music educators maintain students' focus on musical goals. Competitions are an example of an external motivator; music educators frequently use them as a tool to sustain interest in and focus on music education aims. Attribution theory addresses the factors to which students attribute their success or failure (Weiner, 1985). Since competitions create a result that can clearly be perceived as success or failure, students frequently make assessments regarding the factors responsible for their performance. These psychological issues play a substantial role in a musician's competitive experience.

Music educators, then, must consider how to influence and guide their students' motivation. Maehr (1983) suggests,

Motivational problems are not essentially problems of motivating people but rather problems of directing behavior. In most cases, it is misleading to suggest that he or she is not motivated; it is more appropriate to suggest that he or she is motivated in

one but not another way. He or she is investing personal resources differently. (p. 6)

Essentially, all students are motivated to do something. However, when students are motivated toward anything other than the teacher's goals, they appear to be unmotivated (Maehr, 1983). That is to say, they seem lack intrinsic motivation, or the ability to maintain motivation internally. When a lack of intrinsic motivation occurs with a student, an educator is expected to refocus the student on the educational goal (Maehr, 1983). In order to accomplish this, an educator uses an external stimulus to redirect the student's attention, drawing their interest toward musical achievement. The student is then extrinsically motivated, or motivated by an external stimulus (Madsen & Madsen, 1974).

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory holds a central function in musicians' assessment of competitive results. According to the theory, people attribute their success and failure to certain factors: locus (internal/external) and stability (stable/unstable) (Weiner, 1985). The combination of factors to which they attribute their success/failure determines whether they are likely to try the activity again in the future. These dimensions combine to create four attributes: internal/stable, internal/unstable, external/stable, and external unstable (see figure 1). This theory is essential in understanding musicians' rationalization of their own competitive performances.

Table 1

Model of Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1985).

		STABILITY	
		Stable	Unstable
CONTROL	Internal	Internal/stable <i>Ability</i>	Internal/unstable <i>Effort</i>
	External	External/stable <i>Task difficulty</i>	External/unstable <i>Luck</i>

Intrinsic Motivation

In music, intrinsic motivation involves the ability of a musician to internally remain focused on musical goals and achievement (Madsen & Madsen, 1974; Raynor, 1983). In contribution to a symposium of musical motivation and creativity, Raynor (1983) discusses the factors and importance of intrinsic motivation in music:

Intrinsic motivation has two components, one stemming from the particular kind of activity or task and one stemming from the perceived difficulty of the task accomplishment when standards of good performance are inherent in the activity. Intrinsic motivation seems particularly potent in the field of music because of both the apparently inherent interests aroused by the musical sound, and the fact that

reproduction of a musical manuscript involves the standard of playing the notes correctly. (p. 18)

Musicians develop intrinsic motivation at different points in their musical experience. Raynor (1983) describes this point of arrival in a musical experience as a psychological career. At that time, their relationship with music is strong enough to maintain an internal focus. Until that point of development is reached (if ever), musicians may respond to extrinsic motivation, which involves an array of external, tangible stimuli.

Extrinsic Motivation and Token Economies

A token economy is a situation where tangible rewards are given to a learner when a task is accomplished (Madsen & Madsen, 1974). Token economies are an attractive option to maintain or refocus students' attention on educational goals. While the educator recognizes the value of the educational goal, the student may be more motivated by the token itself. Although the token is used to refocus a student's attention, it risks becoming the focus of the student's attention, that is, they have the expectation that the behavior would lead to the token (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001). Regelski, Whitney, Meadows, and Baker (1966) indicate such concern with music education and maintain that tokens, such as competitions, cause participating musicians to lose focus of the broader principles of performance. Rather than acquiring a love for music, the student instead develops a love for the competition result. When the tokens cease, so might the activity with which it is associated.

These findings can be applied to the music education classroom, particularly to the use of ensemble competitions as a means to modify motivation. Applied specifically to the

high school choral classroom, educators should carefully consider competition participation as a form of motivation to develop technical skills and maintain musical interest. When such a great deal of time is invested preparing for and participating in competitions, the danger exists that students may develop the habit of making music in order to participate in and do well in the competition setting. Consequently, Raynor (1983) notes, "poor performance in competitions and low perceived ability are more likely to produce stronger dislike of the subject and more determined attempt to avoid it in older students" (p. 3). Furthermore, there is the consideration of what standard should be employed when participating in music competitions. The nature of a competition is to apply a certain level of accomplishment to all participants, but all musicians do not progress evenly. Maehr (1983) contemplates the standard by which musical competitors should be measured:

Elite performers should not establish the norm. What works for the elite may not work for all. There is a tendency in music education to place elites and regulars on the same track, designing the system in such a way that most will inevitably fall by the wayside with only the cream of the crop surviving. Competitions...seem to revolve around that end. ...This is all fine for the elite. The problem comes for the merely interested and merely good. ...In music, as in any other domain, if the definition of success or the goal of performance is primarily on of determining who is the best among competitors, most are doomed to failure and therefor also doomed to be turned off by the task. One does not create enduring motivational patterns by showing people that they are incompetent. Insofar as an activity is

structures to do that, it will be a motivational failure for the large majority of the participants. (p. 10)

While the appropriate use of competitions in choral music education remains undetermined, the reality is that competitions are frequently used in the context of choral education.

Choral Ensemble Competitions

The Origins of Choral Competitions

Choral competitions have been documented since the mid-nineteenth century, although some types of other music competitions predate these (Latham & Spencer, n.d.). The first documented choral competition was a glee-singing competition held in Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester, England in 1855. Offering prizes for best performance of choral harmony, Mr. Jennison, director of the gardens and organizer of the event, offered monetary awards of ten pounds, five pounds, and two pounds to the top three winners, respectively (Howell, 1855). Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century, records document discussion regarding music competitions in the United Kingdom, including repertoire requirements (Association of Music Contest Festivals, 1905), organization of competition by geographic locations (McNaught, 1907), and early concerns of whether such competitions were appropriate to choral music (The Musical Competition Festival Movement, 1904). Concerns noted regarding competition-festivals included the overlap with entertainment pursuits, such as sports and outdoor activities, and inclusion of uninteresting adjudicators (Grace, 1930). Despite these issues, interest in competition-festivals continued; however, new concerns arose about structure. More general concerns

regarded the overall strengths and weaknesses of the competition festivals (Maddy, 1936). These included desired features such as motivation in choral directors and incentive for thorough preparation, while features less desirable included bitterness between ensembles, unfairness, and emphasis on winning (Maddy, 1936). Concerns with other specific aspects, such as sight-singing components, were also documented (Grace, 1932).

Evolution of Choral Ensemble Competitions

Within the United States, choral competitions are documented as early as the 1790s; the First Parish Singers of Dochester, Massachusetts challenged the Stoughton Musical Society (Berry, 1962; Latham & Spencer, n.d.). However, several sources document the beginning of the school music contest movement with the Band Tournament of 1923 (Burdett, 1985; Holz, 1962; McLain, 2011; Moore, 1972). The tournament, sponsored by instrument manufacturers to bolster failing business, lacked any rules or structure to support its success (Burdett, 1985). Documentation of early competitive musical events indicated more popularity for competitive band events. In 1924, only five states in the U.S. hosted school band contests; by 1931, all but five states were hosting such events (Latham and Spencer, n.d.; Reynolds, 1960). While the choral realm does not document a similar volume of earlier competitive events, organized choral contest-festivals occurred in U.S. schools as early as 1920 (Van Dyke More, 1941). Choral groups were added to Pennsylvania's state music contests in 1930, while Ohio added choral ensembles to its competition line up in 1933 (Burdett, 1985). During the 1930's, Kentucky, Colorado, and Iowa also documented including choral ensembles in competitive events (Burdett, 1985).

Apprehension regarding the competition-festival emerged early on, spurring contest organizers to make a number of modifications. One of the most notable changes in contest format was the omission of rankings in favor of ratings (Klausman, 1966). Other changes included the inclusion of sight-reading to ensure that music educators were not only preparing students for the music performances but also teaching them other music fundamentals. In the judging format, a four-judge format replaced a one-judge format. Additionally, separate judges were employed for concert performance and sight-reading (Burdett, 1985).

North Carolina choral music educators introduced an overhaul of their competition-festival in the early 1940s. Their model at that time included a combination of ensemble competition and honor choir that included schools with larger choral programs. Participants in their competition-festival grew exponentially (from 249 to over 8,000), causing organizers to reflect on the structure and benefit of the experience. Music educators in North Carolina restructured and expanded the event, which included providing the experience to smaller schools (Van Dyke More, 1941). The New York State School Music Association also instituted contest reform, establishing the New York Individual-School Festival Plan in 1943 (Burdett, 1985). The structural changes were influenced by pressure to reduce costs. Rather than having ensembles travel to a festival, adjudicators were selected, trained, and then sent out to the schools to judge festivals at specific schools, which minimized cost.

The Goals of Music Education and the National Standards

Presently, the goals of American music education are specific, rigorous, and

comprehensive (Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2011). Having been in place since 1994, the National Standards for Music Education are as follows:

- (1) Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
- (2) Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
- (3) Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
- (4) Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
- (5) Reading and notating music.
- (6) Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
- (7) Evaluating music and music performances.
- (8) Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
- (9) Understanding music in relation to history and culture. (NAfME, 2014)

These standards include not only behaviors in singing and playing instruments but also areas of composition, analysis, evaluation, and interdisciplinary and historical/cultural contexts. While these standards are currently under revision (NAfME, 2014), it is interesting to note that these musical goals, inspired by a major educational trend and amidst vast revision, make no mention of ensemble competitions, an activity that is largely present in K-12 music experiences nationwide.

Ensemble Competitions in Music Education Textbooks

There are numerous textbooks detailing music education in an effort to prepare pre-service educators for achieving the goals of music education. Ensemble competitions, however, are conspicuously absent from many major textbooks, either as a goal of music

education or as a means by which to achieve musical goals (Garretson, 1993; Holt & Jordan, 2008; Michelson, 1994; Swiggum, 1998). These textbooks, written both before and after the identification of the National Standards for Music Education, make no mention of ensemble competitions as a goal of music education. Other similar resources (Collins, 1999; Hoffer, 1991; Phillips, 2004) make a brief mention of competitions, devoting five or fewer pages in extensive texts of 200 or more pages. *Comprehensive Choral Music Education* (Hylton, 1995) is the only textbook that discusses the role of music ensemble competitions in the curriculum in more extensive detail. In a chapter advising pre-service teachers on special events, Hylton provides arguments both for and against competition before offering advice on competing effectively. Among the arguments for competition, Hylton notes that students enjoy competitions, that competitions are motivation for both director and student, and that competitions are educational for the director. Conversely, he also argues that competitions produce both winners and losers and that ratings do not necessarily reflect the improvements that a particular choral program has achieved. For those that choose to compete, Hylton advises educators to select repertoire that is comfortable for singers and further highlights singers' strengths. Neither by the National Standards for Music Education nor the recognized textbooks in choral music education offers much guidance for music educators regarding the appropriate role of choral ensemble competitions.

Attitudes Regarding Music Ensemble Competitions

Since the inception of music competitions, educators have continued to reflect on the competitive effects upon music education. Ivey (1964) refers to competition as a period of hysteria, elaborating upon the effects of the season in this way:

It is that state of nerves, anticipation, cheers, tears, heartbreak, and ecstasy which borders on insanity and to which we subject ourselves—students, teachers, administrators, parents, and judges—toward the end of every school year. (p. 43)

Several others have expressed concern regarding the effects of ensemble competitions upon music education. Miller (1994) speculates that forcing students to excel in competition requires them to demonstrate skill beyond their level of advancement, and in doing so forces them to ignore or leave behind certain musical skills appropriate to their current level of study. He expressed further concern that creativity and individualism are lost because of their incongruence with competition; specifically, that the nature of creativity is to devise new ideas that may conflict with standardization. He asserts that competition promotes conformity since, in order to work, each competitor must be measured by the same standard.

The intent of competitions is to produce positive results; however, the unintended and sometimes negative results have elicited concerns from many music educators. Asserting what he characterizes as the severe inappropriateness of using music competitions for motivational purposes, John Nicholls (1983) criticizes competitive music making. While art often reflects life, Miller (1994) asserts that art becomes a casualty when subjected to our society's obsession for competing, decaying the spirit of art and creativity.

At the 1963 Yale seminar, leaders in music education felt that the competitive nature of music competitions were causing students to miss out on certain aspects of their musical education (Walker, 1989). Educators agree that it is important to employ fair practices in ensemble competitions, but identifying such practices is controversial (Barry, 2009). While not an exhaustive list, some of the most common concerns to be published are the fairness of such competitions, the educational soundness of the competition experience, the disparities in attitudes between educators themselves, as well as music parents, school administrators, and music students.

Fairness: Scoring System

The fairness of ensemble competitions is a considerable concern for educators; an unfair competition will neither motivate nor retain music students. Educators and adjudicators have scrutinized the ratings system (see Table 2) frequently used in music ensemble competitions (Ivey, 1964). As Ivey explains:

Although the ratings sheets provide for five grades ranging from Superior (I) to Poor (V), there is frequently an implicit (and often even an explicit) understanding that unless a performance is downright catastrophic the rating should not go below III. The reasoning behind this practice is that the student needs to be encouraged rather than discouraged in his musical efforts. More insidious and hardly less dangerous is the feeling that lower ratings, however well deserved, will reflect upon and publicly embarrass the teacher. The judge is therefore faced with lumping all the acceptable performances together under Superior, all the mediocre

performances work under Excellent, and all the bad efforts under Good. (1964, p. 43)

In an effort to avoid embarrassment for directors and students, the system is frequently misused. The bottom two ratings (IV and V) are rarely used out of concern that such low ratings would cause public discomfort. Therefore, the scores are inflated to avoid the use of these ratings, affecting the fairness of the event (Ivey, 1964). Miller (1994) contends that whether music contests, competitive or not, should not use rating systems at all; he asserts that students and teachers are so fixated on the rating, they are therefore unable to analyze comments and advice from judges. Burrack (2002) agrees that students recognize the relationship between assessment and their musical progress, which leads to a more profound understanding of their musical experience.

Table 2
A General Music Competition/Festival Ratings System

Rating	Assessment
I	Superior
II	Excellent
III	Good
IV	Fair
V	Poor

Note: Ratings of this type are used generally throughout the United States. Examples include AL (omits poor rating), IA, (uses full range), IL (omits excellent rating), OH (uses full range), VA (uses full range), and WI (uses full range).

Fairness: Adjudicators

Aside from the scoring techniques, the adjudicators that assign these values have also caused concern about the fairness of music ensemble competitions. This is a difficult task for adjudicators, as clarified by Barry (2009):

Performance evaluation in the arts presents a conundrum. On one hand, artistic performance is inherently subjective—a matter of individual taste. On the other hand, demonstrated mastery of certain technical standards is expected of students in the arts. (p. 246)

Because music, like other fine arts, has both objective and subjective components, certain aspects are difficult to quantify, often causing disparity between adjudicators. The elements of fair evaluation include validity (measures what it says it will measure) and reliability (evaluation is consistent) that should be considered. The subjective nature of some aspects of music can make validity and reliability a challenge.

Educational Soundness

Another issue regarding music ensemble competitions is the educational soundness that is often ascribed to them. Forbes (1994) indicates that educational soundness is often inherently attributed to ensemble competitions when they are sponsored by educational organizations. Miller (1994) notes that while the 10 to 20 minutes of time a judge often has with a performing ensemble is not enough to provide a knowledgeable interpretation on the instructional capacity of a music program, the program's merit is often based on the scores received. Miller further describes the lasting effects and implications of such commentary:

Even though the idea is to compete against a 'standard' rather than with each other, that standard remains undefined and in its place is usually found a strategy whereby a certain number of ensembles—no matter how good or bad—receive I's (enough to spread around the good feelings without making it look too easy), and anyone who gets less than a III has no business being there. These ratings create a tangible pecking order that separates the best from the rest. More to the point, directors from all of these schools can expect the results to be reflected in job security. (1994, p. 30)

Types of Competition

MPA/Competition Festivals

Evolving from the varied educational goals of each educator and ensemble, choral competitions currently occur in several different variations. Such competitions occur in a wide variety of formats, but the majority of them conclude by awarding either a rating or a ranking, frequently in conjunction with certificates, trophies, medals, or prizes. The most common of these types is the competition-festival, where choral ensembles performed for each other and received constructive feedback from an adjudicator (Babcock, 2014). The adjudicators provide written and recorded comments for the educational benefit of the choir and director (Powell, 2013). Finally, the choir is assigned an overall rating, much like a grade given on schoolwork, to assess the quality of their performance (see Table 1). Ratings occur in five levels and are often assigned as an overall rating by averaging those given by each adjudicator (Babcock, 2014). The attractiveness of this competition arrangement is that each choir is given their own rating and not ranked against each other.

The opportunity for success is spread more broadly throughout the body of participating choirs.

Regional/National Competitions

Regional and national choral competitions build on the model listed above. Companies exist that organize such competition opportunities and also provide travel opportunities (Patterson, 2013d). These competitions differ from the competition-festival in two main aspects. First, they attract choral ensembles from a broader geographic area (often from all over the United States); second, they employ the use of a ranking system to determine which choir is the best (Patterson, 2013c). The award system may employ many levels of awards. Some companies continue to offer ratings or variations thereof (such as gold, silver, or bronze ratings instead of superior, excellent, good, etc.) in conjunction with final rankings (Worldstrides, 2014). Additionally, competing choirs are frequently separated into categories by school size for the purpose of fairness, since larger schools are assumed to have more substantial resources than their smaller counterparts (Patterson 2013a, 2013b). This also provides the opportunity for more awards, designating rankings within each category. A grand champion is another award option frequently used, awarded to the choral ensemble with the highest score, regardless of category.

Genre Specific Competitions in Show Choir

The third type of competition is genre-specific competitions. Although they exist for several different types of choral genres (vocal jazz, concert choir, rockapella/pop-a cappella, etc.), the focus of this study includes show choir competitions. Under the umbrella of vocal music, show choir exists as a component of the choral genre.

Essentially, a show choir is one that integrates choreographed movement with choral singing. The show choir genre is relatively new in American choral music education.

Sources detailing the short history of this style of choral music are rare, but show choir choreographer Mike Weaver has documented show choir's history and outlined the art forms from which it seems to derive (Weaver & Hart, 2011). Fred Waring is identified as one of show choir's earliest influences. In his experience coaching the choral sound for radio, he heavily emphasized the delivery of text. In order for radio listeners to receive lyrics clearly, Waring's singers were tasked not only to have a group of people communicate text clearly, but also struggled against the limitations of sound technology of the time, specifically microphones (Waring, 2007). In order to achieve this clarity, he (along with Robert Shaw) developed a system of tone syllables to unify and clarify choral diction over the radio airwaves. These tone syllables became the foundation of his choral style. As the needs of advertising grew and technology changed, Fred Waring's singers found their way into American homes through a new medium: television. Waring embraced the challenge of presenting a visual product for television as entirely as he had the aural product for radio (Alder, 2012). As his singers began incorporating costumes and choreography, his influence on show choir became more apparent. Swing choirs emerged, integrating many characteristics of Waring's style (Weaver & Hart, 2011; Alder, 2012). Over time, the production value of swing choirs became more complex, giving way to the modern style of today's show choirs (Alder, 2012). In its short history, show choir has already divided the opinions of choral directors as to its legitimate place in choral music education.

The popularity of show choir is not distributed evenly across the United States; it is most popular in the Midwest but also present in a cluster of Southern states and pockets on the West Coast (Weaver & Hart, 2011). While show choirs perform an array of musical genres, their repertoire frequently draws from more popular styles, such as pop, rock, and Broadway (Burlison, 2012). The personnel associated with a show choir is vast, including a core of singer/dancers (generally 30 to 50), a live show band, and the choir's own stage crew (Alder, 2012). In addition to the choral director, a show choir staff also frequently includes a choreographer, show designer, and music arranger (Alder, 2012). Strongly influenced by entertainment value, show choirs not only employ choreography, but also frequently use costume changes, sets, and various props (Alder, 2012). These facets are combined in the creation of a competition show.

The creation of a show, much like a marching band, is frequently intended for presentation at a genre specific competition. (While it is exceptionally common, not all show choirs are inherently competitive.) Competition shows are typically 15 to 20 minutes in length and are constructed around a specific theme or the individual songs may be thematically unrelated (Weaver & Hart, 2011). Often comprised of five to six songs, competition shows include special attention to the first and final songs of the show, referred to as the "opener" and "closer," which look to engage the audience immediately and then leave a lasting impression (Weaver & Hart, 2011). The numbers comprising the middle of the show include a variety of songs and styles. These may include novelty numbers, which incorporate a comedic element or a specific prop in the choreography (Weaver & Hart, 2011). Rather than performing a song in its entirety, a show choir may

also make use of a “mash-up,” a method that splices two songs together, often in a creative fashion (Weaver & Hart, 2011). Nearly every competition show includes a ballad, where the choir demonstrates solely their singing ability (Weaver & Hart, 2011). While ballads may include changes in standing arrangement for musical emphasis, they rarely include choreography (Weaver & Hart, 2011). All of these creative elements combine to produce a show intended to impress on the competition circuit.

Show Choir Competitions

The competition season provides a show choir multiple occasions to present their show (Sundry, 2013a; Alder, 2012). Choirs have the opportunity not only to view the competition shows of other show choirs but also to receive critiques from judges whose expertise encompasses the elements of show choir: choral music, dance, instrumental music, show design, and music arranging (Alder, 2012). While there are ample number of local show choir competitions, the popularity of show choir has led to the creation of national show choir competition companies, such as Showstoppers and FAME, which draw show choirs from around the country and often in numerous locations per season (Weaver & Hart, 2011; Alder, 2012). These companies provide show choirs with a competition experience tailored to this specific type of choir.

The type of competition within national companies is hallmarked by its extensive award structure (Sundry, 2014). While awards vary by competition, there are those that occur frequently. Typical award types include ratings, rankings, participation awards, caption awards, and showmanship awards. Caption awards are presented to the choir who scored highest in that particular “caption” on the score sheet (Weaver & Hart, 2011).

These awards frequently include best vocals, best choreography, best show design, best show band, and best soloist. In Virginia, a number of other awards, presented at the competition host discretion, have been included at recent competitions, such as best-dressed director or show band, best stage crew, best costumes, people's choice/audience choice, and outstanding sportsmanship (Finely, 2014; Shapiro, 2014). In some geographical areas, show choir competitions host a day round and a night round or finals (Sundry, 2013). During the day round, all choirs have an opportunity to compete, separated into divisions by gender and size/experience. At the conclusion of the day round, ratings and ranking are awarded in each division. The top choirs overall (regardless of division) move on to the night round/finals, where they compete a second time. At the conclusion, the judges designate the grand champion, as well as runners-up (Weaver & Hart, 2011).

Conclusion

While the competition experience is often a very exciting and emotional one, the unfortunate aspect is that it creates very few winners (McLain, 2011). In addition to the concerns that competitive activities may undermine intrinsic motivation, there is also the risk that doing poorly at a competition may develop negative feelings about music within the singer. When the foremost goal of music education is to create a lifelong association with music, whether as a performer, creator, or listener, finding the appropriate role for competitions in music education is one that has great implications.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the opinions and perceptions of educators who participated in competitions with their choral ensembles during the 2012-2013 school year. Specifically, the researcher's interest was focused on high school choral educators who took concert choirs or show choirs to competitions. The researcher sought to discover the reasons for which choral music educators take their ensembles to competitions. Additionally, the researcher was interested in the preferences for award structures as well as various aspects of competition participation, including the rehearsal time, personnel, budget, and other resources required for competition participation. Educators were further asked about their perceptions of their students' preferences regarding reasons for attending competitions and award structures

Research Questions

The specific research questions for this study include:

- (1) How many competitions did choral educators attend during the 2012-2013 school year?
- (2) Are there differences in the number of competitions attended based on choir type?
- (3) What was the budget for competition participation during the 2012-2013 school year?
- (4) Are there differences in budget based on choir type?
- (5) What personnel are required for competition participation?

- (6) How much of the allotted rehearsal time with an ensemble is spent preparing for competitions?
- (7) Are there differences in rehearsal time spent preparing for competitions based on choir type?
- (8) How much influence does competition participation have on repertoire selection?
- (9) Are there differences in influence between choir types?
- (10) What are the reasons high school choral educators take their ensembles to competitions?
- (11) In the choral educator's perception, what are the reasons choral students prefer to attend competitions?
- (12) Do educators and students share similar motivations for competition participation, in the educator's perception?
- (13) What is the importance of competition award structure to choral music educators?
- (14) In the choral educator's perception, what is the importance of competition award structure to students?
- (15) Do educators and students share similar opinions for the importance of competition award structures, in the educator's perception?
- (16) In the educator's perception, how important is competition participation to educators, students, administrators, and parents?

(17) Are there differences in competition participation importance between choir types?

Operational Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined *a priori*:

Concert choir: A group of singers who performs classical-style music without any added movement or choreography. Concert choir repertoire may include works from all periods of Western music history (Farmer, 2009). For the purposes of this study, jazz choir, show choir, and rockapella/pop-a cappella groups are excluded from this category.

Show choir: “Choral ensemble that integrates choreographed movement with singing. The show choir repertoire draws on popular styles, ranging from pop to Broadway. Primarily found in US high schools and middle schools, show choirs are essentially an outgrowth of the entertainment industry, integrated into school choral music programs” (Burlison, 2012).

Competition-festival: A music competition where ensemble perform pre-prepared selections for a panel of adjudicators. An ensemble sight-reading performance may be included as part of the assessment. Adjudicators provide written and/or recorded comments for the ensemble and director. In some cases, an adjudicator may hold a live clinic with the ensemble at the time of their performance. At the conclusion of the performance, adjudicators assign a rating to the ensemble. Competition-festivals often offer the opportunity to receive comments only and no rating.

Regional/national competition: A competition that is part of a travel experience, attracting music ensembles from a regional or national area. These competitions frequently have a more complex award structure, assigning ratings and rankings to participating ensembles.

Show choir competition: A type of specific competition tailored to the genre of show choir. While the actual format varies, it is a competition specifically designed to host show choirs. Common features include a stage set up conducive to show choirs (for example--with platform risers, sound equipment, proper space for a live ensemble), judging panel with a variety of show choir expertise (for example--choral and instrumental music, dance, show design and arranging), and an expanded awards structure.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Competition is a strategy that has been used to encourage students to maintain focus on their educational goals. Educationalists in many subjects, including music, have made use of competitive classroom structures or activities as a means of motivation. Research has explored the educational benefits and detriments of competitive versus cooperative and individualistic learning structures (Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, and Nelson, 1981) and also the function of competitive tasks as a form of a token economy (Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1994; Hennessey, 1985). In the subject area of music, a number of considerations regarding competitions have been examined, including how competition functions as a motivational tool (Austin, 1988; Schmidt, 2005), the relationship of competition and attribution theory (Asmus, 1986; Chandler, Chiarella, & Auria, 1987), and the influence extra-musical factors on the fairness of competitive events (Bergee & Platt, 2003; Bergee & Westfall, 2005).

Competition in Education

Learning Structures

In educational studies, research is frequently focused upon the three types of learning structures: competitive, cooperative, and individualistic. Studies employ numerous designs, seeking to establish which of these structures is the most effective for learners. The most inclusive study regarding these learning structures in an educational setting is a meta-analysis performed by Johnson, Maruyama, Johnson, and Nelson (1981). The researchers reviewed 122 studies regarding cooperative, competitive, and individualistic goal structures published between 1924 and 1980. Their analysis revealed

that 65 of the studies found cooperative goal structures promoted higher achievement compared to competitive goal structures, while eight of the studies illustrated the reverse. In 36 of the studies, no statistically significant difference emerged between compared goal structures. These findings were consistent across all subject areas and all age groups. This analysis established that, within the scope of the research examined, cooperative learning environments were most frequently of highest academic benefit (Johnson et al., 1981).

Several studies have examined competitive structures in classroom tasks. For example, in an experiment examining cooperative and competitive goal structures in a collegiate setting (Deutsch, 1949), psychology students ($N=50$) were first paired and then divided into two groups to complete a combination of puzzle problems and human relations problems over a five-week period. Although all participants were assigned the same tasks, half were instructed to work competitively while the other half were instructed to work cooperatively. Deutsch concluded that greater productivity occurred in cooperative pairs than in competitive pairs. Clifford (1972) conducted a study examining the effects of competitive learning structure. In order to learn vocabulary words, fifth-grade students ($N=66$) engaged in a series of competitive games over a ten-day period. Expecting that the competitive games would increase achievement, the researcher discovered no noticeable improvement in posttest performance on quizzes or retention of the words. Further, interest was sparked only among winners.

Motivation and Token Economies

Researchers have examined motivation and token economies/extrinsic motivators in education at length, finding many conflicting results. Examining social, environmental,

and developmental issues in creativity, Hennessey (1995) reviewed research supporting the theory that extrinsic motivators are harmful in the case of creative tasks where there is more than one possible answer and that intrinsic motivation was conducive to creativity. She documents the work of social psychologist Teresa Amabile, who asserted there was a direct relationship between types of motivation (intrinsic/extrinsic) and levels of creativity exhibited in a task. Amabile's body of research indicates that where extrinsic motivators were absent, levels of creativity were more advanced. In addition to Hennessey's discussion of the negative effects of rewards on intrinsic motivation, she also references a body of research which suggests the negative effects are associated not only with tangible rewards but also with intangible rewards, such as the learner's expectation of evaluation. Her review of literature also suggested these findings were true across the human life span and were not restricted to school age learners.

There is extensive research on the benefits and detriments of token economies, particularly in education (Cameron, 2001; Cameron & Pierce, 1994, 1996; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999a, 1999b; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001; Deci, Ryan & Koestner, 2001; Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996; Eisenberger, Pierce, & Cameron, 1999). Specifically, two research teams have performed various meta-analyses of existing research and found conflicting results. Cameron, Pierce, and Eisenberger (working in various teams) have consistently found that extrinsic rewards do not decrease intrinsic motivation. Their first study (Cameron & Pierce, 1994) examined 96 experimental studies, concluding the only negative effect emerged in studies where the subject expected a tangible reward for completing a task. This work was repeatedly defended (Cameron & Pierce, 1996;

Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996) against criticisms of research design by Deci, Koestner, and Ryan. In their own meta-analysis, Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999) examined 128 studies for the effects of extrinsic awards on intrinsic motivation. The studies were examined in three categories of research tasks: engagement contingent, completion contingent, and performance contingent. Results revealed that all award types significantly undermined intrinsic motivation. Additionally, tangible rewards were more detrimental to intrinsic motivation in younger test subjects. Each research team has insisted that the other's methodology is flawed, producing incorrect results (Cameron, 2001; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999).

While many studies assert that competition has a negative effect on achievement, other studies illustrate the opposite. Reeve, Olson, and Cole (1983) conducted a study examining intrinsic motivation. Participants ($N=29$) competed in puzzle solving contests; their intrinsic motivation was subsequently measured by the time they continued to play with the puzzle following the contest. Results indicated that intrinsic motivation was increased after a competitive task and that winning facilitated competitive performance. Another experimental study indicated the positive effects of extrinsic rewards (Arnold, 1976). On a volunteer basis, undergraduate participants ($N=48$) were recruited to play a complex computer game; upon completion, some subjects were given a monetary reward. Researchers gathered data regarding rate of volunteering to return, actual return, feelings of competence, satisfaction, enjoyment, and task performance. Results indicated that the extrinsic reward either did not affect or enhance intrinsic motivation.

Competition in Music

Motivation

Because musicians disagree on its appropriate role, competition in music education has driven a great deal of research. Much of this research has focused on band programs in particular and influences on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. For example, Austin (1988) examined the effects of music contest formats on music achievement, self-concept, achievement motivation, performance achievement, and attitude in 44 fifth- and sixth-grade band students. Participants were assigned to one of two experimental groups: those who received written comments and ratings and those who received written comments only. With all receiving feedback but only half receiving a rating, 76% of the participants indicated a preference to be rated in the future. Both groups made significant gains in self-concept but only those receiving ratings showed significant increases in musical achievement based on pre- and posttest measure using the Music Achievement Test (MAT).

Schmidt (2005) examined motivation orientations in relation to academic achievement as well as the relationship among achievement motivation orientations in conjunction with teacher ratings of student performance and effort, all within the context of instrumental music. Participants ($N=300$) consisted of seventh- to twelfth-grade band students who provided information regarding motivational orientations (including intrinsic and extrinsic), self-concept, and commitment to band, as well as a number of demographic factors (grade level, gender, instrument, practice habits, and private lesson experience). Correlations were established between teacher ratings of performance and

self-concept and between ratings of effort and intrinsic motivation. Practice time was most strongly correlated with intrinsic motivation.

In a similar study comparing motivational orientations, Bailey (2006) examined motivation and self-regulated learning behaviors in two groups of high school band students ($N=29$), those adopting a mastery goal orientation and those adopting a performance-based orientation. The Motivational Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) and a posttest designed by the researcher were used to collect data from participants. Students focused on mastery of goals performed significantly better on posttest measures than those focused on performance goals.

Werpy (1995) identified specific components of the high school band program that were most conducive to motivation to continue participation in music study. Using the Band Motivation Inventory (BMI) and the Motivation for Particular Activity Scale (MPAS), the researcher obtained responses from 619 high school band students from Montana. Statistical analysis revealed that the aesthetic experience of making music was most strongly linked to motivation. Extra-musical factors such as teacher reinforcement, making the student feel competent, and positively affecting self-concept were also strongly related to motivation.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory is a particular area of interest in the study of competition in music education since students' attributions of success or failure in a competitive situation are likely to influence their continued involvement in music. Using elementary and secondary band students (grades four through twelve), Asmus (1986) surveyed participants

(N=589) regarding the reasons to which they attributed success and failure in their general, choral, and instrumental music classes. Participants attributed a greater number of stable reasons (task difficulty and/or ability) to success in music as well as a greater number of external, unstable (luck) reasons to failure.

Regarding the success and failure attributions of band students (N=234), Chandler, Chiarella, and Auria (1987) surveyed students about chair placement challenges. Students were asked to indicate whether they had ever challenged a chair position, how frequently they challenged, how they felt regarding their chair placement, what they expected their performance level to be in three months time, and the degree of current success and satisfaction with their current ability. Students who indicated satisfaction with their current ability level attributed their success to effort, natural musical ability, and technical knowledge of the instrument, while failure and dissatisfaction with ability were correlated with external attributions (task difficulty and luck). Further, those who were satisfied with their ability were more likely to challenge chair placements. In a study examining similar factors, Dick (2006) examined the relationship between instrumental music performance and attributions of success and failure. Band students in ninth through twelfth grade (N=149) were divided into two groups based on their teacher's rankings, designating them in the highest or lowest achieving 10% of the class. Participants rated attributions, including ability, luck, task difficulty, and effort, as they pertained to their band experience. Significant differences emerged between high and low achieving students in their assessments of talent, luck, and task difficulty. Both groups ranked ability, luck, and effort as having the greatest influence in music success. Finally, Austin and Vispoel (1992)

examined failure attribution feedback (ability, effort, strategy) and classroom goal structure (cooperative, competitive, individualistic) on motivation and decision-making. To provide these assessments, participants completed a 35-item questionnaire, responding to a story of a fictitious, failing band student. The majority of participants believed that “Bill” could improve his performance with attention to effort expenditure and selecting more effective practice strategies.

Fairness of Ensemble Competitions

Adjudication Reliability

Since the perception of impropriety undermines the educational value of competitions, fairness in such musical events is imperative. Adjudication reliability is an important aspect in the perception of fairness. The available research suggests that issues concerning reliability exist in a number of circumstances, including the number of adjudicators (Bergee, 2003), inconsistencies among adjudicators’ assessments (Garman, 1991), construction of the scoring instrument (Zdzinski and Barnes, 2002), and varied personal preferences of each adjudicator (Thompson and Williamon, 2003). To explore the optimum number of adjudicators, Bergee (2003) examined the assessments of end-of-semester applied juries by evaluators ($N=24$) representing different areas of expertise (brass, percussion, woodwind, piano, strings, and voice). Assessments were provided using a combination of ratings scales and letter grades. Statistical analysis of various combinations of evaluators revealed that the use of at least five adjudicators provided acceptable reliability. To study inter-judge reliability, Garman (1991) examined the ratings by three sets of adjudicators at an orchestral event. Two of the sets of judges were found to

have an inter-reliability of only 54% and 67%. The third set of judges rose to a “marginally acceptable” 80%. Although inter-judge reliability was a cause for concern, ratings given in the sub-categories of intonation and technique were the best predictors of overall rating. Also investigating inter-judge reliability, Thompson and Williamon (2003) examined musical evaluations using a ratings scheme based on that of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Three experienced evaluators rated performances given by student of the Royal College of London. After an examination of their ratings, bias evident according to the evaluator’s own instrumental experience and reliability between adjudicators were found to be only moderate.

In addition to reliability among adjudicators, a reliable scoring instrument is also essential to the perception of fairness in music competitions. To develop a reliable and valid rating scale for string performance assessment, Zdzinski and Barnes (2002) compiled 90 statements from previous ratings scales, essays, and statements. Then, using the compiled statements, fifty judges evaluated one hundred middle and high school string performances. Analysis revealed five areas of reliability: interpretation/musical effect, articulation/tone, intonation, rhythm/tempo, and vibrato. In the choral realm, Norris and Borst (2007) compared the reliability of two choral adjudication forms. Participants ($N=4$) evaluated 15 choral performances, first using the evaluation tool (Form A) that was currently in use by the Michigan School Vocal Music Association. After a break, the participants evaluated the choirs again using an enhanced version of the same evaluation tool (Form B) that provided more specific guidelines and a rubric for performance assessment. After analyzing correlations between items on both forms, results indicated

that Form B provided stronger inter-judge reliability.

Influence of Extra Musical Aspects on Adjudication

In addition to issues with reliability in adjudication, various extra-musical factors have been shown to have a relationship with ratings. These factors include not only attributes of the competition setting, such as time of day, school size, event type, and performance duration, but also a performer's personal attributes, such as attractiveness, stage behavior, race, and dress. In an analysis of competitive instrumental and vocal events ($N=7,355$) from two consecutive years of festivals (2001-2002), Bergee and Platt (2003) investigated trends regarding time of day, performing medium (vocal or instrumental), event type (solo or ensemble), and school size. Significant differences emerged in final ratings when studied by time of day, type of event, and school size. Average ratings moved toward superior as the day progressed, with larger schools tending to receive higher ratings than smaller schools. Regarding solo and ensemble, choral ensembles tended to score higher than solos, while the reverse was true for instrumental competitors. Examining similar factors, Bergee and Westfall (2005) explored festival ratings ($N=3,853$) and inspected several variables, including rating, time of day, size of school, geographical district, performing medium, and event type. Significant differences were found in competition results when studied by performance time of day, geographical area, and school size, with afternoon performances, metropolitan locations, and larger schools benefitting from higher ratings. Seeking to explore a relationship between ratings and factors such as performance duration or evaluator's college major, Napoles (2009) analyzed ratings of children's choral performances. Participants ($n=28$ choral education

majors, $n=44$ instrumental education majors) listened to ten excerpts of children's choral performances and used a seven-point Likert-type scale to rate performance aspects, such as pitch and rhythmic accuracy, tone quality, expression and overall impression. Significant interactions occurred between evaluators' major and excerpt length as well as piece and excerpt length. Longer excerpts (60 seconds) were rated slightly higher than shorter excerpts (20 seconds). While instrumental education majors tended to give higher ratings than choral education majors, no significant difference was found between overall choral and instrumental ratings.

The potential relationship between a performer's physical attributes and performance ratings has been the focus of a number of studies. Wapnick, Darrow, Kovacs, and Dalrymple (1997) studied performer attractiveness in relation to evaluations of vocal performances. Evaluators ($N=82$) were randomly assigned to one of three assessment groups to view prerecorded performances of 14 singers (6 male, 8 female). To assess attractiveness, one group viewed the performances without audio and rated the performer's attractiveness. The other two groups also viewed and rated the musical aspects of the performances under one of two conditions: audio only or audio and visual. Analysis of all ratings revealed several relationships between factors. Ratings of male singers in the audio only condition revealed no difference between assessment of more and less attractive singers. However, in the audio/visual condition, attractive male singers were favored significantly more. Attractive female singers in the audio only condition were also favored more than unattractive female singers. Overall, higher ratings were associated with the audio/visual condition over the audio only condition. In a similar study,

Wapnick, Mazza, and Darrow (1998) examined ratings of violin performances for relationships with performer attractiveness, stage behavior, and performer dress. Participants ($N=72$) consisted of graduate students and university faculty in the music area. Similar to the previous study, evaluators were divided into three groups to assess prerecorded violin performances (6 males, 6 females). The first group viewed the performances with no audio and made assessments regarding the performer's physical attractiveness, appropriateness of dress, and stage behavior. The other two groups assessed the musical aspects of the performances under one of two conditions: audio only or audio and visual. Analysis of all ratings revealed that evaluations of violinists with low rated dress and stage behavior showed no differences in ratings. However, violinists with highly rated stage behavior and dress benefitted significantly from the visual element in the assessment setting. Although a significant difference was not established, more attractive violinists were musically rated higher than less attractive violinists. In the same line of research, Wapnick, Mazza, and Darrow (2000) examined the effects of performer attractiveness, stage behavior, and dress on ratings of children's piano performances. Participating evaluators ($N=123$) were divided into three groups (video only, audio only, audio-visual) and asked to rate pre-recorded performances of sixth-grade pianists. Results revealed that high and low performance ratings were intensified by high and low attribute ratings of attractiveness, stage behavior, and dress.

VanWeelden conducted several studies exploring perceptions of conductor performances as related to certain physical attributes, such as body type and race. In each of these studies (2002, 2004, 2007), participants believed they were rating performances

that occurred in a collegiate choral competition setting. To explore a relationship between conductor's body type and conductor and ensemble ratings, six female conductors (3 endomorphic and 3 ectomorphic) were recorded conducting in the same venue, so as to suggest a live performance to the viewer (VanWeelden, 2002). The same audio of a choral performance was dubbed over all six performances. Participants ($N=163$) were undergraduate music majors ranging from sophomore to seniors. Each viewed the performances and rated the ensemble's performance aspects of the conductor's visual appearance (eye contact, facial expression, and posture), overall effectiveness of the conductor, and their own confidence in the conductor. Analysis of the ratings revealed no significant differences in ratings between conductors of different body types. Further, no significant differences were established between participant genders or among majors.

In further research regarding the physical attributes of conductors, VanWeelden explored the relationship between race and performance perception. To examine evaluators' perceptions of conductor and choral ensemble performances, VanWeelden (2004) employed racially stereotyped music and conductors of different races to examine possible differences in overall ratings. Six male conductors (3 African American and 3 Caucasian) were filmed conducting a choral arrangement of a spiritual; following the filming, the same audio of a choral performance of the spiritual was dubbed over each of the conductor's performances. Participants (undergraduate music majors: $n=69$ males, $n=100$ females; $n=66$ choral, $n=103$ instrumental) viewed the filmed performances of the conductors and rated their performances. Rated items included music aspects such as intonation, tone quality, attacks and releases, phrasing, dynamics, balance and blend, and

diction. Participants also rated non-musical aspects, such as the conductor's eye contact, facial expression, posture, overall effectiveness, and the participant's confidence in the conductor. An analysis of the ratings indicated that, regardless of the participant's gender or major, the conductor's race significantly affected ratings of the conductor's and ensemble's performances. Overall, African American conductors were rated significantly higher than Caucasian conductors. Following this line of research, VanWeelden and McGee (2007) conducted a study that focused on musical genre and conductor race as related to ratings of performance. Participants (N=353 undergraduate music majors) viewed prerecorded performances of both African American and Caucasian conductors conducting a Western art choral selection as well as a spiritual selection. Among both races of conductors and both choral selections, all four combinations of conductors with choral selections were presented; the same audio of each song was presented for both conductors. Results revealed that, although the audio performance was the same for both races of conductors, Caucasian conductors were rated higher when conducting the Western art selection than black conductors. Conversely, black conductors were rated higher when conducting the spiritual than white conductors.

Educational Soundness

A few studies have attempted to establish a relationship between competitive success in music competitions and music achievement. Temple (1973) examined music achievement between thirty-nine competitive and non-competitive bands. The Watkins-Farnum Performance Scale and the Colwell Music Achievement Test were used to establish musical achievement. An analysis of the test results revealed that students from

non-competitive bands scored significantly higher than students in competitive bands. In a similar study, West (1985) examined whether performance success had an effect on the musical achievement of band students. The researcher used the Long-Hoffer Musicianship Test to measure musical achievement of 284 senior band students who had experienced either overall band success or recent success at a solo and ensemble competition.

Statistical analysis revealed significant differences in achievement among subgroups of students experiencing recent band success and students experiencing recent solo and ensemble success.

Opinions, Preferences, and Perceptions

Music educators express a range of opinions regarding music competitions and their place in music education. Moreover, school administrators, music students, and their parents also have strong opinions about music ensemble competitions. Hurst (1994) surveyed band directors ($N=293$) regarding their reasons for competition participation pertaining to various competitive activities. Among the items examined were type of competitive activity, frequency of participation, emphasis on rating and rankings as indicators of success, and emphasis on participation in competitive musical activities. Results revealed that the most important reasons for competition participation were to provide a sense of accomplishment for the students, to help maintain quality performance and high music standards for music education, to provide a means for evaluation, and to provide a clear goal for study.

In an investigation of reasons for music competition participation, Rogers (1985) surveyed band directors and their administrators ($N=421$) regarding their opinions of

competitions participation. Participants completed questionnaires that addressed the value of six different aspects of marching band contests. The results revealed that principals valued competitions from a public relations aspect, while band directors valued competitions for their personal benefit to students. Band directors also rated competitions lowest in terms of improving musical skill and knowledge, while overall, principals rated marching band competitions significantly higher than band directors.

A similar study, Rittenhouse (1989) surveyed choral directors ($n=111$) and their administrators ($n=108$). Questionnaire items included demographic information about the respondent, attitudes and perceptions regarding the competition experience, the adjudication process, and competition participation outcomes. Results indicated that when compared to choral directors, administrators viewed competitions more favorably for motivational purposes and winning awards. Further, administrators viewed the outcomes of the competitions as a valid evaluation of the choral ensemble for the given year, while choral directors felt the opposite. Choral directors perceived the competition experience to function as a means for musical growth while principals perceived the result to be more meaningful.

Some studies have endeavored to include the opinions of students regarding music ensemble competitions. Examining high school band directors' attitudes towards both small and large ensemble competitions, Sullivan (2005) gathered information of the teachers' perceptions of students' opinions regarding the matter. The descriptive study analyzed the responses of band directors ($N=191$) regarding a number of demographic questions (teaching area, school size, education level, and college major) and their

preferences between large and small ensemble competitions. Results revealed that teachers believed there was more educational value in the small ensemble competitive experience but believed their students preferred the large ensemble experience.

A descriptive study addressed the importance of band competition outcomes to directors, students, and parents (LaRue, 1986). Using questionnaires to gather information, the researcher collected responses from 833 participants (band directors, $n=37$; band students, $n=706$; band parents, $n=90$). Results revealed that band directors, band students, and band parents valued competitions positively, agreeing that participation in such competitions fosters *esprit de corps*. LaRue discovered that while all groups felt positively about competitions, band students and band parents felt more positively than did their band directors.

In an examination of Iowa band students, Howard (1994) surveyed 1,591 participants regarding four types of music competitions: concert band, marching band, small ensemble, and solo competitions. Within each of these competition types, six aspects of competition participation were examined: enjoyment, importance, motivational value, anxiety, increased musicianship, and goal structure. Results revealed significant differences between contest types for importance, ratings, and enjoyment. The highest factors for motivation and improving musicianship were found for concert band and solo competitions. Anxiety was found to be highest in solo competitions, followed by small ensemble, marching band, and concert band competitions.

Stamer conducted descriptive studies (2004 and 2006) evaluating the opinion of choral students regarding ensemble competitions. In the first of the two studies,

participants ($N=268$) were freshman, sophomore, juniors, and seniors from three neighboring high schools. Data were collected using an instrument developed by the researcher (Choir Competition Survey) to measure various perceptions about the music competition experience. Results revealed that sophomores and juniors like attending competitions and receive good ratings significantly more than seniors. Between the four groups, sophomores placed the most emphasis on the competition experience and felt that it encouraged members to give more attention to musicianship. More so than the other three groups, juniors indicated that making music was more important than ratings (Stamer, 2004). The follow-up study (Stamer, 2006) surveyed students from the same three neighboring high schools as the initial study. Specifically, the researcher investigated any changes in opinions from the sophomores in the first study who were now seniors during the second study. Using the same survey instrument (the Choir Competition Survey), the researcher surveyed 62 seniors on their opinions of the choral competition experience. Results indicated no significant differences regarding students' opinion of ratings between studies. Seniors strongly indicated a preference for competitions with ranking that produce one winner rather than those where every ensemble receives only a rating. Student responses indicated that the competition experience and receiving high ratings were more pleasurable as sophomores than as seniors.

Battersby (1994) conducted a descriptive study to examine motivation and the perceived benefits of choral competition participation. Participants consisted of two groups of choral directors: those who participated in choral competitions ($n=44$) and those who abstained from competition participation ($n=38$). Additionally, the opinions of the

participating teachers' students were collected for the study ($n=603$). Results indicated that participating directors (who were more likely to be younger directors) preferred competitions for their motivational uses (highest mean reported) and musical benefits, opportunity to reinforce classroom learning, elevate ensemble standards, and improve public relations for the school. Students likewise rated motivation as the primary reason for competition participation. Although their teachers perceived that students would favor extra-musical aspects, students consistently rated musical benefits of competitions over extra-musical benefits. Non-participating directors mostly consisted of those who had never participated citing scheduling problems, financial issues, or their group's lack of competence to compete. Non-participating directors who had ceased competing also cited multiple reasons for their choice, including too much time spent on competition preparation and lack of educational value related to musical goals. Finally, a significant demographic relationship emerged: almost 70% of non-participants were age 40 or older while 60% of participants were younger than 40.

Conclusion

Educators have voiced concern about token economies as a form of extrinsic motivation and also about how such tokens might hinder intrinsic motivation. Educators have also examined the reasons to which students' attribute their success and failure, for these factors heavily influence whether they continue involvement in activities (Asmus, 1986; Austin and Vispoel, 1992; Chandler, Chiarella, & Auria, 1987). Educational research has concentrated primarily on various learning structures, examining competitive, cooperative, and individualistic variations (Cameron, 2001; Cameron &

Pierce, 1994, 1996; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999a; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999b; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001; Deci, Ryan & Koestner, 2001; Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996; Eisenberger, Pierce, & Cameron, 1999). This research has produced varied results; however, extensive research indicates that competitive behaviors diminish intrinsic motivation.

In music education, competitions are a more prominent part of some programs than others, but their overall importance has grown steadily in recent years. Educators' concerns regarding music competitions have specifically addressed fairness (Bergee, 2003; Bergee & Platt, 2003; Bergee & Westfall, 2005; Garman, 1991; Thompson and Williamon, 2003; Wapnick, Mazza, and Darrow, 2000; Zdzinski and Barnes, 2002) and educational benefits (Temple, 1973; West, 1985). Music educators bring their students to competitions to motivate them (Battersby, 1994, Howard, 1994; Hurst, 1994), and their administrators and parents support them in this pursuit (LaRue, 1986; Rittenhouse, 1989). Likewise, students enjoy the more competitive aspects of these events (Stamer, 2004 & 2006). Despite the importance of music competitions in schools, no studies have yet addressed the differing participatory habits among the different genres of choral music.

METHOD

Participants

The participants ($N = 183$) for this study were high school choral educators teaching in Alabama, California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin. These states were selected because show choir is popular in these states' schools. To qualify for participation in the study, educators must have taught more than one year at their current school, had experience competing with concert choir and/or show choir during the 2012-2013 school year, and teach at a school of 500 or more students. No other stipulations were in place for participation in this study.

Compiling Potential Participants

Identification of educators meeting the above criteria was conducted using public records available on the Internet. The researcher consulted multiple Internet resources to compile a list of educators, using websites dedicated to show choir competitions, school district and individual school websites, music educator and choral director association websites, music educator forums, and Internet searches. The resources consulted varied based on the information available in each state.

For educators in Alabama, a PDF indicating the total population of each high school in the state was downloaded from the website for the Alabama High School Athletic Association (www.ahsaa.org). Upon identifying schools of 500 or more, the researcher used search engines (Google and Bing) to identify the choral educator at each school. Once a name had been located, the researcher used a website which compiles

examples of email formats (www.email-format.com) to develop a potential email address for the educator.

For choral educators in California, no searchable high school athletic association or league information was located. The researcher used an Internet search and queried terms such as “choral competitions” and “competition festival results” to return the names of schools who may have recently competed in choral competitions. A website (www.high-schools.com) was used to determine whether the schools were the appropriate size and to establish the name of the school district in which the school was located. The researcher then established the name of the choral educator at the school either by consulting the school’s website or by using an Internet search. With the name of the choral educator and school district, the email format website was used to establish a potential email address.

Educators in Illinois were identified using the state’s high school athletic association website (www.ihsa.org). After high schools were sorted by size, an individual page provided the name and contact information (including an email address) for a number of people associated with that particular school, including the principal, athletic director, coaches, and music directors, which included choral educators.

Finding educators in Indiana involved a similar process. Rather than dedicated pages on the website for each school, a PDF document was available for download at the webpage for the Indiana High School Athletic Association (www.ihsaa.com). Information was provided for each school, including school size and choral educator name. Although the choral educator’s specific email address was not provided, the email address for each

principal was provided and used as a format to generate the choral educator's possible email address.

Educators in Iowa were identified through the Iowa High School Athletic Association's webpage (www.iahsaa.org). A downloadable PDF was available, indicating the size of each high school and the principal's email address. Following the identification of schools of the appropriate size for the study, each choral educator was identified by consulting the school website or through an Internet search. Once the choral director's name was established, the principal's email address from the athletic association website was used for format to generate the educator's email address.

Educators in Mississippi were identified in a manner similar to those in Indiana. A downloadable PDF was available at the webpage for the Mississippi High School Athletic Association (www.mhsaa.org) that contained the total population of each high school in the state, as well as the name and email address for each school's choral educator.

Educators in Missouri required a similar search method to those in California. No specific contact information of any kind was provided on the Missouri State High School Athletic Association website (www.mshsaa.org); however, the site did contain results from previous state music assessment contests, identifying the school names of recent competition participants. The researcher consulted the previously mentioned pages www.email-format.com and www.high-schools.com as well as Internet searches to identify the choral educator at each school mentioned as a recent competition participant.

Educators in Ohio were identified using methods similar to those used for Iowa. The website for the Ohio High School Athletic Association (www.ohsaa.org) provided a

searchable school directory, indicating the total population of the school, as well as the name and email address of the principal. After utilizing an Internet search to identify the choral educator, the principal's email address was used as a formatting guide to generate a possible email address for the educator.

Educators in Virginia were identified from the Virginia Music Educators Association website (www.vmea.org). The researcher consulted a list identifying Blue Ribbon Music Schools for the 2012-2013 school year. This award is presented to schools whose band, orchestra, and chorus had achieved a superior rating at the state assessment competition, ensuring that these schools had participated in at least one competition during the previous school year (information not able to be deducted in other states). After a list of schools was compiled based on Blue Ribbon designation, the Internet tools previously mentioned (www.high-schools.org, www.email-format.com, consultation of school websites and Internet searches) were used to generate a possible email address for the educator.

Finally, educators in Wisconsin were identified via the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association website (www.wiaawi.org). The site provided a searchable directory that indicated school size as well as the principal's name and email address. After producing the choral educator's name through an Internet search, the principal's email address was used for formatting to generate a possible email address for the educator.

The efforts to collect the email addresses of educators produced a list of 642 email addresses, all of whom were invited to participate in the study. At the conclusion of the data collection period, Qualtrics® recorded answers for 211 educators. A total of 28

responses were excluded from the final results. Of these responses, three were excluded because the schools at which the educator taught were smaller than 500 students, 19 were excluded because the educators indicated that they had not participated in competitions during the 2012-2013 school year, two were excluded because the educators indicated they were no longer teaching, and four confirmed that they were not currently teaching high school. Thus, a total of 183 high school choral educators' responses were used in this study (see Table 3).

Table 3
Number of Participants from Each State

	Participants			
	Invited	Responded	Excluded	Used in Study
Alabama	59	20	3	17
California	66	20	4	16
Illinois	61	13	2	11
Indiana	89	37	5	32
Iowa	72	25	3	22
Mississippi	53	15	3	12
Missouri	62	19	2	17
Ohio	68	18	1	17
Virginia	54	22	2	20
Wisconsin	58	22	3	19
Total	642	211	28	183

Questionnaire

The researcher developed a survey instrument to be used in the collection of data for this study (see appendix A). The first page of the questionnaire was a statement of consent. The purpose of this statement was to give invited educators the option to consent and continue with the survey process or decline and end the survey process. (The total number of responses varied for each question due to a condition set forth in the consent process, which advised that educators could skip any questions they preferred not to answer.) Upon consent, educators were asked to provide demographic information. These questions collected information about the educator's current teaching assignment, including number of years of teaching service, the total population of the school at which the educator teaches, the state in which the school is located, the type of ensemble the educator has taken to competition during the 2012-2013 school year, the number of competitions they attended during that same school year, and the amount of rehearsal time dedicated to competition preparation.

The remaining questions of the questionnaire were items pertaining to educators' competition habits as well as their preferences regarding competition participation. The first group of questions was related to the specifics of educators' competition practices. These questions provided opportunities for educators to answer twice, indicating their responses for concert choir and/or show choir separately. To indicate the number of competitions in which educators participated in the 2012-2013 school year, educators used a slider-style mechanism in Qualtrics®. To indicate the distinction between concert choir and show choir competition participation, two separate sliders were provided. Using

a similar structure, educators indicated their competition budget for the 2012-2013 school year, with separate sliding scales allowing educators to indicate separate budgets for concert choir and show choir competition participation. Likewise, educators were asked to indicate the percentage of their allotted rehearsal time was spent preparing for competition participation and were provided two separate sliders to indicate their answers. To indicate the personnel required by each choir type to participate in competitions, educators were provided with two separate columns where a space was provided to indicate a specific number of personnel required.

The second group of questions was presented to educators in a variety of formats in order to collect the appropriate data. Unlike the previous group of questions, these were presented only once. Therefore, comparisons in the data collected are drawn among those educators taking only concert choirs to competitions, those taking only show choirs to competitions, or those taking both concert and show choirs to competitions.

To indicate the impact of competition participation on their repertoire selection, educators indicated the level of influence on a three-point Likert-type scale. The points on the Likert-type scale indicated (1) competitions had no influence on repertoire choices, (2) competitions had some influence on repertoire choices, or (3) competitions had great influence on repertoire choices. Educators were also asked to indicate the reasons for which they participated in choral competitions with their ensembles. To assess these preferences, educators were given a list of fourteen reasons for competition participation and asked to select the five that best described their motivations for doing so. A similar question asked educators about their perceptions of why their students preferred to

participate in competitions. From a comparable list of twelve reasons, educators again selected the five that best described their perceptions of their students' preferences.

Questions were also presented regarding preferences for award structure at competitions. To assess their own preference for award structures, educators rank-ordered a list of award types by dragging and dropping the items until they appeared most preferred (at the top of the list) to least preferred (at the bottom). The award types included participation awards, caption awards, ratings, rankings, and judges' comments. Similarly, educators indicated their perception of their students' preferences by rank-ordering an identical list of award types in the same manner.

To investigate the importance of competition participation to various groups of people, educators responded to a series of related questions. Educators were asked to what degree they found competition participation to be important. The question was repeated three additional times, asking educators about their perception of competition importance to students, administrators, and parents. Educators responded to each of the four questions using a five-point Likert scale anchored by the terms "not at all important" and "extremely important."

Procedure

An email containing a cover letter and a link to an online questionnaire was disseminated to educators (see appendix D). The cover letter introduced the researcher as a doctoral student from Florida State University studying the role of choral competitions in music education as the focus of a dissertation. Following a request for their participation as study participants, a link to the questionnaire was provided at the bottom of the email

for educators desiring to contribute their answers to the study. If educators chose to follow the provided link, they were taken to the questionnaire, which was distributed through FSU's questionnaire program, Qualtrics®. Before answering any questionnaire items, educators viewed the statement of consent (see appendix B) and agreed with the terms of participation. Educators who did not agree with the statement of consent were taken to a page that indicated their participation had concluded, while educators who agreed to the terms were taken to the questionnaire. After the completion of the questionnaire items, educators were taken to a page that indicated their answers had been recorded.

The application of logic rules in Qualtrics® ensured that once the educator had indicated which type of ensemble they had taken to choral ensemble competitions in the previous year, only questions pertaining to that type of ensemble appeared during the survey process, minimizing the time requested of the educator. The researcher estimated that following the agreement of consent, the completion of the questionnaire would take no longer than ten minutes. Additionally, from the initial request for participation, the window for questionnaire completion remained open for two weeks. Educators who had not completed the questionnaire received three reminder emails during that window of time requesting their participation. Educators who had completed the questionnaire received no further reminders.

RESULTS

Educators were asked to offer certain demographic information to ensure their eligibility for the study (see Table 4). Based on the demographic information collected, the average teaching career was 15.82 years, including 14.55 years of service in the high school choral area and 11.24 years of service at their current school. The average school size at which educators taught was 1,546 students. Of the 183 participating educators, 64 indicated they had taken a concert choir to competition during the 2012-2013 school year, while 34 indicated they had taken a show choir to competition during the same time period. The remaining 85 educators indicated that they had taken both a concert choir and a show choir to competition in during the 2012-2013 school year.

Table 4

Demographic Information from All Educators

Average years of teaching experience	
Years of service in K-12	15.82
Years of service in high school choral	14.55
Years of service at current school	11.24
Average size of school	1,546
Total number of educators with competition experience in 2012-2013	183
Concert choir only	64
Show choir only	34
Both concert choir and show choir	85

(1) How many competitions did choral educators attend during the 2012-2013 school year?

Educators indicated the number of competitions they attended with each choir type during the 2012-2013 school year. The survey process returned 138 responses from educators who competed with concert choirs and 111 responses from educators who competed with show choirs (see Table 5). On average, educators took concert choirs to 2.09 competitions during the 2012-2013 school year. Educators with show choirs took their ensembles to over twice as many competitions, with the average being 4.35 during the same school year.

Table 5

Average Number of Competitions Attended in the 2012-2013 School Year

Choir Type	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Concert Choir	2.09	1.39
Show Choir	4.35	2.12

Note. Concert choir, $n=138$; Show choir, $n=111$.

(2) Are there differences in the number of competitions attended based on choir type?

To determine if there was a difference in the number of competitions attended between concert choirs and show choirs, a t Test was conducted. Results revealed that show choirs attended significantly more competitions during the 2012-2013 school year than concert choirs ($t=-10.09$, $p \leq .05$). On average, concert choirs attended approximately

two competitions during the 2012-2013 school year, while show choirs averaged over four during the same time period (see Table 4).

(3) What was the budget for competition participation during the 2012-2013 school year?

Educators were asked to indicate the amount of money spent on competition participation during the 2012-2013 school year (see Table 6). In doing so, educators were asked to consider all aspects of competition preparation in their budget. Those educators taking concert choirs to competitions were asked to consider costs for music, accompanists, entry fees, extra costume/uniform maintenance, transportation, lodging and other costs they would consider to be specifically associated with competition participation. Those taking show choirs to competitions were asked to consider costs for music and arranging, choreography, show design, set purchase and construction, costumes/uniforms and maintenance, entry fees, transportation, lodging, accompanists and show band and other costs they would consider to be specifically associated with competition participation. On average, educators who took concert choirs to competitions indicated they spent \$7,603.64 to prepare for and attend competitions during the 2012-2013 school year. The average educator taking show choirs to competitions spent \$23,401.21 on competition preparation and attendance during the 2012-2013 school year.

Table 6

Average Competition Participation Budget for the 2012-2013 School Year

Choir Type	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Concert Choir	\$7,603.64	\$13,073.32
Show Choir	\$23,401.21	\$18,105.75

Note. Concert choir, *n*=127; Show choir, *n*=106

The responses for this research question from concert choir directors created a standard deviation that was substantially larger than the mean value. Because over 80% of the responses from concert choir directors occurred in a similar spending bracket, the remaining responses affected the standard deviation (see figure 1).

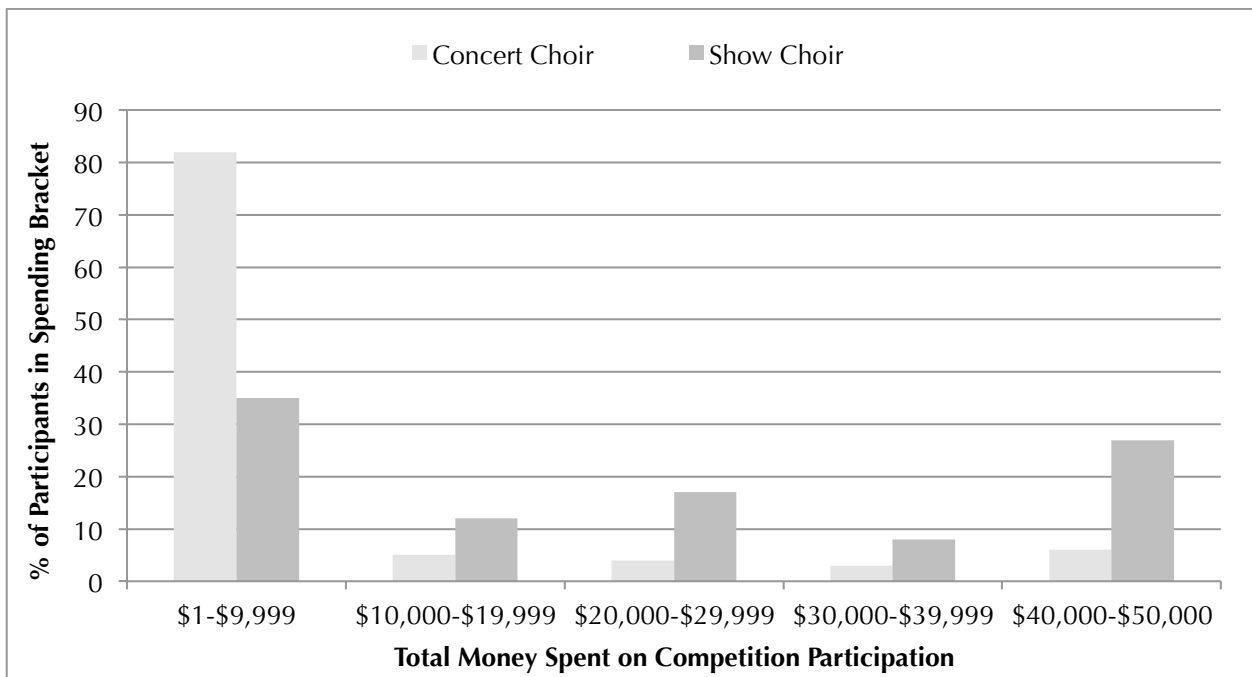


Figure 1. *Competition Budgets by Spending Bracket*

(4) Are there differences in budget based on choir type?

To determine if there was a difference in the budget allocated for competitions between concert choirs and show choirs, a t Test was conducted. Results revealed that show choir directors surveyed spent significantly more money on competition participation than concert choirs during that time ($t=-7.5, p \leq .05$). A comparison of competition budgets for each of the two choir types reveals that show choir directors spent over three times as much money on competition participation during the 2012-2013 school year (see Table 6).

(5) What personnel are required for competition participation?

In order to take ensembles to competitions, a host of personnel is often required. Educators were asked to identify the types and quantity of people that were required for competition participation (see Table 7). When taking concert choirs to competitions, educators indicated that approximately three to four chaperones and one accompanist were needed. For show choirs to attend competitions, educators indicated that, on average, they required one arranger, one choreographer, six chaperones, six stage crew members, and nine show band members.

Table 7

Average Number of Personnel Required for Competition Participation

	Concert Choir <i>M</i>	Show Choir <i>M</i>
Accompanist	1	--
Administrator	0	0

Table 6 - continued

Arranger	0	1
Chaperone	4	6
Choreographer	--	1
Show Band or Combo	0	9
Stage Crew	--	6
Other	0	1

Note. Concert choir, $n=138$; Show choir, $n=113$

An examination of personnel between choir types reveals that each has different needs in regard to those required for competition participation (see figure 2). It should be noted that any value listed as "--" indicates that type of personnel is not required or applicable for that choir type. Concert choirs require approximately one accompanist; this is not applicable to show choirs because they perform exclusively with a live show band/combo, which was listed separately. Neither group indicated that any personnel from their administration were required for competition participation. While an arranger was negligible and a choreographer not applicable for concert choirs, show choir educators indicated needing one of each for competition participation. Both groups reported requiring chaperones; however, on average, show choirs reported requiring more than concert choirs. The largest group of personnel required for show choirs was their show band/combo, numbering 9 members on average. Another large group required for

show choirs to participate in competitions was a stage crew, on average consisting of 6 members.

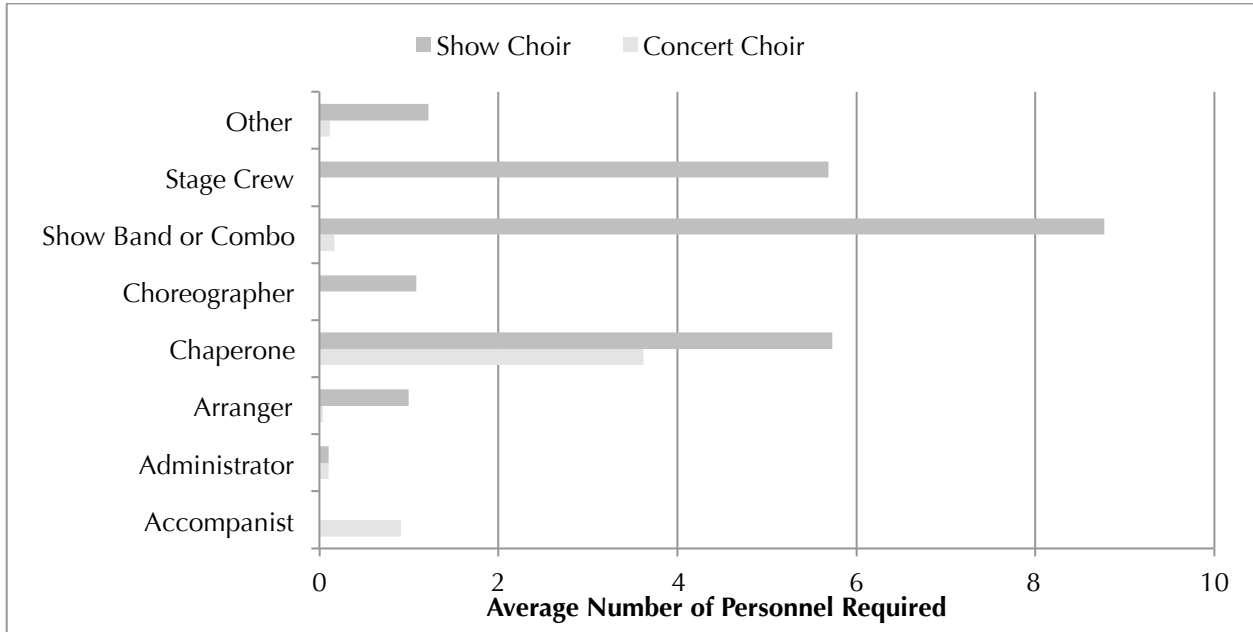


Figure 2. Comparison of Average Personnel Required for Competition Attendance

(6) How much of the allotted rehearsal time with an ensemble is spent preparing for competitions?

Educators were asked to consider what percentage of the total amount of rehearsal time available to them was dedicated to competition preparation. Those educators taking concert choirs to competitions returned 133 responses, while educators taking show choirs to competitions returned 107 responses (see Table 8). Educators who took concert choirs to ensemble competitions indicated that they spent 49.06% of the allotted rehearsal time with their ensemble preparing for competitions. When preparing to take show choirs to competitions, educators indicated that they spent 73.77% of their allotted rehearsal time preparing for competitions.

Table 8

Percentage of Rehearsal Time Dedicated to Competition Preparation

Choir Type	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Concert Choir	49.06	24.53
Show Choir	73.77	21.78

Note. Concert choir, $n=133$; Show choir, $n=107$

(7) Are there differences in rehearsal time spent preparing for competitions based on choir type?

To determine if there was a difference in the rehearsal time allotted for competitions between concert choirs and show choirs, a t Test was conducted. While both types of choirs reported investing a substantial portion of their allotted rehearsal time to prepare for competitions, results revealed that show choir directors spend significantly more of their allotted rehearsal time preparing for competitions than concert choirs ($t=8.25$, $p \leq .05$). On average, show choirs spend 24.52% more of their allotted rehearsal time preparing for competitions. A t-test revealed that show choirs (see Table 8).

(8) How much influence does competition participation have on repertoire selection?

Educators were asked about their habits regarding repertoire selection for competition participation. To assess their habits, they indicated to what degree competition participation influenced the music they selected for their ensembles. This question, presented to all educators, received 176 responses (see Table 9). The most frequent response indicated that competitions have some influence on the literature choices, and that 46% of the educators made decisions based on parameters set forth by

the competition. Additionally, 28% of educators indicated that competitions had no influence on their repertoire choices, while 26% indicated that competitions had great influence, and that they chose repertoire they thought would be impressive to judges and adjudicators.

Table 9

Degree of Influence of Competitions on Educators' Repertoire Choices

Degree of Influence	Σ	%
No influence	49	28
Some influence	81	46
Great influence	46	26

Note. N=176

(9) Are there differences in influence between choir types?

To determine if there was a difference in the influence of repertoire choices for competitions between concert choirs and show choirs, a chi square test was conducted. Results revealed significant differences between how much influence competitions had on repertoire choices between the two types of choirs ($\chi^2=7.72, p \leq .05$). Additionally, when choir type was investigated individually, significant differences were revealed in responses of "no influence" and "some influence" with educators taking only concert choirs ($z=2.93, p \leq .05$) or only show choirs ($z=2.70, p \leq .05$) to competition. No other significant differences were established. An examination of the influence of competitions on repertoire choices revealed that over 50% of educators in all categories indicated at least

some influence on their repertoire choices (see Table 10). Educators taking only show choirs to competitions indicated the most influence, with 35% indicating that competition participation has “great influence” on their repertoire choices. Concert choir only and concert/show choir educators indicated that competition participation had “some influence” on their repertoire choices. Interestingly, show choir educators also had the highest percentage (45%) of educators indicate that competitions had no influence on their repertoire choices (see Table 10).

Table 10
Influence of Competitions on Repertoire Choices by Choir Type

Degree of Influence	Concert choir		Show choir		Concert & show choir	
	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%
No influence	12*	21	14*	45	18	23
Some influence	33*	57	6*	19	40	49
Great influence	13	22	11	35	22	27

Note. Concert choir, $n=58$; show choir, $n=31$; both concert and show choir, $n=80$. Asterisk indicates significant differences between choir types, $p \leq .05$.

(10) What are the reasons high school choral educators take their ensembles to competitions?

The researcher provided a list of fourteen reasons from which each participant ($N=178$) chose the five they felt best described their own reasons for competition participation (see Table 11). The three most popular reasons selected were “to increase student work ethic/motivation” ($n = 140$ or 79%), “to hear the judges’ feedback” ($n=123$

or 69%), and “to increase attention to musicianship” ($n=107$ or 60%). Conversely, the three least popular reasons were “to win/receive high ratings” ($n=14$ or 8%), “to create pride in the ensemble by winning” ($n=10$ or 6%), and “to fortify job security” ($n=5$ or 3%).

Table 11
Reasons for Choral Educators’ Competition Participation

Reasons for Competition Participation	Σ	%
To increase student work ethic/motivation	140	79
To hear the judges’ feedback	123	69
To increase attention to musicianship	107	60
To increase excitement/morale	96	54
To engage in team building	90	51
To create pride within ensemble by attending	85	48
To increase student self esteem	74	42
To travel	33	19
To be recognized as an award winning choir	21	12
To satisfy school administration and/or students’ parents	16	9
To win/receive high ratings	14	8
To create pride within ensemble by winning	10	6
To fortify job security	5	3

Note. $N=178$

When examining the results by choir type, educators in all three categories most frequently indicated they attended competitions to increase student work ethic and motivation (concert choirs only (76%), show choirs only (81%), and those who were directors of both (85%) (see Table 12). The second most popular reason chosen for concert choir only and both show choir and concert choir was “to hear judges’ feedback,” with 75% and 74% of educators respectively choosing this as one of their top five reasons for attending competitions. However, for those taking only show choirs to competitions, the second most popular reason for competition attendance was “to engage in team building” and “to increase excitement/morale,” both chosen by 63% of educators. Across the board, all three categories of educators chose “to increase attention to musicianship” as the third most popular reason. Regarding least popular reasons for competition attendance, the similarities are decreased. All educators agreed that “to fortify job security” was the least important reason to attend competitions (concert choir only, 3%; show choir only, 0%; both concert and show choir, 4%). Slightly more popular was “to create pride in the ensemble by winning,” chosen by educators with only concert choirs or both concert choirs and show choirs attending competitions. However, those taking only show choirs to competitions chose “to win/receive high ratings” and “to be recognized as an award-winning choir,” each being selected by 3% of the show choir only educators.

Table 12

Choral Educators' Reasons for Competition Participation by Choir Type

Reasons for Competition Participation	Concert Choir		Show Choir		Concert & Show Choir	
	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%
To hear the judges' feedback.	44	75	17	53	60	74
To increase student work ethic/motivation.	45	76	26	81	69	85
To increase attention to musicianship.	40	68	18	56	46	57
To win/receive high ratings.	6	10	1	3	6	7
To be recognized as an award winning choir.	10	17	1	3	10	12
To increase student self esteem.	20	34	15	47	38	47
To engage in team building.	30	51	20	63	40	49
To increase excitement/morale.	30	51	20	63	44	54
To create pride within ensemble by attending.	29	49	16	50	39	48
To create pride within ensemble by winning.	3	5	1	3	6	7
To travel.	13	22	5	16	14	17
To fortify job security.	2	3	0	0	3	4
To satisfy school administration and/or students' parents.	5	8	3	9	8	10

Note. Concert choir, $n=59$; show choir, $n=32$, Both concert and show choir, $n=81$.

Finally, it is interesting to note that when studied together, the sums of the responses for each of the reasons listed create a similar contour (see figure 3). Areas of higher importance to teachers include increasing work ethic/motivation, hearing judges' feedback, and increasing attention to musicianship. Areas of low importance to educators included fortifying job security, creating ensemble pride by winning, and winning/receiving high ratings.

(11) In the choral educator's perception, what are the reasons choral students prefer to attend competitions?

One hundred seventy-six educators chose from a list the five reasons they felt best described their students' preferences for participating in competitions (see Table 13). To answer this question, educators chose from a list identical to that of the previous question, with the exception of the omission of "to fortify job security" and "to satisfy school administration and/or parents," as they were not applicable. Educators perceived the three most popular reasons their students preferred to attend choral competitions were "to win/receive high ratings" ($n=125$ or 71%), "to be recognized as an award-winning choir" ($n=124$ or 70%), and "to increase excitement/morale" ($n=116$ or 66%). They perceived three least popular reasons as "to increase student work ethic/motivation" ($n=41$ or 23%), "to increase self-esteem" ($n=39$ or 22%), and "to increase attention to musicianship" ($n=21$ or 12%).

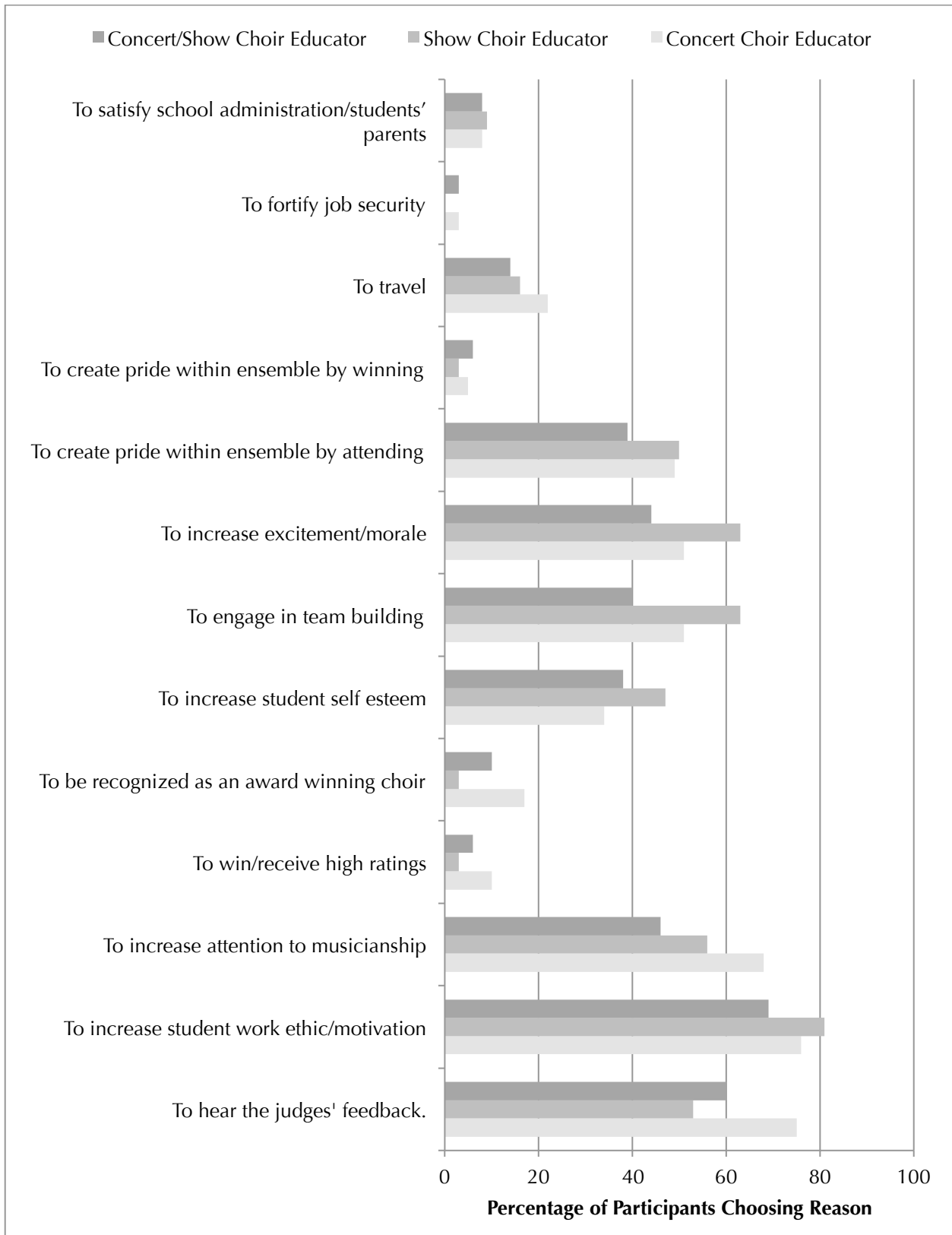


Figure 3. Comparison of Choral Educators' Reasons for Competition Participation by Choir Type

Table 13

Educators' Perceptions of Reasons for Choral Students' Competition Participation

Reasons for Competition Participation	Σ	%
To win/receive high ratings.	125	71
To be recognized as an award winning choir.	124	70
To increase excitement/morale.	116	66
To travel.	98	56
To create pride within ensemble by attending.	73	41
To create pride within ensemble by winning.	67	38
To engage in team building.	62	35
To hear the judges' feedback.	56	32
To increase student work ethic/motivation.	41	23
To increase student self esteem.	39	22
To increase attention to musicianship.	21	12

Note. N=176

After indicating their own reasons for competition participation, educators specified their perceptions of reasons their students prefer to attend competitions (see Table 14). When compared to their own reasons for attending competitions, the perceptions of student preferences showed fewer similarities. For show choir and concert/show choir, the most frequently chosen reason was "to be recognized as an award winning choir." Concert choir only educators indicated "to win/receive high ratings" as the most popular reason they felt their students preferred to attend competitions. The second most popular

reason, “to win/receive high ratings,” was shared by show choir and concert/show choir; however, concert choir only educators indicated “to travel.” The third most popular reason varied by type. Concert choir only chose “to win/receive high ratings,” show choir only chose “to engage in team building,” and concert/show choir chose “to increase excitement/morale.” The reasons “to win/receive high ratings” and “to be recognized as an award winning choir” were placed in the top three most popular reasons for all three categories. The least popular reason also varied by category. Concert choir only educators chose “to engage in team building,” show choir only educators chose “to hear judges’ comments/feedback,” and concert/show choir educators chose “to increase student self esteem.” Slightly less popular reasons included “to increase attention to musicianship” for concert choir only, “to create pride in the ensemble by winning” for show choir only, and “to hear the judges’ feedback” for concert and show choir educators.

Table 14

Choral Educators’ Perceptions of Students’ Reasons for Competition Participation by Choir Type

Reason	Concert Choir		Show Choir		Concert & Show Choir	
	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%
To hear the judge’s feedback.	28	48	8	25	19	23
To increase student work ethic/motivation.	8	14	10	31	24	30
To increase attention to musicianship.	9	16	4	13	8	10
To win/receive high ratings.	44	76	20	63	60	74
To be recognized as an award winning choir.	37	64	21	66	64	79

Table 14- continued

To increase student self esteem.	8	14	11	34	20	25
To engage in team building.	14	24	18	56	28	35
To increase excitement/morale.	35	60	21	66	59	73
To create pride within ensemble by attending.	30	52	12	38	30	37
To create pride within ensemble by winning.	24	41	6	19	35	43
To travel.	39	67	21	66	36	44

Note. Concert choir, $n=59$; show choir, $n=32$; Both concert and show choir, $n=81$.

When the number of responses for each of the reasons listed is calculated, the sums create a similar contour, analogous to the trend in figure 3 (see figure 4). Areas of higher importance were perceived to be winning/receiving high ratings, being recognized as an award-winning choir, and increasing excitement/morale. Areas of lower importance were perceived to be increasing attention to musicianship, increasing student self esteem, and increasing work ethic/motivation.

(12) Do educators and students share similar motivations for competition participation, in the educator's perception?

In a comparison of the motivations for competition participation between educators and students, disparities are present (see figure 5). When identifying their top priorities for competitions, educators (on average) selected (1) to increase student work ethic/motivation, (2) to hear the judges' feedback, and (3) to increase attention to musicianship.

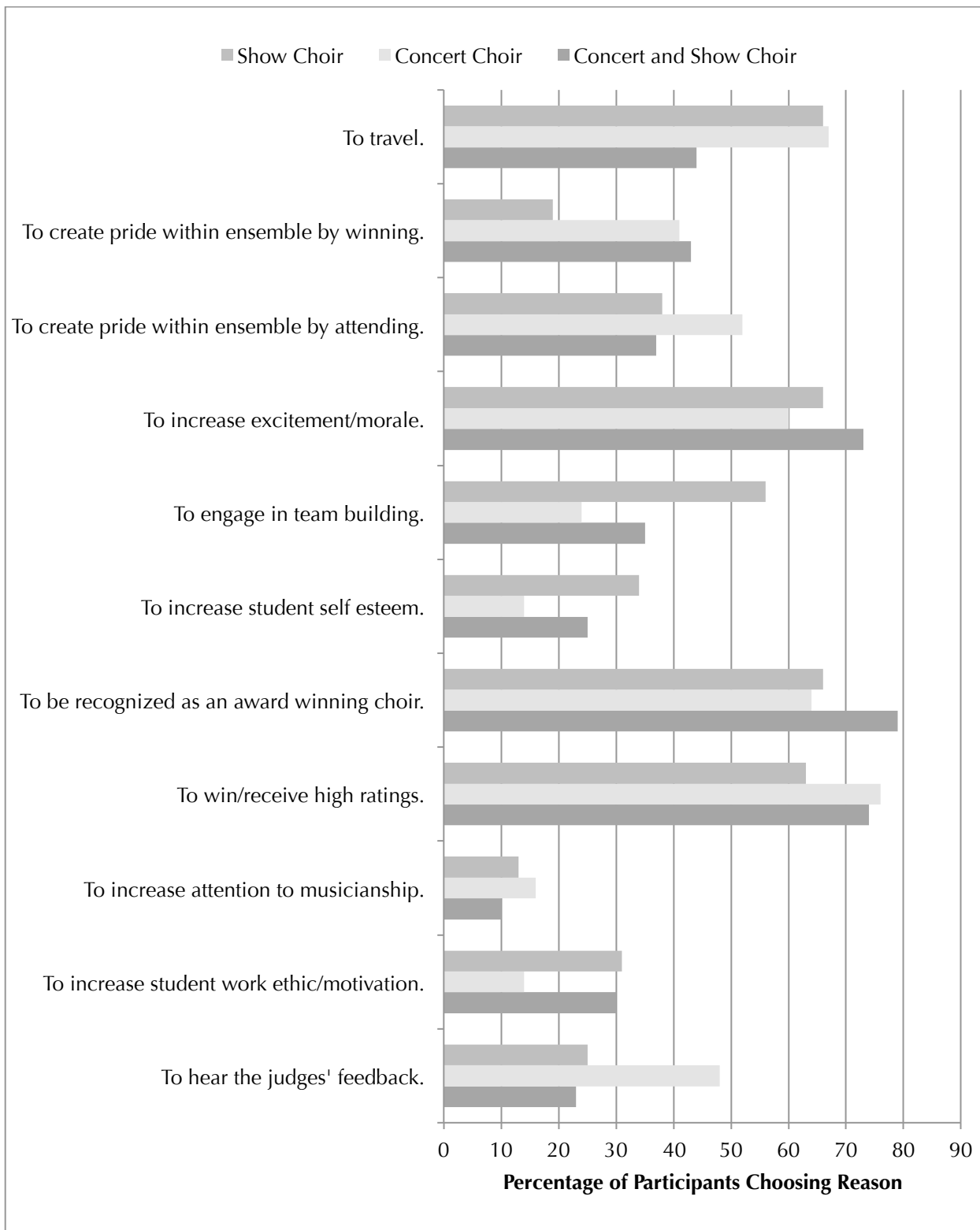


Figure 4. Comparison of Choral Educators' Perceptions of Students' Reasons for Competition Participation by Choir Type

The teachers' perception of student responses to the same items shows a substantial difference. According to the educators' perceptions, students do not share their priorities for competition participation.

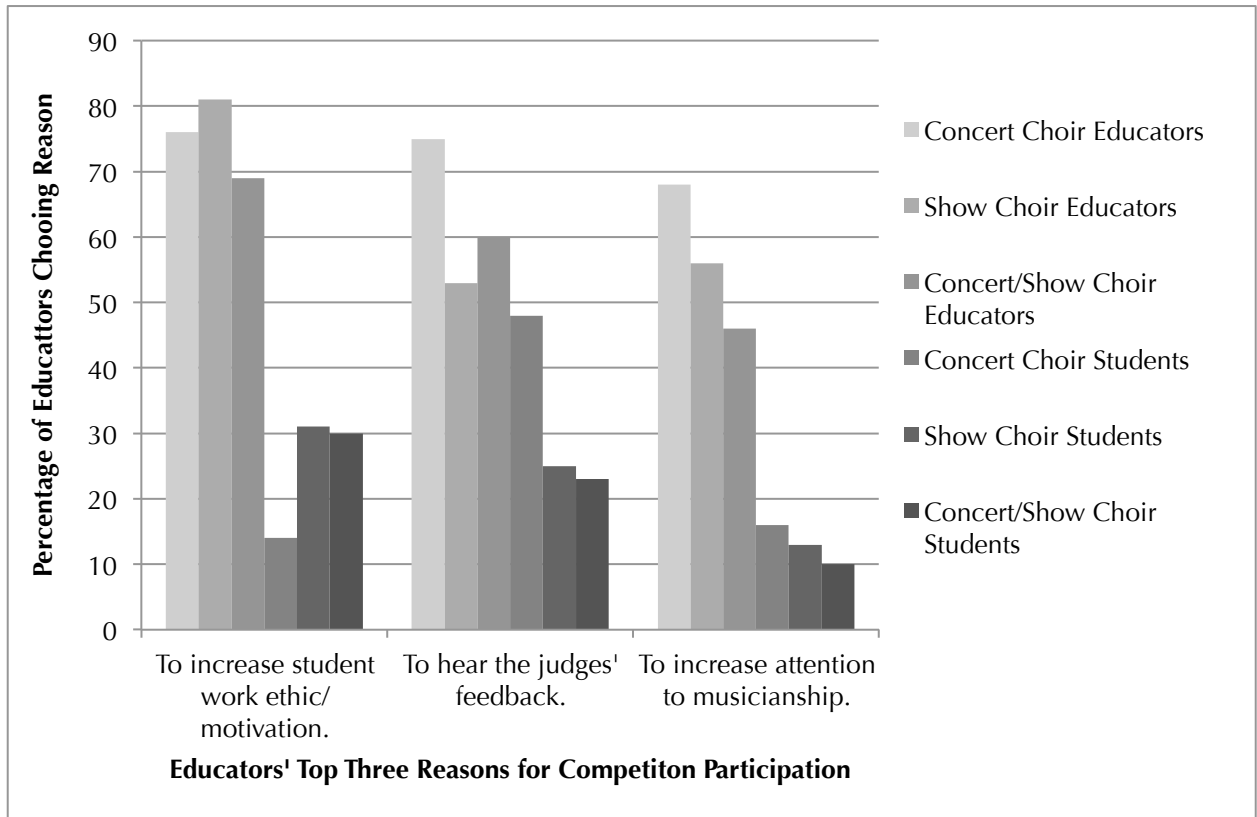


Figure 5. Top Educator Reasons for Attending Competitions with Student Comparison

When selecting the students' top three reasons (on average) for competition participation (in the educators' perception), a similar trend emerges (see figure 6). Educators' perceived that students' preferences for competition participation were (1) to win/receive high ratings, (2) to be recognized as an award-winning choir, and (3) to increase excitement/morale. There is a clear difference of opinion regarding the first two reasons. However, some agreement is evident between educator and perceived student

preferences regarding competitions as an opportunity to increase excitement and morale within the choir.

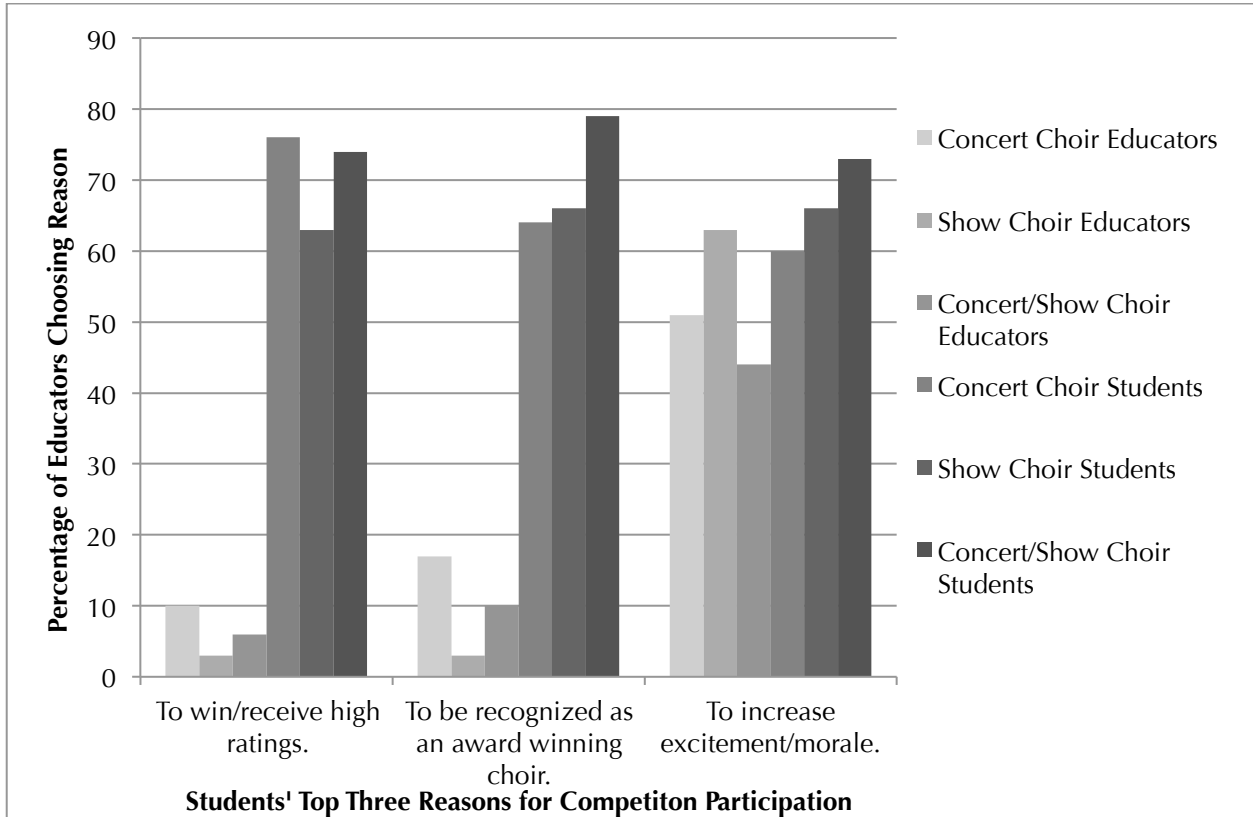


Figure 6. *Top Student Reasons for Competition Participation with Educator Comparison*

(13) What is the importance of competition award structure to choral music educators?

In specifying the importance of award structures at competitions, educators indicated their personal preferences by ranking various award types (see Table 15). To determine the importance of each award type, the ranked responses were averaged producing means where the smallest numbers indicate the highest preference. Of the 171 responses to the question, 61% of the educators indicated that the feedback from the judges was most important, while 57% agreed that participation awards were the least important. Educators most frequently ordered rankings, ratings, and caption awards as

second, third, and fourth most important respectively. Over 80% of educators ranked judges' comments the first or second most important award at a competition, while over 75% ranked participation awards as one of the two least important awards of the five types listed.

Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Award Preferences

Award type	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Judges' comments	1.65	0.98
Rating	2.35	1.05
Ranking	2.95	1.10
Caption awards	3.85	1.03
Participation awards	4.20	1.14

Note. $N=171$. The smaller the mean, the higher the educator's preference for that type of award.

When examining the results by choir type, educators in all three categories of competition participation indicated their own preferences for competition award structure (see Table 16). Concert choir only educators ($n=57$) indicated the following award preference (most preferred to least preferred): judges' comments ($M=1.74$), ratings ($M=1.88$), rankings ($M=3.19$), participation awards ($M=3.81$), and caption awards ($M=4.39$). Show choir only educators ($n=31$) preferred judges' comments ($M=1.65$), rankings ($M=2.42$), caption awards ($M=2.87$), ratings ($M=3.42$), and participation awards ($M=4.65$). Concert and show choir educators ($n=79$) preferred judges' comments

($M=1.57$), ratings ($M=2.27$), rankings ($M=2.94$), caption awards ($M=3.82$), and participation awards ($M=4.41$). Participation awards appeared as the least preferred award type for show choir only educators and concert/show choir educators, and appeared next to last for concert choir only educators.

Table 16

Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Award Preferences by Choir Type

	Concert Choir		Show Choir		Concert & Show Choir	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Participation awards	3.81	1.16	4.65	0.88	4.41	1.03
Judges' comments	1.74	1.09	1.65	0.98	1.57	0.90
Ratings	1.88	0.78	3.42	1.03	2.27	0.94
Rankings	3.19	0.85	2.42	1.18	2.94	1.12
Caption awards	4.39	0.86	2.87	0.96	3.82	0.89

Note. Concert choir, $n=57$; show choir, $n=31$; both concert and show choir, $n=79$. The smaller the mean, the higher the preference for that type of award.

There are several similarities among educator categories considering the average ranking of educators' award preferences (see Table 17). All three categories preferred judges' comments most; both concert choir only and concert/show choir educators preferred ratings second. Participation awards appeared low in the rankings of all three groups, emerging fourth for concert choir only educators and fifth for both show choir and concert/show choir educators.

Table 17

Award Types by Educators' Average Preferred Rank

Concert Choir	Show Choir	Concert and Show Choir
Judges' comments	Judges' comments	Judges' comments
Rating	Ranking	Rating
Ranking	Caption awards	Ranking
Participation awards	Rating	Caption awards
Caption awards	Participation awards	Participation awards

Note. Concert choir, $n=57$; show choir, $n=31$; both concert and show choir, $n=79$. Award types are listed by average preference with highest preference appearing at the top of the list.

(14) In the choral educator's perception, what is the importance of competition award structure to students?

In specifying the importance of award structures at competitions, educators indicated their perceptions of their students' preferences by ranking various award types (see Table 18). Educators indicated that the final ranking against other competitive choirs was most important to their students, with 66% indicating first, second, and third place ranking to be the highest preference. Educators thought that students, like themselves, found participation awards to be the lowest preference, with 58% ranking this type of award as least important. Seventy-eight percent of the educators indicated that rankings were the first or second most important award type, while judges' comments were most frequently ranked fourth of five award types.

Table 18

Means and Standard Deviations of Educators' Perceptions of Students' Award Preferences

Award type	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Ranking	1.57	0.97
Rating	2.54	1.18
Caption awards	3.25	1.21
Judges' comments	3.33	1.02
Participation awards	4.32	1.01

Note. $N=169$. The smaller the mean, the higher the preference for that type of award.

There are several similarities among educator categories considering the average ranking of educators' award preferences (see Table 19). For concert choir only educators, rankings ($M=1.96$) and ratings ($M=1.91$) were similarly ranked as most important award types. Likewise, show choirs only ($M=1.20$) and concert/show choir educators ($M=1.36$) viewed rankings as very important. Participation awards were not perceived favorably by any choir type (concert choir, $M=3.95$; show choir, $M=4.73$; concert/show choir, $M=4.49$).

Table 19

Means and Standard Deviation of Educators' Perceptions of Students' Award Preferences

	Concert Choir		Show Choir		Concert & Show Choir	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Participation awards	3.95	1.10	4.73	0.52	4.49	0.95

Table 19 - continued

Judges' comments	3.16	1.03	3.27	0.04	3.47	1.02
Rankings	1.96	1.15	1.20	0.48	1.36	0.76
Ratings	1.91	0.99	3.53	0.97	2.63	1.09
Caption awards	4.02	1.15	2.27	0.78	3.05	1.04

Note. Concert choir, $n=55$; show choir, $n=30$; both concert and show choir, $n=78$. The smaller the mean, the higher the preference for that type of award.

Differences in award preference emerged with rankings (concert choir only), caption awards (show choir only), and ratings (both concert/show choir) ranked as second preferences. Show choir only and concert/show choir educators perceived participation awards to be least preferred, while concert choir educators perceived caption award to be least preferred (see Table 20).

Table 20

Award Types by Educators' Perceptions of Students' Average Preferred Rank

Concert Choir	Show Choir	Concert and Show Choir
Rating	Ranking	Ranking
Ranking	Caption awards	Rating
Judges' comments	Judges' comments	Caption awards
Participation awards	Rating	Judges' comments
Caption awards	Participation awards	Participation awards

Note. Concert choir, $n=55$; show choir, $n=30$; both concert and show choir, $n=78$. Award types are listed by average preference with highest preference appearing at the top of the list.

(15) Do educators and students share similar opinions for the importance of competition award structures, in the educator's perception?

After investigating award structure preferences of all educators as well as examining differences in preferences by choir type, a comparison between the preferences of educators and educators' perceptions of student preferences was examined. A chi square test for two independent samples was used to compare the preferences of educators and students. Results revealed a significant difference in award preferences ($\chi^2=122.21, p \leq .05$).

To determine if there were specific differences between responses pertaining to award preferences for educators and students, binomial statistical tests were completed. Results revealed significant differences educators showed a significant preference for judges' comments ($z=9.33, p \leq .05$) while educators perceived that students had a significantly higher preference for rankings ($z=7.52, p \leq .05$) and caption awards ($z=3.78, p \leq .05$). A comparison of responses from educators taking only concert choirs to competitions revealed that educators ranked judges' comments significantly higher than students ($z=4.54, p \leq .05$), while educators' perceptions of student preferences were significantly higher for ranked awards ($z=-3.95, p \leq .05$); the same significant differences were revealed for educators only taking show choirs to competitions respectively ($z=3.04, p \leq .05$; $z=-2.74, p \leq .05$). Finally, a comparison of educators taking both concert and show choirs to competitions also revealed multiple significant differences. Educators again ranked judges' comments significantly higher than students ($z=7.39, p \leq .05$), while

educators' perceptions of student preferences were significantly higher for rankings ($z=-5.92, p \leq .05$) and caption awards ($z=-3.41, p \leq .05$).

(16) In the educator's perception, how important is competition participation to educators, students, administrators, and parents?

Educators were asked to rate the perception of importance of competition participation for four categories of people related to the choral program: self, students, administrators, and parents. Responses for each of these assessments were indicated on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by "not at all important" and "extremely important" (see Table 21). Of these four groups of people, educators perceived that competition participation was most important to their students ($M=4.09, SD=.97$) while they perceived that administrators found competition participation the least important ($M=3.45, SD=1.12$).

Table 21
Perceived Importance of Competition Participation

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Educator	3.55	1.12
Students	4.09	0.97
Administrators	3.45	0.98
Parents	3.71	1.04

Note. Educator, $N=181$; Students, $N=181$, Administrators, $N=180$; Parents, $N=179$.

(17) Are there differences in competition participation importance between choir types?

Several significant differences emerged in considering the differences of perceived importance between educators of different choir types (see Table 22). To examine these differences, a one-way ANOVA was performed between choir type and categories for magnitude of importance. Regarding differences in competition importance to the educators themselves, there was a significant difference between show choir only educators and concert/show choir educators ($F(2, 201)=5.37, p \leq .05$, partial $\eta^2=.060$). Another significant difference emerged between concert choir only and concert/show choir educators' perception of competition importance to students ($F(2, 201)=7.08, p \leq .05$, partial $\eta^2=.077$). No significant differences emerged between choir types regarding their perceptions of competition importance to administrators. Finally, a significant difference occurred between concert choir only and concert/show choir educators regarding their perception of competition importance to their students' parents ($F(2, 199)=6.17, p \leq .05$, partial $\eta^2=.068$).

Table 22

Perceived Importance of Competition Importance by Choir Type

	(N)	M	SD
Educator			
Concert choir	91	3.62	1.15
Show choir	32	3.16*	1.05
Both concert and show choir	82	3.85*	0.90
Students			

Table 22- continued

Concert choir	91	3.86*	0.91
Show choir	32	4.28	0.89
Both concert and show choir	82	4.39*	0.75
Administration			
Concert choir	90	3.46	1.00
Show choir	32	3.41	0.76
Both concert and show choir	82	3.54	1.03
Students' parents			
Concert choir	90	3.40*	1.03
Show choir	32	3.84	0.92
Both concert and show choir	81	3.98*	0.96

Note. *denotes significant difference established $p \leq .05$.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to determine the role of ensemble competitions in American choral music education. To assess this role, choral educators provided information regarding their competition participation habits during the 2012-2013 school year. This information included addressing the number of competitions they attended, rehearsal time invested, monetary commitments, and personnel requirements. Information was also provided regarding reasons for competition participation, importance of participation, and award type preferences. An analysis of the responses indicated that competitions occupy a substantial role in the choral practices of those surveyed. Additionally, the reasons for participation were perceived to be different for students and educators.

Competition Participation Practices

Competitions played a substantial role in the classrooms of the educators who participated in the study. There were considerable influences reported on number of competitions, rehearsal time, repertoire choices, budgetary concerns, and personnel requirements. Educators reported attending roughly two to four competitions during the 2012-2013 school year, meaning 47%-72% of their rehearsal time was devoted to preparing for a handful of days during the school year. It is not known what part of the overall choral budget was represented by the reported competition expenditures, but educators invested a considerable amount of money in competition activities during the 2012-2013 school year. Educators taking concert choirs to competitions ($N=128$) spent almost a million dollars (\$965,662) while participants taking show choirs to competitions

(N=106) reported spending approximately 2.4 million dollars (\$2,480,528) on competition participation. Of the responses for educators with recent concert choir experience, most (82%) reported spent \$10,000 or less on competition participation during the 2012-2013 school year, while half (52%) having recent show choir competition experience reported spending at least \$20,000. A quarter of the educators associated with show choirs reported spending \$50,000 or more. This illustrates that, within the scope of the study, while there were fewer show choir educators that participated in the study, they reported spending well over twice as much on competition participation. Overall, show choir educators dedicated substantially more time and money to competition participation than concert choir educators.

The additional personnel required for competition attendance differed vastly between choir types, with show choirs requiring more personnel for competition participation. Concert choirs' personnel needs tended to be modest, needing an accompanist and a few chaperones. Show choirs traveled with a support system of personnel and required more chaperones than concert choirs. Large show bands and stage crews were associated with show choirs, which were frequently student volunteers. Additionally, show choirs reported requiring a music arranger and a choreographer for competition participation, which likely accounted for a large portion of the competition budget. Overall, show choirs required the personal investment of a considerable number of supporting personnel in order to participate in competitions. While the National Standards for Music Education make no mention of the role of competitions in the choral (or music) curriculum, educators spent a substantial amount (about 47%-72%) of their

rehearsal time focused on competition preparation. Although competition preparation could be correlated to performance standards, it would still be a challenge to address the other standards with the remaining class time.

While the degree of influence varied, a vast majority of participants indicated that competitions had some degree of influence over the music they selected for their ensembles. Nearly three-quarters (72%) of participants reported that competitions influenced their repertoire choices. Almost half (46%) admitted conforming to competition guidelines when making repertoire choices for their ensembles. Over a quarter of all participants reported competitions as having a significant influence on their repertoire choices, choosing pieces that they anticipated would be impressive to judges and adjudicators.

Reasons for Participation

Educators self-reported very different reasons for competition participation than those they attributed to their students. Nearly half (45%) of the reasons selected by educators for competition participation were related to improving work ethic and motivation, hearing the judges' feedback, and increasing students' attention to musicianship. However, when educators assessed why they thought their students preferred to attend competitions, again, almost half (45%) of the responses indicated that students attended competitions to win and receive high ratings, to be recognized as an award-winning choir, and to increase excitement and morale. For educators, the role of ensemble competitions in their choral classrooms was primarily a motivational one, encouraging students to work more diligently and focus attention to musical details.

Students, however, preferred to enjoy the competitive aspect of the activity and were more focused on winning as well as the subsequent reputation associated with such results. It is interesting to note that while “to hear judges’ feedback,” “to increase work ethic/motivation,” and “to increase attention to musicianship” comprised the top three reasons educators attended competitions, this did not translate to their students; these three reasons appear in the four least popular reasons students preferred to attend competitions. While educators used competitions as motivational forces in their classrooms, according to their own reports, students’ primary focus appeared to be on the competition results rather than musical achievement. Educators indicated that winning competitions was a very low priority, while they simultaneously reported that it was a high priority for their students.

Award Type Preferences

According to educators’ perceptions, students had a higher preference for award types such as rankings, ratings, and caption awards, which indicate superiority over other choirs. These rankings were consistent with the educators’ perceptions of student preferences for competitions, which indicated students value winning and receiving high ratings and being recognized as an award winning choir. By comparison, educators most frequently valued judges’ comments. While judges’ comments are not specifically a type of tangible award, the compliments and critiques given by adjudicators were the most valuable to educators. This was also consistent with their reasons for participation, which indicated that educators attended competitions to improve work ethic and motivation, to hear the judges’ feedback, and to increase attention to musicianship.

Importance of Competition Participation

Significant differences were found between several comparisons of groups regarding the importance of choral competitions. When asked to make an assessment of competition importance to their students and their students' parents, concert choir only educators perceived significantly less importance than concert/show choir educators. Interestingly, show choir only directors rated the importance of competitions significantly lower than concert/show choir educators, although show choir educators previously reported attending twice as many competitions. No significant differences emerged pertaining to perceptions of competition importance to administrators. Overall, competition participation most frequently held the highest importance for students and least for the educators.

Differences Between Choir Types

The overall competition participation effort represented a much greater role in show choir classes than in concert choir classes. When compared to concert choirs, show choirs attended more competitions, invested more rehearsal time, spent more money, and required more personnel in order to participate in competitions. Educators' perceptions of their students' award preferences indicated that show choir students highly desired affirmation from adjudicators, prioritizing rankings, caption awards, and judges' comments over ratings and participation awards. Educators taking only concert choirs to competitions showed a preference for their own group rating over their rank against other choirs.

Implications for Music Education

Motivational researcher Martin Maehr noted that, “the problems associated with creating, fostering, and retaining continuing interest and motivation in music are indeed multifaceted and complex” (Maehr, 1983, p. 6). To this end, choral music educators have employed ensemble competitions as part of their musical curricula in an effort to stimulate high levels of student motivation towards musical goals. The original concern that inspired this study was not that competitions had a role in choral music education, but that they had such a considerable role in choral music education. The inclusion of competitions in choral music education is clearly meant to be motivational; however, even by the educators’ own account, students’ focus on competition results such as rankings and ratings rather than the goals of musical achievement. Competition preparation, in many classrooms, has consumed an extensive amount of rehearsal time, leaving an inadequate amount of time to cover other musical standards. Competitions represent a type of token economy where winning is a token for achieving the goals of musical achievement. As is the danger with any token economy, the token (winning) can become the goal (previously, musical achievement). When the token becomes the goal in this situation, teachers inadvertently create musicians who, in short, make music to win competitions. This creates concern for continued motivation for musical participation when competition participation ceases.

From this study, the main implication that emerges for music education is the degree to which competitions are used for motivation. Here, music educators are confronted with the issue of intention versus function. The intention is that competitions

are used as a means to bring focus to musical achievement, motivating students to try their very best to attain musical competencies. They are meant as a tool to keep attention focused on musical goals. The function, according to the educators surveyed in this study, is that students are focused on winning and the recognition that accompanies such victory. Their focus is not in line with the goals of their teachers, creating an interruption in the connection to the musical experience. Another implication emerges for show choirs. According to those surveyed, show choirs spend twice as much time and monetary resources to participate in double the number of competitions. Based on these behaviors, show choir students might be more likely to develop a desire for competition results rather than musical goals.

Limitations of the Study

Although the accuracy of descriptive research may suffer due to self-reporting, this issue is compounded when requesting that participants make inferences about others' opinions. The time constraints on this study made it impossible to retain permission from multiple public schools to survey students to assess their preferences for competition participation. While valuable baseline information was attained during the course of the study, the benefit of direct responses from the students would be more desirable. With direct responses from students, more individualized information could be obtained; additionally, responses could be examined overall and also separated and compared through a number of demographic considerations.

Areas for Future Research

In the implementation of this study, several areas of future research have emerged. While this study examined the motivations and practices of educators who do participate in competitions, several educators choose specifically not to attend. Because it was not possible to request survey participation from only those who fit the demographic parameters, the request for participation went out to several who do not participate in competitions. Several of these educators contacted the researcher to explain their pedagogical reasons for abstaining from participation, indicating they felt their voices had not been heard on the matter. As there seems to be incongruence between the reasons that motivate educators and students to participate in competitions, the opinions of those who choose not to participate in competitions would provide another perspective in establishing the role of ensemble competitions in music education.

A number of smaller questions have emerged that could be potentially addressed within a single study. Some research has suggested an inverse relationship between the number of competitions in which educators participate and their number of college degrees. The hypothesis is that the more degrees an educator has completed, the fewer competitions in which they participate. This relationship is also suggested between competition participation and length of teaching career. The idea to be examined is that earlier in their teacher careers, newer teachers participate in more competitions in an effort to establish themselves as respected educators.

Another question to be examined pertains to the different competition designs, each of which presents advantages and disadvantages. Festival-competitions were

originally predicated at least partially on the opportunity to see other groups perform and learn from that experience. Choral ensembles often attend such competitions, perform, and depart, leaving little or no time to have the educational experience of seeing others in their craft. Additionally, some competition festivals provide only written and recorded comments for the choir to contemplate at a later time, forgoing the opportunity to have the adjudicator/clinician work with them in person. Certain competitions, specifically show choir competitions, often differ in this aspect. The design of the schedule virtually requires ensembles to stay and hear all of the ensembles that follow them. With this in mind, educational benefits may exist in examining and comparing the different competition formats and educators preferences for each.

APPENDIX A

QUALTRICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Q2. Are you currently a choral music educator at a high school?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

LOGIC: If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q3. Including the current school year, please indicate the number of years of service you have completed as a choral music educator.

- _____ Total years of service in K-12 music (1)
- _____ Total years of service in high school choral area (2)
- _____ Years of service at current school (3)

LOGIC: If Years of service in high sc... Is Less Than or Equal to 1, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q4. What is the approximate total student population of the school in which you are currently teaching?

- _____ Approx. Total Number of Students (1)

LOGIC: If Approx. Total Number of Stu... Is Less Than or Equal to 499, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q5. In which state do you currently teach?(Your answer to this question is to ensure that a minimum number of responses are collected from each participating state. Your responses will be collectively identified as "show choir" or "concert choir"; no state will ever be indicated.)

- Alabama (1)
- California (2)
- Illinois (3)
- Indiana (4)
- Iowa (5)
- Mississippi (6)
- Missouri (7)
- Ohio (8)
- Virginia (9)
- Wisconsin (10)
- None of these (11)

LOGIC: If None of these Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

Q6. In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions:

- Concert Choir (A choral ensemble of any size or voicing, a "stand-still" choir, performing music a cappella or accompanied.)
- Show Choir (A choral ensemble of any size or voicing that executes choreography while singing, typically accompanied by a live show band.)
- In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition.

LOGIC: Answer If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: Concert Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q7. In the 2012-2013 school year, how many choral ensemble competitions did your concert choir attend?

_____ Number of competitions attended in the 2012-2013 school year

LOGIC: Answer If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: Show Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q8. In the 2012-2013 school year, how many choral ensemble competitions did your show choir attend?

_____ Number of competitions attended in the 2012-2013 school year (1)

LOGIC: Answer If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: Concert Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q9. How much of your rehearsal time with your concert choir is dedicated to choral ensemble competition preparation? (The numbers of the slider indicate percentage of total rehearsal time available.)

_____ % of rehearsal time dedicated to competition preparation (1)

LOGIC: Answer If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: Show Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q10. How much of your rehearsal time with your show choir is dedicated to choral ensemble competition preparation? (The numbers of the slider indicate percentage of total rehearsal time available.)

_____ % of rehearsal time dedicated to competition preparation (1)

Q11. How important is it to the following people that your choral ensemble(s) participate in competitions?

	Not at all Important	Very Unimportant	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Very Important	Extremely Important
You	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your administrators	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your students' parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12. Of the following choices, select up to 5 that best describe why you prefer to attend competition(s).

- To hear the judge's feedback.
- To increase student work ethic/motivation.
- To increase attention to musicianship.
- To win/receive high ratings.
- To be recognized as an award winning choir.
- To increase student self esteem.
- To engage in team building.
- To increase excitement/morale.
- To create pride within ensemble by attending.
- To create pride within ensemble by winning.
- To travel.
- To fortify job security.
- To satisfy school administration and/or students' parents.
- Other (please specify). _____

Q13. Of the following choices, select up to 5 that best describe why your students prefer to attend competition(s), in your perception.

- To hear the judge's feedback.
- To increase student work ethic/motivation.
- To increase attention to musicianship.
- To win/receive high ratings.
- To be recognized as an award winning choir.
- To increase student self esteem.
- To engage in team building.
- To increase excitement/morale.
- To create pride within ensemble by attending.
- To create pride within ensemble by winning.
- To travel.
- Other (please specify). (12) _____

Q14. Based on your preference at competitions, please rank the following types of awards. (1=most important, 5=least important)

You may drag and drop the choices until they appear in your preferred order.

- _____ Participation awards
- _____ Judge's comments/feedback
- _____ Rating (superior, excellent, good, fair, poor)
- _____ Ranking (1st, 2nd, 3rd, place; division champions, grand champions, etc.)
- _____ Caption awards (best soloist, best vocal tone, best show design, best choreography, etc.)

Q15. Based on your perception of your students; overall preference at competitions, please rank the following types of awards. (1=most important, 5=least important).

You may drag and drop the choices until they appear in your preferred order.

- _____ Participation awards
- _____ Judge's comments/feedback
- _____ Rating (superior, excellent, good, fair, poor)
- _____ Ranking (1st, 2nd, 3rd, place; division champions, grand champions, etc.)
- _____ Caption awards (best soloist, best vocal tone, best show design, best choreography, etc.)

Q16. Please indicate which of the following statements best describes your repertoire choices for a choral ensemble competition.

- Competitions have no influence on my repertoire choices; my choices are based solely on what I think is best for my students.
- There is some influence; I choose repertoire based on requirements set forth by the competition.
- There is great influence; I choose repertoire I think will be impressive in a competition setting.

LOGIC: Answer If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to competitions: Concert Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q17. In a school year, approximately what amount of monetary resources available to you are devoted to your concert choir's competition participation, considering all factors that are necessary for participation? (Consider entry fees, transportation, cost of music, accompanist compensation, special uniforms for competition/ extra uniform cleaning required, and any other costs you would identify as specifically related to competition participation.) If the amount is greater that \$50,000, please move the slider all the way to the right.

_____ Approximate Annual Competition Budget

LOGIC: Answer If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to competitions: Show Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q18. In a school year, approximately what amount of monetary resources available to you are devoted to your show choir's competition participation, considering all factors that are necessary for participation? (Consider entry fees, transportation, cost of music/arranging, cost of show design, choreography, show band costs, uniforms, props, accessories, and any other costs you would identify as specifically related to competition participation.) If the amount is greater that \$50,000, please move the slider all the way to the right.

_____ Approximate Annual Competition Budget

LOGIC: Answer: If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: Concert Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q19. What personnel are required in order to take your concert choir to a choral ensemble competition? (Indicate all that apply)

	Accompanists	Administrators	Arrangers	Chaperones	Show band/combo	Other
Number Required						

LOGIC: Answer: If In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: Show Choir Is Selected Or In the previous school year (2012-2013), please indicate the types of ensembles you have taken to choral ensemble competitions: In the previous school year, I have taken both types of ensembles to at least one competition. Is Selected

Q20. What personnel are required in order to take your show choir to a choral ensemble competition? (Indicate all that apply)

	Administrators	Arrangers	Choreographers	Chaperones	Show band/combo	Stage crew	Other
Number Required							

APPENDIX B

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

Statement of Consent: You are invited to participate in a research study about the role of competitions in choral music education. I am asking that you take part because you are a high school choral music educator who has recently participated in choral competitions. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have by email before agreeing to take part in this study. The study: The purpose of this research is to study the motivations, preferences, and habits of high school choral directors and their competition practices. You will be asked questions regarding your own motivations and preferences for competition participation, and habits in attending choral competitions. You will also be asked to make assessments regarding your perception of your students' overall attitudes about motivations and preferences for competition participation.

Risks and benefits: There are no risks or benefits to participating in this study.

Compensation: You will receive no compensation for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept confidential, to the extent permitted by law. The survey will ask about your years of service in choral music education, the approximate number of students in your school, and what types of choirs you have recently taken to competitions. It will not be possible to identify you from your answers. Surveys will be kept securely for one (1) year after this study ends in a locked cabinet and office.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions you don't feel comfortable answering. Your decision whether or not to take part will not affect your current or future relationship with Florida State University. If you decide to take part, you are free to skip any questions or stop at any time. You are free to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University.

The researcher for this study is Erynn Millard. You may reach her at xxxxxx@my.fsu.edu. The researcher's supervisor is Dr. Kimberly VanWeelden. You may reach her at xxxxxx@fsu.edu.

Please feel free to ask any questions you have now, or at any point in the future. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the FSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 850-644-8633 or you may access their website at <http://www.fsu.research.edu>. Please choose "yes" if you give consent to participate in this study.

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL MEMORANDUM



Office of the Vice President for Research
Human Subjects Committee
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 02/07/2014

To: Erynn Millard [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Dept.: MUSIC SCHOOL

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
The Role of Choral Ensemble Competitions in Music Education

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Expedited per 45 CFR § 46.110(7) and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 02/06/2015 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Kimberly VanWeelden [REDACTED] Advisor
HSC No. 2014.12050

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE EMAIL

Dear Choral Music Educator,

I am a doctoral music student at the Florida State University and am investigating the role of choral ensemble competitions in music education.

I am requesting your participation by completing a questionnaire, which should take approximately 10 minutes of your time. The questionnaire will involve:

1. Completing demographic questions which will confirm that you are currently a high school choral music educator, your years of service, the approximate population of the school at which you teach, and the state in which you teach, the type(s) of choirs you have taken to a choral ensemble competition in the previous school year and your competition attendance practices.
2. Answering questions about the importance of and reasons for attending competitions to you and your students, the importance of the award structure, and your competition preparation habits.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or withdraw at any time, there will be no penalty; simply close your web browser.

Your name or other identifying information will never be used in any written or oral presentation pertaining to this study.

There are no known risks or benefits for participating in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at *****@my.fsu.edu.

Thank you.

Erynn Millard
Ph.D. Candidate in Music Education and Choral Conducting
College of Music
The Florida State University

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu.

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