AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICAN CHORAL IDENTITY WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THREE REGIONAL CHILDREN’S CHOIRS

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICAN CHORAL IDENTITY WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THREE REGIONAL CHILDREN’S CHOIRS

By

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In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, I hereby declare that the abovementioned treatise is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment to another university or for another qualification.

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______________________________________________
______________________________________________
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SOLI DEO GLORIA
ABSTRACT

This qualitative mini-treatise explores how South African choral identity is perceived by three regional children’s choirs, facing challenges of representing cultural diversity against the background of an ongoing process of social transformation.

The study proposes that choirs from South Africa project a distinctly South African “choral” identity which they themselves have constructed by fabricating a mental representation of themselves, and which they project outwardly by means of a range of musical and extra-musical elements observable in the cultural product and artifacts generated over time. The researcher has analyzed a selection of cultural products and artifacts of the Eastern Cape Children’s Choir, the Cantare Children’s Choir and the Tygerberg Children’s Choir, in order to identify common practices among three subject choirs which sustain their continuity, in terms of Richard’s definition of identity (in Torres 2008: 3): “to name a set of practices which subjects may adopt in sustaining both the individual and, to varying degrees, collective continuity”.

Research findings indicate that subject choirs are perceived, and project their choral identities, according to their musical ability to communicate and interact with other world-class choirs. Recurring practices undertaken by each subject choir, in order to maintain their international perspective, are identified as key to sustaining their continuity. Choral identity is furthermore strongly influenced by the choral tradition of the choir and the role of the conductor in developing their choral tone.

This study is significant to regional children’s choirs seeking to overcome challenges of renegotiating cultural identity, as well as sustaining and expanding choral singing as an art form in South Africa.
Keywords:

choral identity

multi-cultural transformation

perceptions of choral identity

projections of choral identity

regional children’s choirs

South African cultural identity

worldwide children’s choir movement
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CHAPTER 1
GENERAL ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION
This mini-treatise explores how three regional children’s choirs and their practitioners, from different provinces of South Africa, are perceived, and project what Hammond (2004: 103) refers to as “singing South Africanness” – the premise that choirs from South Africa project a distinctly South African “choral” identity which they themselves have constructed by fabricating a mental representation of themselves, through the identification, organization and interpretation of sensory information which Goldstein (2009: 5-7) terms “perception”.

This study proposes that every choir projects its own choral identity - the choir’s unique corporate nature, essence or “persona”. In turn, audiences perceive the choir’s projections of identity according to their own socio-cultural expectations. Choral identity is observed by means of a range of musical and extra-musical elements, many of which are uniquely South African, which are projected in the music a choir makes as it performs (its cultural product), as well as by the artifacts which represent its range of choral activities over time. The researcher has attempted to analyze a selection of cultural products and artifacts in order to identify common practices among three subject choirs which sustain their continuity, in terms of Richard’s definition of identity (in Torres 2008: 3): “to name a set of practices which subjects may adopt in sustaining both the individual and, to varying degrees, collective continuity”.

1.2 REGIONAL CHILDREN’S CHOIRS: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
Regional children’s choirs are a relatively new addition to the choral landscape of South Africa. Developing from a rich Western European cathedral boys’ choir tradition, itself dating from the Middle Ages, the worldwide children’s choir movement gained momentum in Europe and North
America during the late 19th century, when girls were granted membership of such choirs for the first time. Wolff, (2001: I: 2) states: “…an innovative development was the establishment of children’s choirs that involved both boys and girls. … The mixed gender children’s choir movement has grown from strength to strength and has become the norm rather than the exception in the western world”.

During the early 20th century, Professor Erkki Pohjola established the Tapiola Children’s Choir, Finland, with mixed-gender soprano and alto voices, “developing it into one of the most highly acclaimed vocal instruments of our time” (Wolff 2001: I: 2). In North America, Helen Kemp, “the mother of the children’s choir movement” and Doreen Rao, pioneered graded choral education programmes termed “performance as music education” (Hower, 2008: 2). As schools implemented such graded choral-based music education programmes, they created a feeder-system for community-based regional honours choirs encouraging regional participation in competitions and choral festivals. “Youth who are interested in participating in choral music generally have three options: school choirs, church choirs, or community children’s choirs…” (Mills 2008: 19).

Although members of these choirs were children, they soon became known as instruments of choral excellence. Wolff (2002: xviii) reports that “Treble voice children’s choirs are capable of producing exquisitely beautiful choral tone when trained correctly… Children are not only capable of singing well, but of rendering extremely artistic performances of great choral music”. Bartle, in Van Aswegen (2005: 1: 2) emphasizes that children’s choirs have become “instruments of artistic excellence treated with the same respect that have usually been reserved for adult choirs, orchestras, and opera companies”.

In 1967, the first regional children’s choir, the Pretoria Children’s Choir, was established in South Africa (Van Aswegen 2005: 2:1). By the 1990’s there were at least ten active regional children’s choirs1 almost exclusively

1 The Pretoria Children’s Choir (1967), the Tygerberg Children’s Choir (1972), the NKP Choir (1975), the Eastern Cape Children’s Choir (1982), the Bloemfontein Children’s Choir (1987), the Pietermaritzburg Children’s Choir
addressing the cultural needs of the European (Afrikaans and English) sectors of the deeply divided South African society (Van Aswegen 2005: 2: 8-9). Regional children’s choirs were initially deeply ensconced within the apartheid education system. They were formed as initiatives of educational authorities to create cultural merit awards systems for choristers of school choirs, parallel to those of sporting bodies serving South African schools at district, regional, provincial and national levels. Many were managed by provincial educational departments or tertiary institutions, and supported by parent associations, dealing with the logistic, marketing, and fundraising needs of such choirs on a voluntary basis.

The conductors and accompanists of regional children’s choirs were usually music teachers within the various provincial education departments, who were establishing themselves as choral practitioners as a result of, among others, backgrounds of community, school and university choral singing, as well as exposure to the choral training of pioneering choral pedagogues such as Philip McLachlan. They produced trained choral singers in their schools through the use of highly successful choral-based primary school formal music education curricula, developing junior choirs in Grades 1 to 3, senior choirs in Grades 4 to 7, and smaller, more specialized vocal ensembles, from which the most talented and developed children’s choir members could be selected (Van Aswegen 2005: 2: 2-4). Such auditioned choristers from several schools in each region were also often exposed to curricular class music, active junior and senior primary school choirs, participation in local and regional arts festivals, as well as curricular or extra-curricular music lessons which culminated in graded external music and theory examinations, offered


2 The Paarl/Wellington Children’s Choir and the ERUB Children’s Choir appear to have served Cape-Malay/Coloured communities. The researcher could not locate a regional children’s choir with an exclusively African-ethnic membership, serving Black communities, which had been established in a pre-democratic South Africa.
by institutions now known as UNISA, ABRSM (Royal Schools) and Trinity College³.

In 1994 the first democratically elected government of South Africa, the African National Congress, embarked on transforming South African society through a process of social change aimed at reconstructing the South African cultural identity. State institutions, including schools, education departments and universities, were restructured in order to redress “the historical inequalities that were built into the educational dispensations under apartheid” and “…to commit to a new social order which reflects the social structure more accurately” (Vandeyar 2003: 123). New legislation was tabled pertaining to the governance of non-profit organizations, classifying the governance structures of regional children’s choirs into voluntary associations, trusts and section 21 companies (Lautzheimer and White 2004: 3). These classifications made it possible for children’s choirs to apply for state funding and tax exemptions as public benefit organizations if they complied with the criteria of the social change agenda.

Social reconstruction presented several challenges to South African regional children’s choirs, particularly as such organizations perceived themselves as becoming marginalized from funding opportunities and high-profile performance exposure owing to, amongst others, their historical background of prejudice, homogeneous membership composition, management structures, formal music education approach to choral music, patriotic, “Afrikaans” repertoire and Western European classical choral tradition⁴. Jacobs (2010: 2) records prevailing perceptions by South African authorities (with agendas of democratizing South African culture), that Classical music is a remnant of colonial elitism⁵.

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³ Observation based on the researcher’s experience as a chorister, music educator and children’s choir conductor.
⁴ Condensed from the IFCM 4th Multi-Cultural Conference, University of Stellenbosch (2009: ii).
⁵ Jacobs (2010: 2) reports: “When I recently applied for local government funding to support and expand the activities of my choir, I was told in no uncertain terms that my choir was ‘too white’ (despite its non-white members) and our music ‘too Western’. This reaction is an understandable throwback of colonial domination and especially of the perceived alliance between art music, Afrikaner Nationalism and apartheid…”.
Of the approximately twenty regional children’s choirs that were established in South Africa, approximately ten regional children’s choirs, founded before 1994, still exist at the time of conducting this research. A few have disbanded or have been absorbed into other choirs. Most appear to have assimilated members from other cultural groups while largely maintaining their Eurocentric choral identities. Three new choirs have been formed, two of whom appear to reflect an African ethnic majority in their membership demographic. Two children’s choirs implement feeder outreach programmes to augment their membership, and have incorporated African ethnic elements in their repertoire, including attention to traditional ethnic dance, drama and linguistic training. Such choirs have appointed assistant conductors and voice trainers from previously disadvantaged communities, and incorporate ethnic elements in their costume design. One choir has founded a junior children’s choir component as part of its feeder-system strategy.

Inherited challenges in the South African education system have led to the implementation of Outcomes Based Education in 2004, and, since 2011, a revised curriculum which has reduced subjects such as art, music and class-music into the learning area of arts and culture. In turn, arts and culture has been combined with life orientation. This has minimized and even eliminated curricular music education or “class-singing” from the education curriculum, in

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6 The Bloemfontein Children’s Choir, Cantare Children’s Choir, Eastern Cape Children’s Choir, Jakaranda Children’s Choir, Magaliesberg Children’s Choir, Pietermaritzburg Children’s Choir, South Cape Children’s Choir, Tygerberg Children’s Choir, the West Rand Children’s Choir, and the ERUB Children’s Choir (http://www.classicsa.co.za/site/listings/C89/?s=choirs&f=grp&c=89&m=9&ms=).
7 The Alteprag Children’s Choir, the Stellenbosch Children’s Choir, the NKP Choir, the Paarl-Wellington Children’s Choir, the Kimberley Children’s Choir, the North-West Children’s Choir.
8 The Bloemfontein Children’s Choir claims to have been the first regional children’s choir to include members from ethnic backgrounds (http://www.bloemfonteinchildrenschoir.org.za/).
9 The Cantare and Ekhuruleni Children’s Choirs.
11 The Cantare and Eastern Cape Children’s Choirs.
12 The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir established the Eastern Cape Junior Children’s Choir in 2008 (www.ecjcchoir.com/page/more_about_us).
13 “Each homeland had an education system of its own and in South Africa there was a separate education department for each race group…it also needs to be acknowledged that more Herculean efforts are required in order to transform basic education into a functional system which is well able to deliver the quality of education needed to empower the youth and the previously uneducated segments of society. This to make them happy and useful citizens who are well equipped to build the type of future for the nation that is envisaged in the Constitution” (Hoffmann 2008: 1).
14 “[The] Council [of Education Ministers] has further taken on board the recommendations of the Review Committee to reduce the number of learning areas in the Intermediate Phase from eight to six. That means that in grades 4 to 6 technology will be combined with science, arts and culture will be combined with life orientation and economic and management sciences will be taught only from grade 7” (Ministry of Basic Education 2010: 2).
turn affecting school choirs, which are the foundational feeder-systems from which children’s choir members are drawn. The researcher has had first-hand experience, as choral director in several primary and secondary schools since 1994, of choral activities being moved out of academic time, into the afternoons or early evenings, thereby competing with the school’s extramural sporting fixtures, homework workload and school social events, resulting in chorister fatigue, withdrawal from participation of the child by parents, logistic problems such as unavailability of after-hour transport for choristers, and lack of suitable venues for rehearsal on a regular basis. The researcher has also experienced incidents where conductors of school choirs do not want to release their best singers to become members of a regional children’s choir owing to calendar and event clashes, thereby depleting their pool of choristers.

Since new legislation pertaining to non-profit companies was passed in 2008\textsuperscript{15}, several regional children’s choirs have changed their legal status from voluntary societies and non-profit organizations into trusts and section 21 non-profit companies (NPC’s), making it possible to apply for funding grants from institutions such as, amongst others, the Department of Arts and Culture and the Lotto Trust. The legislation also provides regulations for managing finances of choirs, which include concert ticket sales, asset purchases and membership fees. One of the greatest challenges for children’s choirs remains high operational costs which continue to exclude choristers from lower socio-economic sectors, who are faced with extensive transport, uniform, tour and membership expenses\textsuperscript{16}.

South Africa has increasingly become a concert destination for international choirs who tour the country, participating with their local hosts in cultural exchange joint concerts\textsuperscript{17}. Barrett (2009: 38) states: “South African choral

\textsuperscript{16} Parents of the researcher’s regional children’s choir (South Cape Children’s Choir) pay between R2000 to R21 000 or more, in a year, depending on whether the choir undertakes an international tour during that year.
\textsuperscript{17} The researcher’s choir has, between 2008 and 2012 performed joint concerts on South African soil with the World Youth Choir, Glynn Ellis Children’s Choir, Halle Children’s Choir (Germany), Estonian TV National Children’s Choir, YIP Children’s Choir (Taiwan), Texas State Chorale, Ruamjai Youth Choir (Finland), St Andrew’s Cathedral School Choir (Australia), Aachen Cathedral Boys’ Choir, Washington Children’s Chorus, Los Angeles Children’s
singing plays an important role in the international community. South Africa’s unique choral setup has attracted the attention of people across the globe”. This international interest is related partly to economic and political development by investor countries “using arts and culture as a springboard to do so” (Barrett 2009: 38). Many amateur South African choirs, particularly regional children’s choirs, youth choirs and university choirs, have increasingly undertaken numerous international concert tours, participated in international choral festivals and competitions, and have held prominent positions on various international choral ranking lists (http://www.sagoodnews.co.za/south_africa_inthe_world/sa_choirs_shine_at_world_choir_games_2.html).

1.3 **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IDENTITY FOR SOUTH AFRICAN CHOIRS**

Hammond (2004: 103), a European chorister in a multicultural South African choir, poses the question: “What right do I have to call myself South African?” Maloka, in Jili (2000: 71) challenges the relevance of Western art forms to South Africa’s emerging cultural identity: “If Africans are to avoid defining themselves in the shadow of the West, then they must have the courage to consider discarding some of the ineffective and culturally irrelevant institutions and structures that have been promiscuously copied from the West”. South African children’s choirs face challenges of renegotiating their identities to remain relevant within “the discourses of ‘the new South Africa’” (Hammond: 2004: 106) in order to authentically reflect the choral traditions of Africa to their multi-cultural audiences and international guests.

Researchers consulted in this mini-treatise suggest the need for addressing identity transformation: “South Africa should…work towards a deeper and proactive diagnosis of the content of the culture of its diverse peoples and find spaces for dialogue based on equity…” (Vandyeyar 2003: 123). Lamprecht (2002: 1) states: “…a new perspective on cultural and musical identity is
imperative in South Africa in order to promote the well-being of the nation”. Jili (2000: 2) states: “…the way we define culture has a bearing on the way we view our identity. ….the continuing importance of identity issues relates to the devaluation by colonialism of African cultures and histories…It therefore becomes a matter of national importance to construct a cultural heritage that can be adopted and owned by all citizens”. Hammond (2004: 111) introduces choral music as a suitable mechanism for identity transformation: “Choral music, therefore, belongs to all groups and so is a non-threatening site for the renegotiation of identity. Its hybrid nature allows us to construct a musical culture that does not overwrite the past, but rather expands to include new, shared experiences.” Oelofse (2002: 45) emphasizes that a choir mirrors the cultural conditions of the society or community it represents: “Choral singing is a phenomenon brought on by the need for choral activity to reflect the events – and thus the real needs of the society in which it is practiced.”

1.4 MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH AND STATEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTION

The researcher, working as a choral director in the competitive field of South African regional children’s choirs, is interested in finding out how choral identity in regional children’s choirs contributes to an emerging, all-inclusive, yet diverse South African choral culture against the background of social transformation. Identifying the practices such choirs adopt to sustain their continuity in order to remain relevant will contribute towards ensuring the future of the choral art in South Africa.

The researcher has selected three typically representative South African regional children’s choirs with whom his own choir has performed, and who have consented to being researched. They are the Eastern Cape Children’s Choir (Eastern Cape), the Cantare Children’s Choir (Southern Gauteng) and the Tygerberg Children’s Choir (Western Cape).
The general research question of this study is:

In what ways do perceptions and projections of South African choral identity in three regional children’s choirs contribute to their sustained continuity?

1.4.1 **Primary Objective of the Study**

The primary objective of this mini-treatise is to explore how South African choral identity is perceived and projected by three regional children’s choirs, in order to determine which musical and extra-musical practices adopted and implemented by all three subject choirs, as part of their artistic, cultural, organizational and functional lifespans, contribute to the construction of a unique “essence”, “character” or “persona” which can be considered the representative, corporate identity which “drives”, inspires or gives them vision and purpose, leading to artistic success. Such practices, according to Richards (in Torres 2008: 3), comprise the subject choirs’ identities.

1.4.2 **Secondary Objectives**

The secondary objectives are:

- To discover whether any typically South African choral elements and traditions are evident in the projections of identity by subject choirs;
- To consider the relevance of regional children’s choirs toward breaking down cultural barriers and renegotiating South African cultural identity;
- To gain understanding about the phenomenon of regional children’s choirs in South Africa and their role as choral feeder-systems, in order to maintain and expand the choral art in South Africa.

1.5 **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to contribute towards the growing body of multi-disciplinary research on identity, by exploring how identity is perceived and projected by South African regional children’s choirs. Very little research has been done on the phenomenon of South African regional children’s choirs. “Interestingly, relatively few researchers address the connection between identity and music in adolescents and children” (Mills 2008: 76). “To date, most perceptual
analysis of music…concentrates solely on the signal. Any musical analysis approach that ignores the contextual extra-signal information is doomed in the long run: they are making decisions based on a very small part of the musical experience” (Whitman 2005: 18-19).

This study is also significant in identifying the need for fresh initiatives to create, recreate and transform South African choral culture in its performed music. Oelofse (2002: 1) expresses a serious concern that “…choral music in particular has been relatively slow to respond to these changes in South African society”. The 4th Multi-Cultural Choral Conference of the International Federation for Choral Music, held on 31 March to 4 April 2009 at the University of Stellenbosch, has concluded in its findings that “choral tradition has a far stronger influence on identity than previously thought”, and that “no further integration towards a common South African identity seems to be occurring18”.

This research introduces the concept of choral identity to new generations of conductors and their management bodies who may be confronted with inherited, outdated organizational structures, rapidly changing social conditions of choristers, changes in the cultural expectations of audiences, as well as outdated, irrelevant choral practices and conventions.

This study also emphasizes the crucial function which regional children’s choirs fulfill with regard to providing well-rounded, experienced choristers to regional youth choirs, university choirs, church choirs, and other community choral groups, who may experience declining membership of their choirs, and have to accept poorly-trained, less accomplished choristers as members.

Education stakeholders, such as provincial and national education departments, will find this study significant as part of their initiatives to redevelop and maintain systems of choral music education in primary schools.

18 The researcher was a delegate attending the 4th IFCM Multi-Cultural Choral Conference. Source: 4th IFCM Multi-Cultural Choral Conference, University of Stellenbosch (2009: ii).
1.6  **LIMITATIONS AND DELINEATION OF THE STUDY**

Owing to the multi-disciplinary nature of the topic and constraints with regard to the length of this mini-treatise, the research is exploratory and includes data indicating how the choirs may want to perceive themselves or be perceived by others. Subjects’ perceptions of South African choral identity may not be consistent with objective reality or with others’ perceptions, because they respond to situations differently and behave in different ways (Robbins, in Bacus 2008: 6). Budgetary constraints have limited the selection of subjects to only three regional children’s choirs with which the researcher has contact. In keeping with ethics requirements when researching children, this mini-treatise has not studied the individual choristers singing in children’s choirs and has not addressed issues of individual identity-formation in choristers. Audiences’ perceptions of the projections of identities by choirs have not been investigated.

This study is further limited by a dearth of research on the history of the collective regional children’s choir movement in South Africa. Consequently, few references on the topic can be employed as parameters in the findings. The researcher, as a conductor of his own regional children’s choir, may be biased towards the relevance of the regional children’s choir in South African culture, and has his own perceptions of choral identity. In order to minimize researcher bias, the perceptions of subject choirs’ conductors have been incorporated in the study, as a form of triangulation, and several textual perspectives have been included.

1.7  **OUTLINE OF THE STUDY**

- Chapter 1 has introduced the rationale of the research. The purpose and motivation of the research, the general research question, objectives, limitations and delineations of the study have been listed, and topics for further study presented.

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19 Mills (2008: 32) states: “Many researchers combine psychological and social perspectives, as well as physical development perspectives, when investigating identity development”. Other pertinent scholarly disciplines that address identity include anthropology, ethnomusicology, organizational design, economics, management studies, psychology, philosophy, post-modern and post-colonial studies (Compiled from researcher’s observations).
• Chapter 2 discusses the research design and methodology, including in-depth clarification of key concepts as part of the conceptualization of the research design.
• Chapter 3 presents a review of the literature of primary and secondary sources in order to present an overview and bibliography of past and current theoretical thinking.
• Chapter 4 presents the profiles of three regional choirs referred to in this mini-treatise, as well as their conductors' perceptions of choral identity.
• Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study, and ends with a summary of the findings.
• References and appendices follow.

1.8 TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY
• Constructing models of choral pathways towards multicultural choral practice in South Africa.
• The nature of social and musical interaction between individual members, voice groups and conductors of children’s choirs in the context of sociological knowledge and theories on mono/inter/multi-cultural group interactions.
• Exploring the nature and effects of transculturation as a change dynamic with regard to constructing choral identity in South Africa. Jacobs (2010: 2) refers to this as: “…the ‘Africanisation of art music’ and the ‘metropolitanisation of African music.”
• Exploring the prevalence of a cappella singing as a key indicator of a choir’s international standard.

1.9 SUMMARY
The preceding chapter has surveyed the rationale of the research, identifying the research question and providing the motivation, primary and secondary objectives, significance, as well as the limitations and delineation of the study. Lastly, topics for further study have been listed. The following chapter will present the research design and methodology, including clarification of the most important key terms found in the study.
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND METHOD
OF DATA ANALYSIS

2.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter 1 has presented the rationale of the research by presenting a historical perspective about the history of regional children’s choirs in South Africa. It has also presented the research question, provided the motivation, primary and secondary objectives, significance, as well as the limitations and delineation of the study, with topics for further study. Chapter 2 discusses the research design and methodology used in this mini-treatise, and includes an in-depth clarification of key concepts as part of the conceptualization phase of the research design.

2.2 RESEARCH DESIGN
Booth et al (2008: 56-61), in discussing the nature of conceptual problems, state that “the condition of a conceptual problem …is always some version of not knowing or not understanding something”. They identify four steps to the formulation of a conceptual question: the statement of topic, the conceptual question, the conceptual significance and the potential practical application. The purpose of the study has been stated in Chapter 1 as being an exploration of South African choral identity with specific reference to three regional children’s choirs. The research question has focused on how perceptions and projections of choral identity, which have been perceived and projected as distinctly South African, have contributed to the subjects’ sustained continuity. The broader conceptual significance of the study has been stated as a contribution towards renegotiating South African cultural identity through choral music, and the potential practical application has been linked to the need for creating choral feeder-systems to maintain and expand the choral art in South Africa.
De Vos (in Vuma 2011: 103) indicates that “the main advantage of qualitative research is the building of new theories as well as exploration of new areas of research”. Babbie (2007: 117) states: “…research design involves a set of decisions regarding what topic is to be studied, among what population with what research methods for what purpose”. This mini-treatise utilizes elements of ethnographic and case study design, focusing on a small number of cases against the broader contextual history of the cultural movement of regional children’s choirs in South Africa. Its literature review introduces various interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives, from which multiple sources of data have been identified, categorized and analyzed within flexible, evolving design features.

The study follows general principles of case study design applicable to many forms of qualitative research, as indicated by Babbie and Mouton (2003: 282-283):

- “The role of conceptualization in case study research;
- The importance of contextual detail and in-depth description;
- Using multiple sources of data;
- Analytical strategies in case study research”.

2.2.1 Conceptualization

Babbie and Mouton (2003: 282) identify several key principles which guide construction of a conceptual framework of a study:

…stating the purpose of the study; presenting the principles guiding the study, either as hypotheses or research questions; sharing the reasoning that led to the hypotheses or questions; and carefully defining concepts. The construction of the framework is based on a combination of a literature review and the researcher's experience”... “It is not uncommon for case study researchers to formulate broad ‘conjectures’ (which) perform the role of ‘guiding principles’ and assist in structuring the data-collection process.
The literature review has provided a framework of past and current theoretical thinking, ranging from the value of the choral art, various inter-disciplinary perspectives of identity, South African choral traditions, the use of choirs in identity transformation, the role of children’s choirs in social transformation, the influence of the conductor on identity, and aspects of legislation affecting the organizational identity of choirs. A historical overview of the cultural phenomenon of regional children’s choirs in South Africa has been presented from the researcher’s perspective, as a conductor of a regional children’s choir.

2.2.2 Clarification of key concepts

Key concepts have been carefully defined below, as part of the conceptual framework, ensuring uniformity and understanding of the terms used throughout the study:

**Choral identity**

Originally, a term used in Classical Greek tragedy to define the role of the chorus of elders (Dhuga 2005: 333). In the context of this mini-treatise, choral identity is defined as: “to name a set of practices which subjects may adopt in sustaining both the individual and, to varying degrees, collective continuity” (Richards in Torres 2008: 3). In choral performance, choral identity refers to the execution of a varied choral repertoire (representing one or more cultures), by individuals in collaboration, wearing distinctive choral attire, utilizing voices in homogeneous, harmonic combination, according to stylistic conventions and musical criteria belonging to one or more choral traditions, enunciating language texts (lyrics governed by linguistic conventions), which may require choreographed dance and/or body movements during interpretation; under the creative influence or direction of a conductor’s interpretation of a musical score (Researcher’s definition).

**Multi-cultural transformation (or cultural pluralistic transformation)**

A term describing the process of transforming a community or organization into an equitable, fair and representative body which upholds ethnic diversity and democracy. By making the broadest range of human differences

**Perceptions of choral identity**

Personal constructs created by individuals and groups during their processes of organizing and interpreting sensory impressions in order to give order and meaning to their environment (paraphrased from Goldstein 2009: 5-7). In the context of this study, choirs’ perceptions of choral identity may not be consistent with objective reality or with others’ perceptions, because they respond to situations differently and behave in different ways (paraphrased from Robbins, in Bacus 2008: 6). Goldstein (2009: 5-7) identifies perception as being “the organization, identification and interpretation of sensory information in order to fabricate a mental representation through the process of transduction”. The process of perception begins with an object in the real world (the distal object). By means of light, sound or another physical process, the object stimulates the body’s sensory organs. These sensory organs transform the input energy into neural activity – a process called transduction. Perception is sometimes described as the process of constructing mental representations of distal stimuli using the information available in proximal stimuli:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transduction (The process of perceiving)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proximal stimuli</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projections of choral identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Saks and Johns (2011: 7)

**Projections of choral identity**

“The process of giving other people a particular idea about you … an idea that seems real because of your own strong feelings” (http://www.macmillandictionary.com/.../projection). The projection of identity in regional children’s choirs, particularly their projection of South African
identity, is observable in the cultural product (performances, concerts, etc.) and cultural artifacts such as photographs, compact disc covers, websites, newspaper articles and constitutional documents, amongst others, of subject choirs. (Researcher’s definition).

Regional children’s choir
A non-profit society with roots in Western European art-music traditions, which has as its core activity the choral development and concert preparation of an amateur choir of excellence comprising auditioned and selected boy and girl choristers between the approximate ages of 9-14 (or up to as old as 17) from a geographical region, drawn from several sources (schools, choirs etc.), who perform a repertoire of same-voiced choral music for concerts, tours and competitions at a regional, provincial, national and international level, and in so doing, function as cultural representatives in music for their region, as amateurs, with a high musical and choral standard (Researcher’s definition).

South African choral identity
A changeable, unfolding corporate, communal, cultural, multi-cultural and/or ethnic persona, presence, musical or social identity that is observably South African in projection, and that reflects past, present or future elements of South African social conditions and expectations (Researcher’s definition).

Worldwide children’s choir movement
A movement utilizing girls’ and boys’ voices, which had its origins in boys’ cathedral choirs, of the 17th to 19th centuries, in Britain and Europe, and which spread to America in the late 1800’s as part of the curricular music education system. The movement spread worldwide from the 1930’s, when repertoire for children’s choirs became available, becoming a vehicle for quality choral performance and extracurricular music education. (Wolff 2002: xvi).

2.2.3 Contextualization
The study has explored the conjecture that regional children’s choirs from South Africa project a distinctly South African choral identity in performance which they themselves have constructed by fabricating a mental
representation of themselves. A historical perspective of the regional children’s choir movement in South Africa has been provided. The ecology or environment of the study subjects is presented below, in the form of profiles, or summarized life histories, of each of the choirs.

2.2.4 Multiple sources of data
Cook and Campbell (in Babbie and Mouton 2003: 282) emphasize the rationale for using multiple sources of evidence: “From the ethnographic tradition, thick description means using multiple perspectives on multiple systems, using multiple methods and sources of evidence”. This is a form of triangulation, from which patterns of replication may emerge, assisting in ensuring that findings are credible and transferable. The researcher has made use of sources from his own collection, has requested sources from subject choirs, has interviewed conductors and has accessed public records pertaining to the choirs, such as websites and news articles.

2.3 METHODOLOGY
The fourth principle of Babbie and Mouton’s case study design is the analytical strategy to be employed. This refers to “(1) How to organize your findings; (2) The question of whether generalization is appropriate to case study data; (3) The issue of theory development” (Babbie and Mouton 2003: 283).

The researcher has considered the stages identified in Taifel and Turner’s social identity theory (in Hammond 2004: 3) as pertinent towards constructing a methodology for analyzing data. The theory lists categorization, identification and comparison:

*Categorization is a process by which we order our environment. By categorizing people, we allow ourselves to assume certain things about them, based on the normal behaviour and professed ideologies of the groups to which they belong. Similarly, by categorizing ourselves, we are able to identify appropriate behaviours based on the groups to which we perceive ourselves as belonging. In order to do this, however, we have to*
Identify the people who belong to the same groups as us. This process of identification is based on notions of sameness. We assume, in some way that fits our purposes at a particular moment, that we are identical to a certain group of people. In this way, we construct what Benedict Anderson (1983) calls ‘imagined communities’.

In this study, the researcher, who, as a conductor of a regional children’s choir, perceives himself to be a member of an “imagined community”, has presented descriptions of theoretical perspectives, historical background and profiles of the life histories of three regional children’s choirs, in order to construct a data-categorizing framework comprising main themes and sub-themes pertaining to identity. A selection of available cultural artifacts and cultural products, which represent projections of subject choirs’ identities, have been collected and arranged under each category. A descriptive, comparative analysis of the products and artifacts has been appended to each theme and sub-theme. Repetitive patterns emerging from the comparison of choirs’ utilization of their cultural artifacts and products have been identified and linked to practices which choirs undertake towards sustaining their continuity. Any uniquely South African elements evident in the practices of each choir have been identified. The perceptions of three conductors regarding their choirs’ choral identities, as well as theoretical premises and definitions used in this study, have been tested for credibility.

The researcher has compiled a schematic representation of the study’s methodology:

**Categorization:** Themes pertaining to choral identity, taken from the literary review and historical overview, are categorized into main headings with various perspectives grouped under each main heading as sub-themes.

**Identification:** Cultural product and artifacts from 3 choirs which are perceived and projected as examples of choral identity, are identified.

**Comparison:** Three regional children’s choirs are compared by observing and analyzing patterns appearing in each choir’s projection of identity, as exemplified by their cultural product and artifacts.

**Selection:** Adopted practices which appear to be typically South African, and which appear to ensure continuity of every choir, are selected and arranged into generalized sets.

**Conductors’ Perceptions of Choral Identity** are compared with analysis results.

**Theory Tested**

- Richard’s definition of identity;
- The researcher’s definition of choral identity;
- The nature of choirs’ notions of South African choral identity.
2.4 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Baptiste, (in Lamprecht 2002: 8), mentions that “regardless of methodological orientation, qualitative data analysis comprises four interrelated phases:

- Defining the analysis,
- Classifying the data
- Making connections, and
- Conveying the message – as per report on data-analysis”.

Mouton (2005: 108) states:

*Analysis involves the ‘breaking up’ of data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. The aim of the analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one’s data through an inspection of the relationship between concepts, constructs or variables, and to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated, or to establish themes in the data.*

The researcher has grouped different perspectives and notions of choral identity into four main thematic categories, which have emerged from the literature review and historical overview:

- Themes relating to members’ individual identities;
- Themes relating to choirs’ musical identities;
- Themes relating to choirs’ national, cultural and ethnic identities;
- Themes relating to choirs’ identities as organizations.

The category of identity relating to individual members has been eliminated from the scope of this mini-treatise, owing to ethical restrictions regarding conducting research on children. Utilizing the remaining categories, the researcher has identified and classified pertinent sub-themes emerging from the literature review under each main theme, and has selected, classified and analyzed representative cultural artifacts and products of the three choirs, which are publicly available, in his possession, or supplied by subject choirs on request, for elements of identity. Cultural artifacts and products refer to organizational documents (vision and mission statements, constitutions),
recorded cd and visual examples of pieces sung, photographs of the choir, media articles, website information, records of overseas tours, lists of international groups hosted, awards and achievements, records and artifacts of their repertoire and performances. The researcher has performed a comparative analysis across the three subject choirs by making descriptive notes of how each choir has projected identity by means of the cultural products and artifacts. Finally, the researcher has observed and made conclusions about which items represent, or have been generated because of, practices which have been frequently implemented by all three choirs to sustain their continuity, and whether they could be considered uniquely South African. Observations and conclusions have been recorded and compared with the responses of the three conductors of subject choirs, who were asked to express their perceptions of choral identity, during an informal, audio-recorded interview.

2.5 SUMMARY
Chapter 2 has discussed the research design, methodology and method of data-analysis implemented in this mini-treatise, as well as providing an in-depth clarification of key concepts. Chapter 3 reviews the literature supporting the rationale presented in Chapter 1 and the research design in Chapter 2.
CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter 2 has presented the research design, methodology and method of data-analysis, as well as clarifying the key terms. Chapter 3 reviews the literature supporting the rationale presented in Chapter 1. As such, Chapter 3 forms an important part of the research design by being “an exercise in inductive reasoning, where the researcher works from a ‘sample’ of texts in order to come to a proper understanding of a specific domain of scholarship” (Bailey, in Van Heerden 2007: 36). According to Babbie and Mouton (2003: 565) the literature review also serves a bibliographical function, indexing previous research and giving an overview on current theoretical thinking. Folkestad (2004: 83) also emphasizes that “the theoretical framework of the research study, as laid out by the preliminary literature review, indicates that qualitative methods, at the centre of this study, are well established in music educational research”.

The researcher has reviewed inter-disciplinary literature relating to various aspects of identity, applicable to music, choirs and regional children’s choirs, and, where possible, within a South African context, in order to provide a literary framework for the conceptualization of the research design. Headings have been added in order to group emerging themes into broad categories.

3.2 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES CONSULTED
The researcher has presented a selection of primary and secondary sources in order to provide the broadest possible inter-disciplinary scope within the research constraints.

3.2.1 The value of the choral art to humanity
In all sources consulted, authors concurred that choral singing is a profoundly valuable cultural, social and artistic activity which is fundamental to mankind.
Wilson (1959: 10) states: “We insist that the chief concern is not what people can do to music but what music can do for and to people.” Mbuyamba (2006: 1) emphasizes the role that Africa should play in promoting choral singing as one of the oldest and most universal arts of mankind.

Music participation, such as choral singing, is crucial to a human’s overall intellectual development because the study of music heightens critical thinking skills and stimulates the creative part of the brain. Albert Einstein (Lautzheimier & White 2000: 12) states: “It occurred to me by intuition that music was the driving force behind that intuition and my discovery was the result of my musical perception.”

Durrant (2003: 40-45) emphasizes the nature of the human voice as an agent for the emotions, being the most effective means of expressing wide ranges of thoughts and feelings. He emphasizes the role that choral singing plays as a social, inter-communicative experience:

*Choral singing enables people to work together toward a common goal. People of different backgrounds, social status, and ethnicity can relate to one another through musical participation. Within these groups or social structures, people derive satisfaction from social approval and acceptance as well as from the singing itself; they can feel socially safe.*

Phillips (1992: 336-337) indicates that the beauty of group singing lies in its corporate nature, and that there are few places in life where people actively join together in a group effort to share their feelings and thoughts about life. “Whatever its benefits, expressive group singing is a tradition of humankind that has as its basis this need to share and express what makes people human”.

Barrett’s research into the cultural benefits of choral singing, indicates that choral singing generates social capital, which he defines as “an instantiated set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permits them to cooperate with one another” (Barrett 2009: 22). He
emphasizes that choirs create bridging social capital by creating networks that are outward-looking and including people across diverse social cleavages.

Literary sources emphasize the capacity of choral music to break down cultural barriers between people and reconstruct culture. Lamprecht (2002: 2) states: “There is a way that music brings people together, even when they don’t understand the music they’re singing.” During the interpretation of a choral work in performance, a wide range of emotions, intentions, contexts and meanings are grasped and shared by choristers. This experience integrates “ethnicity, religious or political affiliation, work place, ancestry, shared interests, attitudes, and common goals, which may be called culture” (Sharlow 2006: 2). Cultural cohesion depends on aspects such as group stability, length of time the group has existed, how intensely the group has experienced learning, the mechanisms of learning, as well as the strength and clarity of the assumptions held by the founders and leader of the group (Schein 1990: 111). Cultural cohesion in a choral ensemble takes place at various social and inter-relational levels. “…Choristers who sing together effectively develop bonds akin to those formed between groups of people who regularly communicate in a meaningful way” (Hammond 2004: 107).

3.2.2 Theoretical perspectives on identity
Choristers construct individual and collective identities for themselves according to their perceptions of who they are as individuals, as members of a group, as performing artists, and as representatives of a larger cultural movement.

Torres (in Mills 2008: 12) states that personal identity includes “aspects of the self which distinguish one from other individuals, thereby establishing one’s uniqueness”. Individuals therefore “develop a sense of their own identity by comparing themselves to others and noting the differences”. Greenberg, in Mills (2008: 26) substitutes the term self-identity with that of self-concept - “the perception the individual has of himself”. There are strong emotive and subjective elements inherent to the concept of self-concept. Van Heerden (2007: 2) indicates that music “may serve as a model of self, a resource for
articulating and stabilizing self-identity – hence the term *musical identities*. Mills (2008: 11) emphasizes the experiential quality of musical identity: “Each child’s experience in a children’s choir is unique. Each child brings to the choral setting a particular personal and musical identity that is influenced by his or her experiences in the choir.”

Richards (in Torres 2008: 3) uses the term ‘identity’ to “name a set of practices which subjects may adopt in sustaining both the individual and, to varying degrees, collective continuity”. This definition is supported by Widdicombe and Wooffitt, in Torres (2008: 3): “Identity is not seen as a thing that we are, property of individual, but as something we do. It is a practical accomplishment, achieved and maintained through detail of language use.” In the context of this research, continuity-sustaining practices adopted by South African children’s choirs are identified by observing the projections of choral identity (the cultural product) or the artifacts of their projections. This is achieved through use of music as a communication medium.

Choristers fundamentally are members not only of a specific choir but also of a greater community of choristers on a national, and even an international, level. “Choristers typically construct identities for their choirs based on a sense of belonging to a greater network of choirs” (Hammond 2004: 104). According to Anderson (in Hammond 2004: 105), groups, such as choirs construct “imagined communities” with which to identify themselves and others like them. “We assume, in some way that fits our purposes at a particular moment, that we are identical to a certain group of people.” Hammond defines this assumption as “social identity”: “…that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Hammond 2004: 50). Taifel and Turner (in Hammond 2004: 105) mention three stages in the process of identity formation: categorization, identification and comparison. “Seen from this intergroup perspective of social identity, social categorization can therefore be considered as a system of orientation which helps to create and define the individual’s place in society.” Worchel (in Hammond 2004: 73)
explains that groups have just as strong a desire to develop a group identity as individuals have to establish their own sense of identity and that groups become known by their enduring “character” which outlives the individual members.

The cultural product of a choir – the music it creates in performance – in itself has an identity, and reflects the identity of a choir. Ralston (2008: 1) states: “The issue of musical identity – of what defines works of music, gives each its unique character and distinguishes them from one another – is one of the central issues in the philosophy of music.” Sharlow (2006: 4) includes the performers in their activity of performing music in his description of musical identity. “The choral ensemble is characterized by distinct qualities inherent in the musical score, the human voice, and the group of people collaborating in music.” These qualities may be used to define a group’s corporate musical “essence”, or artistic “persona”. Born, (in Torres 2008: 5), links music and body with dance and choreography. He discusses the process of musical identities that provide a bridge between the musical performance and the experience of the body in the micro social field. Hammond’s research (2004: 110) mentions that several choristers identify a number of extra-musical features that “South Africanize” western music. Some listed dress, movement and dancing as the main features of “African” musical performance.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher has termed a choir’s projection of musical and extra-musical identity in performance as “choral identity”. Hammond, (in Bouwer 2009: 14-15) identifies choral identity as: “choral sound, homogeneity, visual aspects and repertoire.” Frith (in Torres 2008: 3) states: “Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers to the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives.”

A choir’s choral identity is neither static nor permanent, but is adaptable, changeable and receptive to being moulded by a range of stimuli over a period of time. Cultural identity is formed when “a population experiences both bad and good times together, and adapts their environment to manage the
obstacles and benefits presented them” (Van Heerden 2007: 2). Hammond (2007:24) indicates that identity can be transformed: “Identity transformation involves negotiating the tensions between processes of identification, and processes of differentiation.” Lanza (in Van Heerden 2007: 2-3) states: “Music may serve as a model of where one is, was, is going, or where one ‘ought’ to be.”

Several authors link societal transformation to manifestations of identity. Oelofse (2002: 45) emphasizes that choirs are microcosms of the communities they represent, as well as society at large, and that they reflect the social realities of their audiences. Grossberg (in Torres 2008: 1) argues that modern cultural identity has a heterogeneous constitution, character and outcome and is constructed out of difference: “…Thus, the modern constitutes not identity out of difference but difference out of identity”. Hall, (in Torres 2008: 2) points out that identities are becoming increasingly fragmented and fractured in modern and post-modern societies, being “…multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions”. Olsson (in Torres 2008: 2) emphasizes that identities are “representations” which are neither fixed nor stable. Hesmondhalgh (in Torres 2008: 5) analyses manifestations of identity across regional and national boundaries, while Barker (in Torres 2008: 2) contends that national identities are being replaced by hybrid identities owing to accelerated globalization. Frith (in Torres 2008: 3) emphasizes the formative role of music in the construction, negotiation, and transformation of sociocultural identities. Born, (in Torres 2008: 3-4) comments on the “aesthetic pleasure of music” and emphasizes that “…music can construct new identities while reflecting simultaneously on existing ones”. He proposes that it is the extraordinary powers of imaginary evocation in music that render a primary means of both marking and transforming individual and collective identities.

Woodward (in Torres 2008:6) explores the links between identity and subjective feelings and emotions which lead individuals and groups to attach to particular identities. Hammond (2004: 3) indicates that humans articulate the conscious and unconscious aspects of their characters through music.
3.2.3 **Choral traditions in South Africa**

Baines (in Jili 2000: 50) refers to the disparity of the collective South African cultural identity as reflected in its choral traditions: “Apartheid effectively created two nations; one white, the other black. …South Africa became two political communities in a single national territory”. Bouwer (2009: 1:1) concurs: “In South Africa, there has been for decades, even centuries, a tendency by people from different races to rather preserve their own than to share. … As a result of this, distinctly separate choral styles have emerged in South Africa”. These separate choral styles have distinctive sonic identities\(^\text{20}\) which Barrett (2009: 27-29) believes is impossible to define as a single entity.

De Beer (2006: 7) pinpoints the sonic origins of African choral music as originating from 18\(^\text{th}\) and 19\(^\text{th}\) century European influences, such as their exposure to church and school music presented by missionaries and use of military bands by colonial regimes. Lamprecht (2002: 3) identifies the elements of this diversity:

\[
\text{The African singing culture, which is based on the African scale, without semitones, developed a different aural concept of intonation, than what was the norm in the Western singing tradition. This, together with a tradition of singing with excessive vibrato and the tendency to force the voice, remained a constant challenge.}
\]

Several issues and challenges pertaining to sonic identity result from South African differences in style. It is difficult to develop a unified homogenous choral timbre from choristers with differing choral backgrounds because the African choral style makes use of vibrato, which cause overtones (more than one tone sounding together). Enunciation of diction depends on placement of sound in the mouth, which may differ between Western and African choristers. There is a difference in the way Western and African choristers conceptualize

\(^{20}\) Sonic identity refers to the defined musical identity or unique musical voice of a choir as exemplified by characteristics originating from a specific choral tradition (Paraphrased from www.smitheventmusic.com/pdf/MSM_Press_Kit_090825.pdf and researcher’s definition).
the function of choral music: Eurocentric choirs sing “to” audiences; African choirs sing “as part of” a community (Van Heerden 2007: 23). The difference in audience response and performance etiquette between Western and African cultures needs to be understood, appreciated and accommodated. In the performance of African repertoire, the authenticity of the culture’s music, symbolism, traditions and movements must be demonstrably transferred. Hammond’s research (2004: 109) points out that most choristers connect “head voice” singing with older Western musical styles and European (especially church) music, while “chest voice” singing is connected by many choristers with modern music (particularly jazz and African American Spirituals) and African music.

3.2.4 Perspectives on African and European identity in South Africa

African ethnophilosophy argues the existence of an “African essence” comprising cultural artifacts and products including proverbs, folklore, art, aphorisms, fragments, rituals, traditions and collective wisdom of the African people, which is comparable to Western philosophy (Kwame in Jili 2000: 10). This essentialistic view argues that postcolonial African society has been so westernized that any genuine African philosophy must be rooted in pre-colonial society. Non-essentialism, on the other hand argues that identities are socially and historically constructed. Jili (2000: 7) states:

Social constructivism maintains that identities are constructed by socio-cultural environments and that there are no fixed essences that all Africans can be said to share. Like the social world, people are the product of their social environment and identities are constructed through everyday social interaction.

White South African identity was constructed out of two ethnic groups of European origin (English and Afrikaans) both of whom defined themselves primarily in contradiction to the indigenous population. But they also

21 (Researcher’s observations were collected from the IFCM 8th World Symposium on Choral Music, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2008, and the University of Stellenbosch “Voices of South Africa” Conference on Multicultural Choral Music”, held in April 2009).
distinguished themselves from each other through adopting a different standpoint to the ‘other’. “The narrative of ‘whiteness’ which informed the construction of white identity meant that race became a salient social category in South Africa” (Jili 2000: 49).

Price (in Jili 2000: 60) indicates that “…since the election of 1994, the political ethos pushed by the ANC…has been non-ethnic and non-racial. Its leadership has missed few opportunities to project in its speech, symbols and political ritual the idea of an inclusive and universalistic South African identity; an identity which encompasses but…eclipses ethnically and racially defined memberships”.

3.2.5 Renegotiating South African identity through choral music

Jili (2000: 1-49) states: “The way we view our culture has an impact on the way we view ourselves and our identities.” He states that South Africa’s transition from a white minority regime, justifying exclusive and oppressive rule in the name of apartheid of “separate development”, to a majority democracy which contains a constitution arguably the most liberal of constitutions worldwide, has been accompanied by a quest for a new national identity, symbolized by the phrase “rainbow nation”. Barrett (2007: 4) reports: “Since the dissolution of apartheid and the first democratic elections in 1994, South Africans of all races have been reconceptualising their identities to fit into the discourses of the ‘New South Africa.’”

Folkestad (in University of Edinburgh 2011: 8) distinguishes between national identity, cultural identity, and ethnic identity. He states: “Music plays a particularly important role in countries which have had their legal and cultural sovereignty seriously threatened over extended periods of time.” Barrett (2007: 4) contends that choral music belongs to all groups and so is “a non-threatening site for the renegotiation of identity”. Oelofse (2002:1) indicates that cross-cultural interaction has not been taking place in the South African choral music scene. The 4th Multi-Cultural Choral Conference of the International Federation for Choral Music, held on 31 March to 4 April 2009 at the University of Stellenbosch, concluded that choral tradition has a far
stronger influence on identity than previously thought, and that “…no further integration towards a common South African identity seems to be occurring” (IFCM 2009: ii). Hammond (2004: 103), as a chorister in a South African choir, poses a central question with regard to choral identity: “What right do I have to call myself South African?”

The search for a representative choral identity has become particularly relevant since South Africa has become a popular tourist and concert destination for many international choirs who often perform South African traditional ethnic music. Barrett (2007: 38) states: “South African choral singing plays an important role in the international community. South Africa’s unique choral setup has attracted the attention of people across the globe.” This international interest is related partly to economic and political development by investor countries “using arts and culture as a springboard to do so” (Barrett 2007: 38).

De Beer (2007: 1) states: “Although choirs from Africa perform western music, African compositions and African neo-traditional music, most choirs with a western background focus on neo-traditional selections when performing folk music from South Africa.” He terms Neo-traditional music as “a hybrid genre of music which is an amalgam of western and African tradition”. Van Aswegen (2005: 1-6, 7:6-13) states that South Africa has a valuable collection of folk music and composed repertoire, in both western and African idioms, and that there is a worldwide interest in indigenous African music, but that there is a shortage of ethnic choral music for children’s choirs. She highlights the challenges that African choirs have in exclusively using solfa notation (solfeggio), as well as their tradition of passing choral music on orally which prevents authentic replication. Children’s choirs may struggle with the a cappella (unaccompanied) nature of African choral works, which are mainly sung by adult choirs utilizing tenor and bass voices, the difficulties of pronouncing African lyrics, and the difficulties of learning dance and interpreting symbolic movements. She mentions that conductors of western choirs sometimes feel intimidated by perceived political agendas behind the inclusion of African music in their repertoire. To remedy these challenges, Van
Aswegen recommends that western conductors should learn from conductors from African communities in a spirit of “Ubuntu” (Van Aswegen 2005: 1-6).

3.2.6 Perspectives on multi-cultural transformation

Mbembe and Posel (in Hammond 2004: 111) state:

*Choral singing in South Africa has the potential to contribute significantly towards the realization of this ideal [of reconciliation across racial divides, and a polity based on principles of human sameness rather than racial difference], not only because it is an opportunity for South Africans of all races to interact and cooperate in a non-threatening environment, but also because it is a site for the renegotiation of South African identities. Choral music…is an inclusive genre with the potential to redefine South Africanness in a way that suits the heterogeneous ideal of the new South Africa.*

Bouwer (2009) has conducted research on three previously “white” universities who implemented strategies of accommodating diversity within their choirs. The first model has accommodated two choirs of different identities existing together. The second model has accommodated an integrated choir, and the third model has remained primarily Eurocentric in its membership composition. Her findings indicate the strengths and weaknesses of each model, concluding that each model is suited to its own circumstances.

Another choir that has had success in multicultural integration is the University of Port Elizabeth, now renamed Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Lamprecht (2002: 22) states: “Musically I feel that we have overcome many of the challenges I have discussed. …We have managed to develop our own unique sound quality, which we can adapt to all the different musical styles that we are singing. We have developed the musical qualities of the African traditional singing and introduced it not only to Europe and the Philippines, but also to the South African white audiences.”
Storper (in Lamprecht 2002: 2) indicates that exposing students to multicultural music is the first step towards eradicating prejudice and racism. Van Heerden (2007: 26) refers to the processes of enculturation and socialization, through which musical knowledge can be informally transferred. Enculturation is the process by which choir members learn the culture by which they are surrounded, and acquire values and behaviours that are appropriate or necessary in that culture. Successful enculturation results in competence in the language, values and rituals of the culture. The largest cultural group within a choir therefore exerts the greatest cultural influence on the identity of the choir and will influence how choral music is learnt by the choir. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enculturation).

3.2.7 The role of the children’s choir in social transformation
The children’s choir contributes to the breaking down of cultural barriers because it has its roots in communal music-making and manifests a history of adaptation to social change. Wolff (1992: 2) states: “It is vitally important that we educate children to be sensitive to beauty, in order to counteract the unseemly and course influence of our ever-increasing materialistic society.” Van Aswegen, (2005: 2: 2) indicates that children’s voices have been utilized in European and British choral music for centuries. Curwen (1899: 15) indicates that in the past, particular attention was given to boys’ voices. Martin (1910: 17) presents strong prejudice against girls’ voices who, historically, have been excluded from singing in choirs. Mees (1901: 176) records the use of boys in cathedral and church choirs utilizing sacred (church) music. The exclusion of girls in children’s choirs of previous centuries, is paralleled by the exclusion of African children from pre-1994 South African regional children’s choirs, and illustrates the adaptability of children’s choirs within the context of social change.

The history of the international children’s choir movement in, amongst others, the United States of America, reveals an intense interest in, and practice of, singing multi-cultural choral works, thereby creating opportunities for children between the ages of 9 to 14 years to explore diverse cultures by performing traditional or folk music from various countries. Piaget’s theory of cognitive
development (in Mills 2008:42) explains why this age group is so susceptible to identity-formation:

*Children are active and motivated learners; Children organize what they learn from their experiences; Children adapt to their environment through the processes of assimilation and accommodation; Interaction with one’s physical environment is critical for cognitive development; Interaction with other people is equally critical for cognitive development. The process of equilibration promotes progression toward increasingly more complex forms of thought.*

Van Aswegen (2005) discusses the link between the international history of the children’s choir movement and the development of good repertoire for children’s choirs which developed in the 1920’s, out of the compositions and music-education programmes of Kodály. “Music educators discovered what a tremendously rewarding aesthetic instrument the mixed-gender choir can be” (Wolff 2001: 1: 2). Two names appear in sources linking children’s choirs and multi-cultural music education, viz. Helen Kemp, “the mother of the children’s choir movement” and Doreen Rao. Hower (2008: 2) emphasizes Rao’s role in pioneering “performance as music education”. Several sources of choral technique emphasize teaching of choral principles as a programme of musical education in children’s choirs: “Although the choral programme is inherently performance-based, the end product should not become the ultimate consideration. The choral teacher’s prime duty is to give the choristers a thorough music education” (Wolff 2002: xvi).

3.2.8 The influence of the conductor

Literary sources emphasize the all-encompassing influence of conductors in the construction of identity in choirs. All sources concur that the conductor’s function and influence in terms of vision, leadership, organizational skill, musical ability, qualifications, experience, musical tastes and preferences, stage persona and even personality, exert a direct bearing on the organizational culture and ethos, the day-to-day operations and the artistic goals of the choir. Strommen (2005: 108) hints at the extent of this influence
in terms of musical performance: “Years of being involved with performing organizations at all levels has convinced me that despite whatever shortcomings or advantages a group suffers or enjoys, it all boils down ... to the cook – the conductor. The passion of the person up front will drive and motivate the players”. Stanton (1972: 1: 2) concurs: “In the midst of all this diversity, the position of the conductor remains virtually the only – certainly the strongest – hope for the continuing growth, adaptability, and relevance of the choral function.” Kaplan (1985: 18) emphasizes that the conductor’s conducting technique is the single element that most affects the eventual sound quality of a chorus in performance.

Lamprecht (2002: 65) points out that a conductor working in a multicultural environment should create a safe social environment, detect racism with membership selection, and develop self-awareness skills to cope with the social dynamics of the group, in order to facilitate acceptance, understanding and sensitivity among the different cultures. She describes the musical abilities of the conductor:

The conductor should have self-awareness of own musical abilities; willingness to share expertise; to be exposed to new musical influences and stylistic approaches; continuously develop and seek musical knowledge of various stylistic interpretations and strive to continuously evaluate and improve conducting and vocal production techniques.

Other vital roles of the conductor which Lamprecht highlights are to encourage the choir to share musical knowledge and skills in the wider community; to sensitize and expose all communities to the different musical traditions in the country; and to introduce the wealth of South Africa’s musical heritage to the rest of the world.

3.2.9 How legislation affects organizational identity

In 1996, a new South African constitution was adopted which recognized and acknowledged unity in diversity, showing tolerance and respect for human rights, liberating subjugated cultures and promoting cultural equality. The
White Paper of 1996 was tabled, announcing far-reaching policy changes to how concepts of culture and heritage would be interpreted and implemented, in order to bring about equitable transformation of its divided society. Ngubane (in South African Parliament 1996: 1) states:

*The aim of this document is to promote the arts, culture, heritage and literature in their own right, as significant and valuable areas of social and human endeavour in themselves. It spells out the institutional arrangements required to implement a new vision in which they are developed, practised and celebrated among all our people, and it indicates the changes required of existing institutions to assist this. It also deals with the rights of practitioners within these domains.*

Act 71 of 1997 stipulates that voluntary associations, trusts and section 21 companies are recognized as the legal entities available to non-profit organizations. These three kinds of entities may then register as Non-profit Organisations in term of the Non-profit Organisations Act. Entities already registered as Non-Profit Organisations may register as Public Benefit Organisations under the Income Tax Act. This entitles Public Benefit Organisations to a broad range of tax benefits, including income tax exemption. Finally Public Benefit Organisations can apply for the right to receive tax-deductible donations. These Public Benefit Organisations receive so-called donor deductible status.

The legal entities available to governing/management bodies of choirs are useful mechanisms which enable access to funding in order to meet the financial demands of multi-cultural transformation. These demands include purchase of repertoire, specialized voice, movement and drama training, rehearsal and concert transport costs, membership fees and sponsorships, uniform purchase and supply, camp fees, and international tour expenses.

Different governance structures are in place for voluntary associations, trusts and section 21 companies. These structures are necessary for the effective
management of the non-profit organisations\textsuperscript{22}, and invariably influence such organisations’ identities as legal persons. The founding documents, constitution, vision and mission statements of a children’s choir reflect the organisation’s perspectives of identity and its strategies for transformation\textsuperscript{23}.

### 3.3 SUMMARY

Chapter 3 has provided a review of past and existing literature, across multiple disciplines, dealing with concepts of identity, and has attempted to position the issue of identity within a South African historical and sociological context.

The literature review has provided a framework of past and current theoretical thinking, ranging from the value of the choral art, various inter-disciplinary perspectives of identity, South African choral traditions, the potential of children’s choirs to promote identity transformation, the influence of the conductor on a choir’s identity, and aspects of legislation affecting the organizational identity of choirs. It indicates that choral singing is a changeable, emotive, and subjective cultural activity generating social capital, and reflecting the social reality of its practitioners and audience. In a South African context, choral identity has evolved from two diverse choral traditions and includes features such as African-ethnic dress, movement or dancing, through which identity can be projected. The cultural product of choirs – their music sung in performance – also reflects the group’s corporate “essence” or identity. The status of the South African regional children’s choir as a non-

\textsuperscript{22} The constitution of a voluntary association usually provides for the appointment of a management committee, who are given executive powers to manage the association. The constitution should provide for the election of members to the various offices, including chairperson, treasurer, etc. and for the holding of meetings and the procedures to be followed at those meetings including the quorum required and the manner in which votes are taken. A trust is governed by its board of trustees. The trust deed of will provide for the appointment of a board of trustees. Trustees may not act until they have been authorised to do so by the Master of the Supreme Court. A section 21 company has a two-tiered governance structure consisting of the members and directors. A section 21 company must have a minimum of 7 members and they exercise their powers in the general meeting. For example they have the power to appoint and remove directors, amend the founding documents of the company. A minimum of two directors must be appointed. Directors are usually given broad executive authority. The memorandum and articles of association of the company should provide for the election of members to the various offices” (Non-Profit Organisations Act 71 of 1997, Section 12 (2) (h)).

\textsuperscript{23} “One of the requirements for registration under the Non-Profit Organisations Act is that an organisation must set out in its founding documents the organisational structures and mechanisms for its governance. Section 30 of the Income Tax Act also imposes other conditions on the governance and operations of Public Benefit Organisations. For example, the organisation’s constitution must provide that there are at least three unrelated persons with fiduciary responsibility for the organisation and no single person may directly or indirectly control the decision-making powers relating to the organisation” (Income Tax act of 1962, Section 30 (3) (b) (i)).
profit organization, in the context of multi-cultural transformation, and the issue of renegotiating cultural identity is also discussed. The literature also indicates that the conductor has a primary influence in determining the identity of a choir.

Chapter 4 follows by presenting the profiles of three regional children’s choirs, and their conductors’ perceptions of choral identity.
CHAPTER 4

PROFILES OF THE SUBJECTS OF STUDY AND
CONDUCTORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF CHORAL IDENTITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter 3 has provided a review of past and existing literature, across multiple disciplines, dealing with perspectives of identity. Chapter 4 presents the profiles of three regional children’s choirs, and their conductors’ perceptions of choral identity.

4.2 PROFILES OF THE SUBJECTS OF STUDY
The three regional children’s choirs selected for study have the following attributes in common:

- Each choir has matured from a pre-apartheid Western choral tradition;
- Each comes from a different geographical region of South Africa;
- Each has a track-record of excellence with regard to local, regional, national and international activity;
- Each has a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic membership demographic;
- Each represents at least four ethnic, cultural or language groups;
- Each projects a multi-cultural identity in terms of choral repertoire, annual choral activities, organizational documents, and performance attire;
- Each performs to audiences comprising and representing multi-cultural/multi-ethnic communities.

The profiles of the choirs cover their organizational structure, geographical location, development history, vision and mission, services provided, operational challenges, number of recordings made, performances with other choirs, as well as international tours undertaken.
4.2.1 The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir (ECCC) is a non-profit choral organization based in Port Elizabeth, in the province of the Eastern Cape. The province was formed in 1994 out of the Xhosa homelands of Transkei, Ciskei, and the eastern portion of the Cape Province. It is one of the poorest provinces in South Africa owing to the endemic poverty inherent in the former homelands (http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_Cape).

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir was established in 1980 from within the auspices of the apartheid government-controlled Eastern Cape Provincial Education Department by its founding director, Anna du Plessis, targeting European children from privileged socio-economic backgrounds, who were auditioned, and who had some measure of music-reading ability. The original management structure comprised a chairman (normally a senior member of the Education Department), a secretary, the choir conductor and a repetitor/accompanist. Du Plessis was succeeded by Junita Lamprecht from 1983-1985, and Lionel van Zyl, the current director, was appointed in 1986.

Between 1980 – 1994, owing to its homogenous European membership, the ECCC was perceived as an elite, rich-man’s choir and encountered negative media coverage and protests during its first concert tour of Italy in 1992 “due to the obvious lack of cultural diversity as far as members were concerned” (Van Zyl 2007: 34).

After 1994, the transformation of South Africa’s education systems led to the choir’s management becoming the responsibility of parents. Members were recruited from all racial groups and financial backgrounds on the basis of a successful voice audition only Development programmes were initiated to accommodate and support choir members from disadvantaged communities. Van Zyl (2007: 35-37) reports:

> The number of applicants who turn up for auditions has also become significantly less, so that often children of lesser skill and talent must be admitted simply to ensure the balance of the ensemble, because of the
additional financial burden that membership of the choir places on the resources of the family... Although some members continue to fit the profile described above, the new composition of the choir is both challenged and enriched by two additional, distinct musical traditions. On the one hand there is the group who have had some exposure to the western musical canon, and, on the other hand, there are black children in the development programme who have only been exposed to township choral music. The challenge of the conductor in this case is to draw choristers from such contrasting musical backgrounds together to the benefit of the choir as a whole.

The organization’s vision and mission comprises the maintenance of the children’s choir; contributing to the musical education of pupils through participation in choir work with its attendance, discipline and values; encouraging and spreading choral tradition in the Eastern Cape and further afield; and contributing to cultural growth and music appreciation (The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir 2006: 1 and Van Zyl 2006: 39). It provides approximately 70 auditioned children from primary and high schools of mainly the Port Elizabeth region in the Nelson Mandela metropolitan area, between the ages of 11 and 14 from all socio-economic cultural and ethnic backgrounds, with local, regional, national and international choral-singing opportunities. Auditions are held annually, in October. The choir rehearses twice a week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, for two hours per day. One additional rehearsal per term is usually held on a Saturday.

The organization is administered by a voluntary parental choir committee and exacts membership fees, ticket fees and sponsorships/donations in order to cover the costs of sponsored members, a compulsory choir camp at the beginning of the choir year, hosting costs of visiting choirs, a grant for the choir director and accompanist (who also acts as rehearsal pianist), acquisition of sheet music, payment of telephone accounts, postage, paper, rental of the choir’s permanent rehearsal venue, as well as the costs of
recording sessions and the production of compact discs, of which the choir has made eight during its existence\(^2\).

To encourage confidence to appear on international public platforms and to expose the choir to external cultural influences, eleven international concert tours have been undertaken, once every two years. Since 1992, tours have been undertaken to: Italy (1992), France (1994), Austria and Eastern Europe (1996), Germany and the Czech Republic (1998), France, Holland, Belgium and Normandy (2000), Germany (2002), The United Kingdom (2004), Germany and Czech Republic (2006), Germany, Finland, Estonia (2008), Germany, Switzerland (2010), Germany, Lichtenstein and Switzerland (2012).

The ECCC has performed on South African soil with several international children’s choirs which include the Prague Philharmonic Children’s Choir, the Los Angeles Children’s Chorus, the Vox Aurea Children’s Choir, the Südpfalzlerchen Children’s Choir, the Estonian Children’s Choir, the Vienna Boys’ Choir, and the Kinderchor der Stadt Halle. International joint concerts include the Chicago Children’s Choir (1996), The Choeur d’Enfants de l’opera de Paris (1999), Les Pétites Chanteurs (Monaco Boys’ Choir) (2002), the Mainzer Dom Knabenchor (2003), the Tucson Arizona Boys’ Chorus (2004), the Würzburger Domsingknaben (2005), and the the Severacĕk Children’s Choir (2006) (http://www.eccchoir.co.za/page/choir_friends and Van Zyl 2006: 39-41).

4.2.2 **The Cantare Children’s Choir**

The Cantare Children’s Choir (CCC) is based in the Ekurhuleni-South region, one of five districts of the Gauteng province of South Africa. The largest language group among its 2,480,260 people is Zulu (2001 Census) and comprises members from Alberton, the southern suburbs of Johannesburg, Heidelberg and the Vanderbijlpark and Vereeniging regions of the Vaal Triangle (http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ekurhuleni_Metropolitan_Municipality).

Founded in 1995 by Ida Strydom in conjunction with the former Transvaal Education Department, the choir was privatized and funded itself through concerts, fundraising and membership fees. Choir parents, in conjunction with the musical director and conductors, carry the responsibility for administration, fundraising, marketing, finances, performances and tours.

The Cantare Children’s Choir provides local, regional, national and international choral performing opportunities for multi-cultural choir members with a Christian character. Auditions are held during April to June of every year, and choristers are selected from grades 4 – 7 for participation in the choir’s year, which spans from October to September of the following year. Members practice in Alberton once a week, and also undertake regular choir camps and week-end tours. The Cantare Development Choirs in Katlehong, Thokoza and Tembisa were established in 2005. These choirs are funded by the National Lotto Development Trust Fund.

The vision of the Cantare Organisation is to be truly representative of all cultures; to produce a unique South African sound, representing the community and South Africa; thereby creating a benchmark of quality choral music, quality education and goodwill between people. Medium term goals are to undertake national and international tours and to take part in various national and international choir festivals and competitions their long-term goals are to become one of the most acclaimed choirs in South Africa (http://www.cantare.org.za).

Senior choristers are given the opportunity to participate in national and international tours and have participated in the 3rd Choir Olympics, Bremen, Germany (2004), and received a golden diploma and bronze medal in the competition: “Folklore a cappella”. The tour choir participated in the 5th World Choir Games, Graz Austria (2008), receiving a gold medal in the Gospel and Spiritual sections, and silver medals in the Children’s Choir and the Pop Choral Competitions. They also participated in the 6th World Choir Games in Xiamen, China. (2010) where the choir received a golden diploma and a silver
medal in the competition: Children's Choirs. They were winners of the Folk Showcase with 90% in the Llangollen International Eisteddfod, Wales (2010).

The choir has received several accolades and awards during its existence. In 2006 it received the Outstanding Children's Choir Award by the South African Choral Society at their annual choral awards. The Board of Directors was also awarded in the category: Outstanding Contribution to Choral Music. The National Lotto Development Trust Fund also received an award for Outstanding Sponsorship for Arts and Culture for sponsoring the Cantare Children's Choir to the 4th World Choir Games.

The Cantare Children's Choir has made 5 cds and performed with South African and international groups which include the Drakensberg Boys' Choir, Copenhagen Boys' Choir, Ratcliffe Choral Society, Harvard Ladies Choir, Cantate Chamber Choir, Colla Voce Youth Choir, East Rand Youth Choir, Ekurhuleni Youth Choir and various children's choirs (Pretoria, Jacaranda, East Rand, West Rand, Kimberley and South Cape) (http://www.cantare.org.za).

4.2.3 The Tygerberg Children's Choir
The Tygerberg Children's Choir (TCC) was established in 1972 through the initiative of Etienne Smit, the then headmaster of the D.F. Malan High School in Bellville and chairman of the Tygerberg Eisteddfod. The Choir comprises 70 to 76 members (boys and girls) between the ages of 10 and 14 years, drawn from school choirs in the northern suburbs and other areas of the Cape Town area of the province of the Western Cape. Auditions for the Choir are held annually in May and June. Choir leaders of schools usually make nominations, and parents are also able to nominate. The choir members leave the choir at the end of grade 8. The choir is managed by a choir committee and a parental advisory body, which represents the interests of its choristers.

The main objectives of the TCC are “to promote top quality choral singing in a multi-cultural South Africa; develop the musical and singing skills of children from all the communities in the Tygerberg and neighbouring regions; maintain
the international standard for children’s choir singing and be recognized for it; create equal development opportunities for talented children from different communities with a special focus on previously disadvantaged communities” (Tygerberg Children’s Choir 2006: 2).

The choir undertakes national tours on an annual basis, and since 1980, has toured internationally fourteen times, participating in nine international competitions, winning seven and achieving second places in Toulouse (Spain) in 2001 in the children’s division. In July 2004 the Choir visited Debrecen, Hungary on invitation to participate in the Béla Bartók 21st International Choir Competition, winning the Children’s Choir category, and sharing the first prize with the Vesna Children’s Choir from Moscow, Russia. Both choirs received 91,2% in the final round of the competition, thus qualifying to participate in the Grand Prix competition. The Choir also received two special prizes - one for the best interpretation of a Béla Bartók composition and the other prize for being the public's choice as the best choir of the competition. The Choir also received a diploma in the folklore category of the competition. In July 2006 they obtained first place in the Folklore division at the prestigious International Music Eisteddfod in Llangollen, Wales. They also obtained a 3rd place in the Senior Children's Choirs division. The Choir toured to Italy and Austria during July 2008, where they inter alia obtained 2nd Place and a Gold Medal in the Children's Choir Division at the World Choir Games in Graz, Austria. The choir was crowned World Champions twice at the 6th World Choir Games in Shaoxing, China in July 2010. They won the Music of the Religions and Folklore open categories against much older choirs. The choir also won the ATKV Animato Choir Competition in 2009 and 2012. The choir participated in the 7th World Choir Games in Cincinnati, Ohio, winning 2nd places in several categories, followed by a short tour to Germany.

The Tygerberg Children's Choir has a long and varied record of choral awards, ambassadorship roles, performances before national and

25 In 1993 the Choir participated in the SA Cultural Week during the International Horticultural Show, Stuttgard, while the Choir was the guest choir at the music festivals in Detmold (Germany) in 1998 and Basle (Switzerland) in 1998. After rigorous auditioning the Choir, along with three other prominent children's choirs, participated in
international dignitaries\textsuperscript{26}, and collaborative performances with prominent artists and musicians\textsuperscript{27}, including commissioned works by prominent composers\textsuperscript{28}.

\section*{4.3 Conductors' Perceptions of Choral Identity}

The three conductors of subject choirs were asked an open-ended question expressing their perceptions of South African choral identity during a brief

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\textsuperscript{26} SongBridge 2001 in March 2001, a mass celebration of fifty children's choirs at the World of Children's Choirs 2001 in Vancouver. In September 2002 the choir was invited to participate in the Lutheran Church's second annual convention of church music in Malmö, Sweden; and in December 2002 they presented Christmas concerts with the Danish Radio Girls' Choir in Copenhagen. Recent awards received by the Choir include: Outstanding contribution as community leaders awarded by the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI) (2004); Outstanding Children's Choir and Outstanding Choral Conductor (Hendrik Loock) from The South African Choral Society (2004); Award for outstanding national and international contribution by the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport at their Arts, Culture and Heritage Awards Ceremony (2004). Hendrik and Theresa Loock received an award by the Western Cape branch of the ATKV (Afrikaans Language and Culture Association) for their involvement as so-called 'Afrikone' (African Icons) in choir singing over many years (2005). The Choir, with Louis Loock as guest artist, received the prestigious Kanna Award at the Klein-Karoo National Arts Festival, as the Best Classical Music Production at the festival (2005). In 2011 the choir was nominated for a Kanna Award for Best Production at the KKNK. In 2012 they were nominated for the KykNet Fiesta Award for Classical Music (http://www.tcc.co.za/e_about.htm).

\textsuperscript{27} The Choir has performed before heads of state and royalty, including Pope John Paul II, Queen Elizabeth II, King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, President Bill Clinton (USA) and the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. It also performed at the inauguration of President Thabo Mbeki and Princess Alexandra of Denmark. The former ambassadors Joubert (Belgium), Khubeka (Denmark) and Niehaus (Netherlands) emphasised the ambassadorial role across borders which the children have played (http://www.tcc.co.za/e_about.htm).

\textsuperscript{28} Media reports have described the Choir as a "Superb Export Product". "Leading music critics, including Dirkie de Villiers, Paul Boekkooi, Louis Heyneman, Frikkie Strydom, Stefans Grové, Anthea Johnson, Justin Pierce, Mary-Ann van Rensburg and Ivan Meredith have praised the Choir for its musical discipline and involvement, pure voice reproduction, good intonation, uniformity of sound, sensitive phrasing, technical ability and dynamic contrasts". The Choir has also shared the stage with highly regarded South African musicians and singers, including Kammersängerin Mimi Coertse, Aviva Pelham, Manuel Escorcio, De Wet van Rooyen, the Capab Orchestra in the opera "Hansel and Gretel" under the direction of Christopher Dowdeswell. Gerard Korsten directed them in "Does the noise in my Head" by Hans Roosenschoon (http://www.tcc.co.za/e_about.htm).

South African composers have written special works for the choir, including "Lux Aeterna" from the "Youth Requiem" (Pieter-Louis van Dijk), "Driesiemandorie" (Pieter de Villiers), "Kô laat ons sing", "Magnificat", "Caritas" and more recently "Sky" (Hans Roosenschoon) and the "Tygerberg Mass" (Johan Cloete). For SongBridge 2001 (Canada) Hendrik Hofmeyr composed a commissioned work, "Tu Pauperum Refugium". This is a work for equal voices and a double choir. On instruction from Erkki Pohjola the three other choirs - Newfoundland Symphony Youth Choir of Canada, Odawara Children's Choir of Japan and Moran Choir of Israel - as well as the audience had a part in this performance (http://www.tcc.co.za/e_about.htm).
informal interview which was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Conductors consented to having their comments recorded and presented in this mini-treatise. Transcriptions of conductors’ comments were submitted to them for written approval in order to be published below.

4.3.1 **Lionel van Zyl (Eastern Cape Children’s Choir):**

“I think my choir has the advantage that I am a voice specialist, I’ve trained singers my whole life…my choir has a really good choral sound, and it’s not a choral sound which I have imagined, but it’s a choral sound I get from doing the correct exercises, which I have been doing all my life, and I know they work…And also what is very important is that a new singer has no idea of what good tone sounds like. I let them listen to the best possible recordings I can lay my hands on, to get the sound in their heads. The identity of my choir is based on good choral sound.”

4.3.2 **Ida Strydom (Cantare Children’s Choir):**

“I believe that every choir has, to a certain extent, its own identity, in the context of South African culture, if I can express it that way. Our choir, (that is, the Cantare Children’s Choir) has, since 1995, changed from a choir that consisted exclusively of European children, and sang predominantly Afrikaans works, performing in many churches, to a choir that is multicultural, and is eager to sing other cultural groups’ in our country’s songs. This has become a part of how our choir is. Every choir has its own identity, particularly the sound which is produced, and how the conductor ‘plays’ with it, how the choir’s sound is developed, and where you go with it is an identity that is created in your choir’s situation.”

4.3.3 **Hendrik Loock (Tygerberg Children’s Choir):**

“Well, to begin with, I must say that, although each choir will have its own identity, I think music is the universal language, and that you will form your own identity as soon as you will be able to communicate with world choirs, and you learn from them, you contribute towards them; and sound is a very

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29 Personal communication between the researcher and Mr Lionel van Zyl, recorded telephonically on 20/11/2012.
30 Personal communication between the researcher and Ms Ida Strydom, recorded telephonically on 19/11/2012.
important aspect; and from the very, very first foundation of music, it was sound, and the vowels that was formed in old, sacred music; and when you listen to all these wonderful music that we have (church music, sacred music) you get, and you produce music which is actually of world standard, when you perform in a certain way; and to be accepted in that way, you have to reach a certain level of production, timbre, aural ability; and then, from that, you will develop your own identity\textsuperscript{31}.

4.4 **SUMMARY**

Chapter 4 has presented a profile of each choir studied, indicating a vast range of choral activities undertaken by each. Each conductor’s perceptions regarding South African choral identity have also been presented. Chapter 5 follows with the findings of the study and a summary of the findings.

\textsuperscript{31} Personal communication between the researcher and Mr Hendrik Loock, recorded during an informal interview on 3/10/2012.
CHAPTER 5
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter 4 has presented the profiles of each choir studied, followed by the perspectives of each conductor regarding choral identity. Chapter 5 presents the findings of the study, as well as a summary of the findings. References and addenda follow the summary.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS
The results of the data analysis are structured according to Table 1, presented below. The researcher has deviated from the numbering used in Chapter 5 for the sake of simplicity of presentation, utilizing the numbering used in Table 1 for his presentation of findings. Chapter numbering resumes with the presentation of the summary of findings.
Table 1: Themes, sub-themes, items analyzed and practices identified

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1. **MUSICAL IDENTITY**

1.1 **South African Choral Traditions**

An analysis of the subject choirs' recorded repertoire indicates that they perform a variety of choral works falling within the following broad descriptive, language and stylistic categories:

- Classical (Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern);
- Contemporary-Classical;
- Afrikaans;
- English/American-English;
- South African-Ethnic neo-traditional works (Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho);
- Multicultural (songs from different countries with a folk, or traditional background, including Negro Spirituals);
- Advent/Christmas music;
- Contemporary popular music arrangements;
- Works by South African composers.

The Cantare Children's Choir's repertoire of recorded choral music reveals that 31.5% of their repertoire is Afrikaans; 18.1% is multicultural; 17.3% is ethnic South African; 14% is English or American English; 7.5% is contemporary popular; 6% is classical; and 5.6% is Advent/Christmas music.

The Eastern Cape Children's Choir's recorded works available to the researcher reveals that 73.1% of their repertoire is sacred classical; 7.4% is Advent/Christmas music; 6% is multicultural; 4.5% is South African ethnic; 4.5% is Afrikaans; and 4.5% is English.

The Tygerberg Children's Choir's recorded music available to the researcher reveals that 32.5% of their repertoire is multicultural; 20.9% is Afrikaans; 16.2% is contemporary-classical; 11.6% is English; 9.3%
is African-ethnic; 4.6% is classical; 2.3% is contemporary-popular; and 2.6% comprises commissioned South African works.

From an analysis of data, it is evident that all three choirs have originated, and are rooted in the western classical art music tradition. Practices identified by the researcher as sustaining the subject choirs’ continuity are:

1.1.1 Sourcing and preparing repertoire:
Substantial preparation and time is required by the conductor to source repertoire which is suited to children’s choir voice groups, their level of musical proficiency, their audiences’ needs, and their envisioned choral activities. An analysis of recorded repertoire and concert programmes indicate that conductors undertake the following practices when sourcing and preparing repertoire: commissioning composers, particularly South Africans, for unique works; acquiring classical works suited for children’s choirs; purchasing arranged works from music publishers; transcribing arrangements of SATB (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) works for treble-voiced choirs; sourcing newly-released contemporary-classical works utilizing several same-voice groupings; arranging contemporary-popular works into four, or more vocal parts; and singing traditional South African ethnic works, as taught by the choristers, or which are available as neo-traditional arrangements. No improvisatory works are attempted.

1.1.2 Programming of repertoire for concerts:
An analysis of concert programmes indicates that selection and use of repertoire in concerts depends on each choir’s annual choral activities; their particular membership demographic; geographic location; the nature of the function or event; the musical development and ability of choristers; availability of repertoire, including the costs of original, commissioned or imported repertoire; the conductor’s background and musical focus; the musical tastes of the choir’s audiences; the choirs’ preparation for festivals and competitions; the choral organization’s
developmental objectives and outreach activities; as well as exposure to other choirs and choral works.

1.1.3 Use of accompaniment:
An analysis of the recorded works of the three subject choirs available to the researcher, indicates that the Tygerberg Children’s Choir includes the most unaccompanied works in its repertoire (48.8%), followed by piano-accompanied works (32.2%), unaccompanied works with body percussion or percussion instruments (13.9%) and piano with percussion (6.9%). The researcher has also observed the Tygerberg Children’s Choir in concert utilizing voices emulating accompaniment and using speech and sounds instead of singing\textsuperscript{32}. The relatively high percentage of unaccompanied works included in the Tygerberg Children’s Choir’s recorded repertoire indicates its striving towards achieving a world-class standard of choral proficiency\textsuperscript{33}.

An analysis of the recorded works of the Eastern Cape Children’s Choir available to the researcher, indicated that 55% of classical works were accompanied by church organ, 40% by piano, while 5% were unaccompanied. Dominance of the organ as accompaniment instrument indicates the sacred, classical nature of the choral works presented, and the performance focus of the conductor in presenting such music.

An analysis of the Cantare Children’s Choir’s recorded work available to the researcher indicated that 60% of works were accompanied by piano and/or synthesized keyboard, 20% with synthesized keyboard and drums, while 20% were sung unaccompanied. The use of electronic accompaniment indicates a trend to popularize choral music to audiences exhibiting more commercialized musical tastes.

\textsuperscript{32} As observed by the researcher during the ATKV Animato National Choral Competition Finals, held on 30 September 2012.

\textsuperscript{33} It is the researcher’s view that one of the primary indicators of a world-standard choir is the prevalence of a cappella works being sung in the choir’s repertoire.
1.2 **Unique sonic identity**

An analysis of recorded audio and video works of all three choirs available to the researcher indicates that each choir projects its own distinctive sonic identity, which is attributed to variables in the homogeneity of each voice group’s intoned sound, differences in the individual choristers’ placement and projection of head-tones, the overall balance between, and size of voice groups (Soprano 1, Soprano 2, Alto 1 and Alto 2), as well as voice groups’ positioning in the choir’s performance formation, particularly when recording CDs.

Sonic identity is affected by availability and selection of balanced voice groups at auditions, their level of aural and harmonic singing ability when selected, their vocal range and tonal development while in the choir, the grouping of individuals according to voice timbre (dark, intermediate and light), as well as the voice group’s placement in the overall stage or performance layout. Other factors that affect sonic identity include the choir’s mastery and execution of dynamic phrasing, enunciation and over-enunciation of diction for effect, and the experience and ability of middle voices (Soprano 2 and Alto 1) to lift and maintain pitch. Voice changes in choristers, owing to the onset of adolescence, as well as the conductor’s conducting technique, also affect sonic identity.

Practices with regard to sonic identity occurring in all three choirs, which sustain individual and group continuity, are:

1.2.1 **Auditioning, selecting, combining and placing choristers/voice groups:**

All three subject choirs undertake annual audition processes and apply the following practices: Selection of soloists at auditions for choral voice-groups; selecting choristers with a very similar vocal timbre; utilizing choristers with wide vocal ranges, particularly as second sopranos and altos; limiting choristers’ membership of choirs to pre-adolescent ages; determining the positions of voice groups according
to the balance and group strength of choristers; and grouping dark, intermediate and light voices together, within every voice group.

1.2.2 **Scheduling and presenting rehearsals, workshops and camps:**
The sonic identity of a children's choir is further shaped by rehearsals, workshops and rehearsal camps. All three subject choirs undertake weekly rehearsals, schedule additional workshops and present an annual camp in order to prepare their choristers for performance. Conductors, accompanists and music staff present vocal training, utilizing voice exercises collected over long periods of time, either at the commencement of rehearsals, or as part of the training of specific vocal works. Voice-part training is undertaken during rehearsals by voice-part trainers or accompanists who train the various voice groups for a portion of the rehearsal. Choristers who are proficient note-readers are encouraged to undertake unofficial voice-part training in their own time. In other cases, voice-part CD recordings are distributed as homework. The largest portion of a rehearsal is utilized by the conductor to interpret and communicate musical aspects of the score, such as dynamics and phrasing, and to reinforce aspects of musical interpretation in performance, by means of conducting technique.

The Tygerberg Children’s Choir undertakes two rehearsals per week (Saturdays from 09.00-13.00 and Tuesday evenings from 18.30-20.30), totaling 6 hours. The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir rehearses on Wednesdays and Fridays (4 hours in total) and the Cantare Children’s Choir rehearses once a week (2-2 ½ hours, depending on the season). All three choirs’ rehearsals are affected by changes in seasons, clashing school activities, family commitments, continuity of rehearsal venue availability, as well as transport availability for choristers to and from rehearsals.

1.2.3 **Recording of compact discs on a regular basis:**
The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir has recorded 8 cds in its 32-year history, amounting to an average of 1 every 4 years. The Cantare
Children’s Choir has recorded 5 in its 17 years (an average of 1 every 3.4 years). The Tygerberg Children’s Choir has recorded 5 long-playing records and 9 cds in 40 years, averaging 1 every 2.85 years. Ongoing and regular recordings of choirs’ repertoires preserve a record of their sonic identity development. Compact discs are also marketable commodities generating additional income at concerts, and create opportunities for the choir to be broadcast on radio and certain television programmes where pre-recorded sound is required. CDs offer mementos for audiences who have attended concerts and choristers who have participated in the recording.

1.3. **Visual Aspects of Identity Uniform, Movement and Choreography**

An analysis of photographs and website images (see Addendum B and C) indicates a fusion of western and ethnic uniform elements in all three choirs, which generate unique neo-traditional designs. Choreographed movements are also characteristic of all three subject choirs’ concert performances.

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir utilizes a uniform comprising white shirts, red waistcoats, black bow-ties, trousers or long skirts for its sacred programme which projects the Western European choral tradition. For the choir’s secular programme, choristers reverse their red waistcoats to reveal ethnic designs into which the South African flag has been incorporated.

The Cantare Children’s Choir utilizes loose-hanging, black “Madiba”\(^{34}\) shirts with “hybrid-academic gown” orange panel inlays, and decorative sleeve- and collar-patterns. For an African-ethnic look, choristers change into “Madiba” shirts with colourful African-ethnic prints.

The Tygerberg Children’s Choir wears a loose-hanging blue “Madiba” shirt, black trousers/skirts and an African bead necklace or inlay as

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\(^{34}\) *A batik silk shirt, usually adorned in a bright and colourful ethnic-African print, popularized by Nelson Mandela. (Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madiba_shirt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madiba_shirt)*
formal concert wear. For more informal presentations, the girls retain their blue shirts, changing into a colourful African-ethnic concert skirt, while boys add a waistcoat-like ethnic "Madiba" shirt over their blue concert shirt. When ethnic uniforms are worn, the choir sings barefooted.

Practices observable from all three choirs which emphasize South African identity, are:

1.3.1 Changing concert attire during performance:
All three subject choirs utilize a more formal uniform for performances of sacred and classical works, and then change into a second, more ethnic uniform during intervals. Ethnic designs create a festive, colourful display, and enable the choristers to move comfortably and stay cool during performance. All three subject choirs have adhered to their original costume design, with minor adaptations in colour, inlays and accessories. Changes in concert uniform design are subject to availability of replacement material as a result of regular use, changes in projection of the choir’s identity, as well as improved, or competitive costume design trends. Maintaining the original concert uniform indicates the preservation of the choir’s identity as part of the tradition, ethos and heritage of the choir.

1.3.2 Using choreography to project South African identity:
All three choirs utilize choreography and South African ethnic elements in their singing, including ululating, accurate enunciation of ethnic vernacular, and body movements that have symbolic meanings. The Cantare Children’s Choir appears most authentic in its projection of African-ethnic works, which is attributed to its high African-ethnic membership demographic.

1.3.3 Consulting cultural “specialists”:
All three choirs make use of cultural experts in different ways to assist in authentic projection of African ethnic elements. The Cantare
Children’s Choir makes use of several conductors of African township choirs who are feeder-system conductors associated with the Cantare organization. The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir draws on members of the choir, ex-members of the choir who are tertiary students, as well as specialists from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Music Department and Choir. The Tygerberg Children’s Choir draws on external specialists and members of the music staff, who assist in specialist training of choreography and dance. These include specialists based at the Hugo Lambrechts Music Centre.

1.4 **Level of music education and choral development of members**

An analysis of all three subject choirs’ annual operational programmes, as described in their profiles and websites, indicates that every subject choir has developed its own set of practices for developing and maintaining choral development standards, culminating in measurable success indicators which include competitions, choral festivals and frequent international concert tours.

Musical development practices sustaining group continuity are:

1.4.1 **Measuring choral proficiency against international standards:**

The Tygerberg Children’s Choir has participated in nine prominent international choral competitions and choir festivals, winning seven and gaining second places in two. They have received a range of accolades over a forty-year period and, according to the Interkultur organization, are ranked 20th out of the 1000 top-ranking amateur choirs in the world (http://www.interkultur.com/leftnavi/world-rankings/list/d9668403d01db0fbf030640d3b89ed60/?tx_amranking_pi1[list_id]=).

The Cantare Children’s Choir has participated in five international choral competitions and choir festivals (once, every two years since
2004), achieving gold, silver and bronze medals in a variety of categories.

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir has undertaken eleven international concert tours since 1992, and currently undertakes an international tour every two years.

1.4.2 Participating in diverse choral activities and events:
An analysis of subject choirs’ performance records indicates that all three choirs undertake an annual itinerary of performances which include: local performances, weekend tours, regional, national and international competitions, regional or national South African tours, international concert tours, joint concerts with touring choral groups, overnight hosting of choristers from international choral groups, participation in larger musical productions, presentations of gala, reunion and Christmas concerts, radio and TV appearances and appearances as guests at special events.

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir presents its own concerts, performs at special events, presents joint concerts with other choirs, hosts visiting international choirs, participates in larger musical productions, and undertakes regional, national and international concert tours.

The Cantare Children’s Choir presents its own concerts, performs at special events, presents joint concerts with visiting choirs and recording artists, hosts visiting international choirs and participates in national and international choir competitions and festivals, including Welsh Eisteddfodau, the IFCM World Choral Games and international Advent choir festivals.

The Tygerberg Children’s Choir presents its own concerts, performs at special events, is used in larger musical productions, participates in joint concerts with other choirs and recording artists, and hosts international groups. It participates in national and international
competitions, choir festivals, choral events and concert tours. It has participated in most major prestigious choral competitions for children’s choirs, including the IFCM World Choral Games.

1.5 **The influence of the conductor**
An analysis of informal interviews conducted with the three conductors of subject choirs indicates that they all consider the conductor most influential in determining and shaping the identity of choirs.

A comparison of conductors’ functions, as reflected in their constitutional documents, profiles and records of performance, indicate that practices which sustain group continuity are:

1.5.1 **Length of tenure as conductors:**
Lionel van Zyl was appointed as the third conductor of the Eastern Cape Children’s Choir in 1986, and has been its conductor for 26 years. Ida Strydom was the founding conductor of the Cantare Children’s Choir in 1995, and has been its conductor for 17 years. Hendrik Loock was the founding conductor of the Tygerberg Children’s Choir in 1972, and has been its conductor for 40 years.

1.5.2 **Practices emphasized by conductors:**
During recorded, informal interviews, in which conductors of subject choirs expressed their perceptions of choral identity, all three conductors emphasized the attainment of correct choral tone as the predominant practice towards sustaining their choirs’ continuity at an international level:

Lionel van Zyl emphasized the conductor’s skill and experience in vocal training, and the implementation of correct voice exercises in achieving correct choral tone. Ida Strydom emphasized the importance of correct choral tone as undertaken within a multicultural membership perspective, while Hennie Loock emphasized correct choral tone as the
key to international choral acceptance from, and communication with, other world choirs.

2. NATIONAL, CULTURAL AND ETHNIC IDENTITY

2.1 Reflecting the expectations of audiences by reconceptualizing “South Africanness”

An analysis of subject choirs’ vision and mission statements, constitutions, website profiles, choral activities and logos (see Addendum A), indicates that all three choirs have undergone transformation with regard to their cultural identities since their inception, have incorporated symbolic and visual elements of the “new” South Africa, and regard themselves as “uniquely” South African exponents of a global phenomenon towards accelerated, globalized sociocultural identities.

All three choirs undertake diverse development programmes as a practice to sustain group continuity:

2.1.1 Implementing development programmes to accommodate diversity:
The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir has established a junior children’s choir, the Eastern Cape Junior Children’s Choir, to provide a basic level of choral experience, and to provide a feeder-system for new members auditioning to join the choir. Choristers with financial constraints or little exposure to Western choral practice are assisted by means of development support programmes which provide sponsorship and access to choral and musical training.

The Cantare Children’s Choir has established several developmental feeder-choirs in local townships, each with their own conductors, utilizing funding from the Lotto Trust, from which the Cantare Choir auditions and selects choristers. These feeder-choirs are the Thokoza, Katlehong and Tembisa Children’s Choirs. Members joining the
Cantare Children’s Choir undergo choral training for at least a year before being selected to sing in concert or tour-choirs.

The Tygerberg Children’s Choir focuses on careful selection of highly proficient choristers by means of auditions, from a wide feeder-base of primary schools in the northern suburbs of the Cape Town area. Deserving choristers who struggle financially are given sponsorships in order to facilitate their development. Associations with external centres of music tuition, such as the Hugo Lambrechts Music Centre, and the music departments of feeder-schools, create opportunities for Tygerberg Children’s Choir choristers to study musical instruments and singing at a more advanced level.

2.2 Choirs as members of an ‘imagined community’ or greater ‘network of choirs’ on an international level

An analysis of joint-concert and international tour records of subject choirs indicates that all three perceive themselves as part of a world children’s choir community, or network of choirs, and actively cultivate cultural exchange relationships and performance opportunities with international choirs.

 Networking practices which emerge in subject choirs to sustain continuity are:

2.2.1 Joint performances:

The Eastern Cape and Tygerberg Children’s Choirs have hosted at least seven international choirs each, since 2008, while the Cantare Children’s Choir has hosted at least five international groups during the same period. Differences in statistics are attributed to geographic and tourism variables. Joint concerts provide choristers with the opportunity to hear different choral styles, repertoire and performance.

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35 The Eastern Cape and Tygerberg Children’s Choirs are situated along a well-developed cultural tourism route, and are popular destinations for international groups.
standards. Families of the host choirs accommodate choristers of the international choirs overnight, providing meals and opportunities for cultural exchange between host and guest choristers. When touring internationally, all three subject choirs make use of the hospitality of their hosting choirs, on the same basis, in order to limit costs pertaining to concert venue, accommodation and meals.

2.2.2 Participating in global festivals such as the World Choral Games and "Songbridge":

The International Federation of Choral Music’s World Choral Games is marketed as the “Olympic Games” of choral singing. The Cantare Children’s Choir has participated during 2004, 2008 and 2010, while the Tygerberg Children’s Choir has participated in 2008, 2010 and 2012. The Tygerberg Children’s Choir has performed at the “Songbridge” massed choral concert of 2001 in Vancouver, considered by some observers to be a “rite of passage” for any choir of world standard. The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir undertakes joint international concerts with orchestras and choirs as part of their concert touring programme.

2.3 Choirs project an enduring ‘character’ which outlives the individual members

An analysis of media articles, logos, websites and CD covers indicates that stakeholders of each subject choir perceive their choir to be an enduring artistic entity exhibiting an all-inclusive, personified character which transcends the contributions of individual members. This perception is attributed to marketing and media practices which require

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36 “Songbridge is a non-competitive forum for international co-operation between children’s / youth choirs and contemporary composers developed by professor Erkki Pohjola, of the Tapioca Choir, Finland. The original concept was named Songbridge 2000, as part of UNESCO’s programme Music and Peace 2000-2001. The three most important choral events, the World Symposium on Choral Music (Rotterdam 1999), the America Cantat (Caracas 2000) and the Europa Cantat (Nevers 2000) included Songbridge in their programmes. Since 2004 Songbridge has been a project of International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM). As an established IFCM project, its mandate is to provide opportunity to open-minded choirs and conductors to work hand in hand with committed composers to create, through the medium of choral music, new messages and new models for the worldwide movement of children’s and youth choirs” (http://www.songbridge.net/html/basics.html).

37 The researcher attended the Songbridge Gala concert held in Copenhagen’s Tivoli Gardens, during the IFCM 8th World Symposium on Choral Music, on 23 July 2008.
condensed records of overall achievements of a choir, spanning its entire existence.

The following quotation extracted from a website about the Tygerberg Children’s Choir illustrates the practice of:

2.3.1 Projecting personified choral identity for purposes of media coverage and marketing:

“For almost four glorious decades the Tygerberg Children’s Choir... has taken lovers of choral music on a very special musical journey. The choir regularly performs with great aplomb for heads of state, princes, kings and queens and is one of South-Africa’s proudest export products. The choir has won every major international choral competition since its inception in 1972, and its unsurpassed legato singing, maturity of sound, musical power and dynamic interpretation of very difficult material makes Tygerberg Children’s Choir a foremost exponent in the world of international competition choirs” (http://www.tcc.co.za/e_cd.htm).

The above quotation indicates that there is a link between performance success and age of the choir. This link supports the notion that identity is created within the choir’s adoption and application of practices which sustain its continuity.

3. ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY

3.1 Organizational identity-transformation
Data analysis of constitutional documents and profiles of the subject choirs indicates that the organizational ethos of subject choirs have undergone various levels of transformation since their inception. The oldest choir, the Tygerberg Children’s Choir, is the only choir which is still associated with its founding body – the Tygerberg International Eisteddfod. The Eastern Cape and Cantare Children’s Choirs have
privatized into non-profit organizations and function independently from their provincial education department structures. The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir has registered as a non-profit company, according to the South African Companies Act. In all three subject choirs, there is a management structure comprising volunteer parents who hold management committee positions (Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer), and who assist in the day-to-day running of the choir. In all three choirs, the conductor serves as a member of the management committee.

Practices which occur in all three choirs which sustain organizational continuity and reflect organizational transformation, are:

3.1.1 Membership fees:
All subject choirs charge membership fees from the parents of choristers. Membership fees are mainly used to finance operational expenses, camps, concert uniforms, the honoraria of staff and purchases of music and instruments.

3.1.2 Fundraising Activities:
An analysis of concert programmes indicates that all three choirs depend on fundraising for addressing tour and sundry costs. A variety of fundraising events are conducted: selling concert tickets, finding corporate sponsorships and donors, hosting golf days and receiving payment from international tour operators for presenting joint concerts with international groups.

3.2 Organizational focus:
An examination of all three subject choirs’ vision, mission and objective statements indicate common practices which maintain their organizational foci.

Practices which sustain continuity are:
3.2.1 **Core activities:**

Analyzed data indicate that all three choirs strive to attain, and be recognized for, the excellence of their choral art by providing quality music education, international performing opportunities, cultural growth and discipline, within a culturally equitable, diverse, representative and culturally harmonious setting.

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir places special emphasis on preserving the choir's heritage of choral tradition. The Cantare Children’s Choir strives to create a unique South African sound, while the Tygerberg Children’s Choir emphasizes attaining recognition for choral excellence.

3.3 **Links with feeder-schools, youth choirs and university choirs**

An analysis of website profiles, constitutional documents and concert records indicates that subject choirs actively maintain feeder-school relationships, and indirectly provide choristers for regional youth and university choirs.

The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir draws choristers from primary and high schools in mainly the Port Elizabeth region of the Nelson Mandela metropolitan area, as well as the Eastern Cape Junior Children’s Choir. It directly provides choristers for the Eastern Cape Youth Choir and indirectly, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Choir and Rhodes University Chamber Choir.

The Cantare Children’s Choir draws its choristers from primary and high school choirs in the southern suburbs of Johannesburg, Alberton, Heidelberg and Vanderbijlpark, as well as the Thokoza, Katlehong and Tembisa children’s choirs. It directly provides choristers for the Colla Voce Youth Choir, the East Rand Youth Choir, the Ekurhuleni Youth Choir, the Mzansi Youth Choir, and indirectly, the University of the Witwatersrand Choir, the University of Johannesburg Choir, the University of Johannesburg Chorale, and the Vaal University of
Technology Choir, the University of Pretoria Choir and the North-West University Choir, in Potchefstroom.

The Tygerberg Children’s Choir draws its choristers from several primary schools in the northern suburbs of the Cape Peninsula and provides choristers directly to the Cape Town and South African Youth Choirs, and indirectly, to the University of Stellenbosch Choir, the Schola Cantorum Choir, the Stellenbosch Music Conservatoire Vocal Ensemble, and the University of Cape Town Choir (http://www.classicsa.co.za/site/listings/C87/?s=choirs&f=grp&c=87&m=9&ms=).

Activities observed in all three choirs which sustain continuity, are:

3.3.1 Performing with feeder-school, youth and university choirs:
An analysis of performance records, media articles and websites indicates that all three subject choirs maintain relationships with their feeder-schools by participating in joint concerts or performing as guests at feeder-school functions. Subject choirs also undertake joint concerts with regional youth and university choirs.

3.3.2 Presenting reunion functions, prizegiving ceremonies and gala concerts:
An analysis of media articles, websites and concert records indicates that all three subject choirs present reunion functions, prizegiving ceremonies, or gala concerts, to which feeder-school roleplayers are invited, and recognition is given to past members for ongoing achievements.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
The research study has explored South African choral identity by referring to how three regional children’s choirs create perceptions of, and about themselves, by projecting their identities in ways that sustain their continuity. The study has identified and analyzed common practices which characterize
their identities as individual choirs and, collectively as members of a cultural movement.

The findings of the study indicate that each of the three subject choirs have their own, unique, choral identity which is inclusively South African. The Eastern Cape Children’s Choir projects a “British Cathedral” identity in its uniform, repertoire, tonal sound, accompaniment and visual presentation. The Cantare Children’s Choir projects a predominantly multicultural Afrikaans and African-ethnic identity in its organizational outreach, uniforms, repertoire, tonal sound and visual presentation. The Tygerberg Children’s Choir projects the identity of an Afrikaans “global” choir by means of its competition achievements, tonal sound, output of contemporary, unaccompanied repertoire and performance experience. This study confirms the findings of the 4th Multi-Cultural Choral Conference, held on 31 March to 4 April 2009 at the University of Stellenbosch, which has determined that choral tradition has a far stronger influence on a choir’s identity than previously thought.

The findings further indicate that the practices of thorough music education and intensive choral training underpin the undertaking of regular concert tours and/or participating in international choral competitions, as well as maintaining contact, performance relationships and associations with international choirs. All other functions directly or indirectly uphold these primary practices, which convey a momentum of achievement, esteem, respect, a sense of belonging, a vision towards excellence, and an international perspective to their practitioners, all of which contribute to the construction of identity. The influence of the conductor in implementing practices aimed at attaining choral excellence at international levels, is crucial towards the choir’s projection of identity.

The study has answered the research question by identifying sets of proven practices which new generations of conductors and governing body members can implement to effectively sustain and develop children’s choirs. It has also determined specifically South African practices implemented by subject choirs, which contribute towards an emerging South African choral identity.
The research has also created awareness regarding the function and importance of regional children’s choirs in maintaining and developing the choral art in South Africa by providing experienced, well-trained choristers of the highest international standards to youth and university choirs.
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1. Cantare Children’s Choir sings at the World Choir Games, Graz, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JiPogDAjhhA
4. Tygerberg Children’s Choir sings at the World Choir Games: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3aUzMCKJqg.
ADDENDUM A: CHILDREN’S CHOIR LOGOS

1. Eastern Cape Children’s Choir

![Eastern Cape Children’s Choir Logo](image1)

2. Cantare Children’s Choir

![Cantare Children’s Choir Logo](image2)

3. Tygerberg Children’s Choir

![Tygerberg Children’s Choir Logo](image3)
ADDENDUM B: FORMAL CONCERT DRESS

1. Eastern Cape Children’s Choir

2. Cantare Children’s Choir

3. Tygerberg Children’s Choir
ADDENDUM C: AFRICAN-ETHNIC CONCERT DRESS

1. Eastern Cape Children’s Choir

2. Cantare Children’s Choir

3. Tygerberg Children’s Choir