

# We overestimate the relationship between the social impact and health or not?

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A comparative study: The effect of singing in a group on personal wellbeing versus that of playing music individually on personal wellbeing

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## Preface and acknowledgements

This thesis is the outcome of my interest in academic and the field of music cognition and health. The first idea originated from my personal experience with music education in a special school for the blind. Musicology gives me a deep insight into the relationship with between music and health science. I desired to apply my passion to the practical way and to explore a topic I am interest in. Therefore, I have devoted myself to this thesis for a couple of months. There is a robust body of research on the relationship between group singing and health. However, I would like to re-examine the topic in my own way and with my own methodology to discover other possibilities of the results. I try to fulfill this with the combination of my studies in Musicology with the knowledge of the field of Cognitive Psychology and general Psychology by online courses and the literature. I believe that such disciplinary has concreted the structure for the topic for a long time.

I would also like to thank some people, because without their support, I cannot complete my thesis on my own. First, I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor Sara Lambrecht who has supported my topic since the first meeting. Our discussion about the innovation of this thesis research inspired and motivated me to keep going. Her direct and sweet comments on my draft sometimes frustrated me a little, but most of the time ignited my ambition to challenge myself. Even though this is the thesis I have finished on my own, without Sara's participation as a supervisor, I might not be satisfied with what I have now. Second, I owe a lot to Larissa who has offered the help when I got stuck in my thesis, and she always has supported me whatever in studies or my life. I also want to thank Isidora who helped me relieve the stress during the study. Furthermore, I really appreciate Larissa and Aristi who corrected my grammar and spelling and gave me constructive feedback. Of course, I am more than grateful for all the participants who spent their time in my research, and I need to show my appreciation to Jan Peter who helped me distribute the questionnaire forms on Facebook. Finally, I have no words to express my gratefulness to my mother, who has always supported me financially and mentally.

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## Abstract

There were two main objectives of this study: (1) to re-examine the social impact and the effect of music on personal wellbeing in the context of making music in a group an individually (2) To explore the elements that affect the results of the research on the objective (1). A qualitative method gives means to my research, consisting of a questionnaire survey and a semi-structured interview in depth. There were 40 participants joining the research, each with music-making experience in both group-making and individual making music experience, both in group or individually. 40 of them filled out the Questionnaire A ‘the correlation of group singing to personal wellbeing’ and 14 of 40 participants filled out the Questionnaire B ‘the correlation of playing music alone to personal wellbeing’. By comparative analysis, the data results show that university students have a positive experience while making music in a non-social environment so that they benefit more from this kind of music activity. A combination of the findings with the interview suggests that there are three elements contributing to the findings: expression of personal emotions, autonomy and achievement of personal goals. In sum, singing in the choir can promote participants' health, however, making music individually have a more positive effect on wellbeing. Therefore, there is a conclusion, which is that we overestimate the social impact on personal wellbeing and underestimate the effect of music experience on personal wellbeing in the context of making music.

Key words: Making music. Group singing. Social impact. Music experience. Wellbeing. Individual engagement. Engagement state. Engagement process. University students.

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis is to reexamine if engaging in a group music-making activity has an influence on human being's wellbeing. There is much evidence that music is beneficial for a person's health/wellbeing. To start with, scholars from the field of psychology of music argue that involvement in musical activities has been shown to have effects on mood (Valentine & Evans, 2001), quality of life (Clift et al., 2010) and engagement (Davidson, 2011), and to be a very rewarding leisure activity (Lamont, 2011a), according to Lamont (2012). In the article '*Music and Mood*', Murrock *et al.* (2005) suggest that the five elements of music (rhythm, melody, pitch, harmony, and interval) have the potential for altering moods, communicating feelings, and creating a distraction. To continue, in the non-clinical realm, for example, 'music therapy is a systematic process of intervention wherein the therapist helps the client to achieve health, using musical experiences and the relationships that develop through them as dynamic forces of change' ( Brusica, 2014). Actually, the idea of music as a healing influence which could affect health and behavior is as least as old as the writings of Aristotle and Plato<sup>1</sup>, and Alvin (1996) argues that through the ages, ancient men and women observed that music could be used in the healing of body and mind through incantations, songs, drums to ward off evil spirits or to appease the gods. Also Pythagoras believed that integrating music into one's daily life would enhance overall health, speed the healing of wounds, and alter moods (Murrock *et al.*, 2005). The existing research and literature give the evidence for those arguments in relation to a positive effect of music on the physical and mental health. For example, there was a case on guitar improvisation and song singing with a terminally ill client (Forinash, 1989); The *Music-Play Project* at Florida State University was designed for the children on the autism spectrum (Baken *et al.*, 2008); and an experiment was to explore the effects between Live music Tape-recorded music on hospitalized cancer patients (Bailey, 1983), which indicates that live presentation of music is more effective than

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<sup>1</sup> American Association for Music Therapy: <https://www.musictherapy.org/>, accessed by June 2018.

recorded music in this case according to the result of Profile of Mood States questionnaire.

There is now growing evidence<sup>2</sup> to suggest that singing in groups is not only an enjoyable special interest activity but can also be beneficial for the health and wellbeing of individuals and community (Gridley et al., 2011). According to the considerable studies, it appears that many researchers focus on the effects of group singing on moods, health or wellbeing in the context of singing as music performance or musical elements. However, Waterman (1994) argues that music does not apparently simply make individuals 'feel' happy or sad because mood is linked to the environmental context and material learned. Environmental factors could affect how people perceive or feel music, and the way in which people interact with music; for example, people might show different behavior while listening to music with friends and a completely one when they are enjoying music by themselves. Clark (2005) advocates that perception on music engages with environment itself not only because human beings are active organisms, but also people proactively get adapted to the changes in life.

Actually, recent research has consistently demonstrated the importance of lifestyle factors, such as active involvement in social activities and social networks, in a variety of health outcomes, including physical illness, mental health and mortality<sup>3</sup>. Jang et al. (2004) quoted material that social engagement, through interpersonal relationships and participation in social activities, promotes physical and emotional well-being and lowers mortality rates in later life (Avlund, Dasmgaard, & Holstein, 1998; Everard, Lach, Fisher, & Baum, 2000; George, 1996; Glass, Mendes de Leon, Marottoi, & Berkman, 1999; Lennartsoon & Silverstein, 2001). For instance, some researchers investigate how social engagement affects the life quality of the elderly in a positive way (Everard, et al., 2000; Jang et al., 2004) or how old people with mental disorder

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<sup>2</sup> Sources are from Lagacé et al., 2016; Linnrtmann, Schnersch, and Nater, 2017; Clift & Hancox, 2010; Tavormina M, Tavormina R & Nemoianni, 2014; Southcott & Li, 2017; Clift & Hancox, 2000; Gridley et al., 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Wang, Shunn-Jin. 2009. 'Social Engagement in the Elderly'. Journal of the Chinese Medical Association. Vol 72: 10, 507-508. Article.

benefit from the social activities (Glass, et al., 2006; Tsai, et al., 2006; Cohen et al., 2006; Hillman, 2002). Or singing as an interactive music therapy on hospitalized children (Barrerra et al., 2001). Of course, there are also considerable literature on the impact of singing on mood (Kenny & Faunce, 2004; Clements-Cortes, 2004). Social processes are communicatively and culturally bound with groups, settings, and contexts, representing socially embedded influences to effect meaning, through interaction and connection (Johnston, 2018). Within a football team, for example, football players need to cooperate with each other to win the competition, which can be achieved through communication and participation and so forth. Orchestra is another good illustration of this social process. Not only does each instrumental group need to musically and verbally communicate with each other, both the conductor and all musicians emphasize the cooperation and interaction within the orchestra as a whole. Likewise, ‘singing in a choir allowed for the development of multiple relationships but also forced the participants to collaborate with one another despite their differences to reach their common goals’ (Lagacé et al., 2016). Johnston (2018) gives his explanation of the difference between individual and social engagement: ‘[a]n individual level of engagement is often positioned within a binary relationship, while at a social level, engagement is represented as a dynamic social process involving influences and outcomes for’ engaged parties. Those analysis of emotions and social life intrigue me to re-examine the current research on the relationship between group singing and wellbeing/mental health: is there different affective experience and its relevant outcomes of wellbeing if we see group singing in the context of social activity?

‘[T]he research published so far does give promising indications in support of the hypothesis that “singing is a good for health” (Clift, 2012). Similarly, the evidence that social activity correlates positively to the qualify life of people is presented by many scholars, from which some are mentioned above. However, many studies are exploratory and involve very small samples (Clift, 2012) and much research is only conducted in the context of choral singing. The existing study on the link of group singing to personal or community wellbeing has little attention to if participants enjoy

music or not. Even though the results demonstrate that singing in a group has a positive effect on the participants' wellbeing, one thing it still obscures to me is that *Are the participants affected by music more or the social impact more while engaging in making music?* Therefore, my main research question is then divided into smaller sub-questions which are *Do we overestimate the social impact on personal wellbeing and underestimate the effect of music experience on personal wellbeing in the context of the music-making activity?* and *Which elements could be responsible for it?* The methods in which those questions were approached, was gathering data from questionnaires and interviews. The research participants were recruited from the student choirs in the Netherlands, who have music-making experience both in group or individually. The approach to questionnaires and interview will be elaborated in the chapter of **Method**. **Theoretical Framework** will be presented in Chapter 3, **Findings** and the **Discussion** will be elaborated in Chapter 4 and 5 respectively.

## 2 Method

There is the considerable research in the effect of singing in a group on wellbeing and the result of their research they have in common is that group singing indeed has a positive effect on the participant's psychological and physical health. Based on these findings, it is interesting to look at the topic in a different way to see if there is same result when just focusing on the choir members in The Netherlands. Also, it is worth reconsidering the relationship between social impact and personal health. So that's the starting point to construct the research in my thesis, re-examing the topic in the context of making music in a social environment and a non-social environment.

### 2.1 Materials

This section provides an overview of the research methods employed in thesis, including the framework of the methodology and the design of the questionnaire and interview.



This study was designed as a qualitative interpretative research of members of student choirs in The Netherlands. The data-generation method used is two questionnaire forms and a semi-structured interview, and participatory observation. Before turning to the introduction of specific methods, it is necessary to begin in part one of this chapter with the explanation of the methodology framework of the topic in my research. Research on well-being can be thought of as falling into two traditions (Deci & Ryan, 2006), and they both belong to the positive psychology of framework (PPOF) which ‘has already been used to interpret and analyze data on the effects of music listening’ (Lamont, 2011b). These two traditions are the key to understand PPOF and to combine my research with the questionnaire survey. First, the hedonic tradition focuses on happiness or *pleasure*, defined as a presence of positive affect and an absence of negative affect (Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 1999); the second tradition is the eudaimonic focusing on living life in a satisfying way (see Lamont for detail, 2012). Given the explanation of two traditions of PPOF, the exploration of positive effect on emotions and satisfaction with life is an access to my questionnaire research. Lamont’s (2012) complementary argument for the potential of this framework gives a further evidence:

*[T]he growing body of research on different beneficial elements of music-making and performing can also be mapped onto this positive psychology framework to explore how music-making leads to wellbeing [...], different researcher use different methodologies and theoretical approaches.*

Another point of this part of the chapter is to have a clear understanding of the value of interview. Judd and Pooley (2013) used an interview as one of the tools for their investigation on people who regularly participate in choral singing. They make a specification for the usage of an in-depth interview:

*Following the methodology of Hays and Minichiello (2005) and Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, and Alexander (1995), the researchers anticipated that in-depth interviews would illuminate the meaning and importance of singing in the participant’s lives. An in-depth conversation would be rewarding to better understand ‘the meaning of the participant’s discourse’, according to Minichiello et al. (1995).*

Given the literature, the methodology framework of my research is based on *Positive Psychology of Framework* (PPOF), which is the most suitable foundation. As the questionnaire plays a leading role in the research - the key to collect data in the first phase and the interview questions are based on the questionnaire answers - it should be elaborated more in this part on purpose. The self-report examination is a common tool in the psychology field, which makes the questionnaire less bias but more objective in general. Personal Wellbeing Index – Adult (PWI-A) as a standardized self-report examination includes seven domains covering the aspect of life: standard of living, health, achieving in life, and it matches the requirement. As the methodology framework in my research is set within the PPOF, the questionnaire focuses on two domains: *Emotional experience* and *Satisfaction with the experience* in group singing and playing instruments individually. What Werner, Swope, and Hide's (2006) opinions on the Music Use Questionnaire (MUSE) prove the value of my questionnaire. They argue that the valid MUSE questionnaire should demonstrate in relationships between music background indices, styles of music engagement, demographics, the brief Music Experience Questionnaire (Werner, Swope, & Hide, 2006), and the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Gross & John, 2003). In other words, the purpose of the questionnaire is to examine if the relationship between social impact and personal wellbeing remains desirable in these two domains when comparing it with making music alone. In this case, the questionnaire is then divided into two forms A & B) including four sections. Section 1 is Demographic questions, Section 2 is the Personal Wellbeing Index-Adult self-report which focus on life satisfaction. Section 3 is to explore the (emotional) experience in the choir and playing music alone respectively and the exploration of the satisfaction with group playing and playing instruments individually is designed for section 4.

An in-depth interview is a useful complement for the understanding and interpretation of the answers given by the respondents. A semi-structured interview corresponds with the research questions of my thesis: *Which elements are responsible for the*

*questionnaire results?* Both the complete questionnaire questions and the interview transcript can be found in Appendix.

## **2.2 Procedure**

Regarding the selection of the research participants, I tend to choose the choir students since I believe that they form a stable group which will lead to a good result. Lamont (2012) also argues that young adult participants as a relatively homogeneous age group who have sufficient potential opportunities for strong experiences of music through performing. Such strong experiences of music are exactly what my research tries to explore, proving the relationship between music experience and wellbeing through the comparative analysis of two different music-making activities. Hence, young adults who join the student choirs would be the optimal target group for my research.

The total number of the research volunteers is 41. They are the members from different choirs in The Netherlands including *Hucbald*, *The Utrecht Student Choir and Orchestra (USKO)*, *Erasmus Studentenkoor Reotterdamsch Schoon*, *Medusa Studentenvrouwenkoor*, *Utrecht Studenten Cantorij*, and *School choir of the Stedelijk Gymnasium Breda*. Participants were selected through the following selection criteria: (a) male and female aged at least 18, (b) who are the members of the student choir and have joined the choir for at least 3 months, (c) singing in the choir on a weekly basis, (d) who have played the instrument(s) as an amateur or a professional and (e) who are able to speak English well and understand the questions clearly. Participants were recruited in person through the current choirs via their chairman or chairwoman. Also some of them were recruited online by email and the Facebook group page of different choirs. The chairwoman of ESK would like to support my academic endeavors by answering the mail: ‘We are more than happy to help you finding respondents for your thesis on wellbeing and singing in a choir. We include the link to your survey in our weekly e-mail to our members.’ One choir member of The Utrecht Student Choir and Orchestra (USKO), Jan Peter Lanooy, posted the invitation of my thesis research on the Facebook group page of USKO.

### 3 Theoretical framework

Given the interdisciplinary scope of my research, it is necessary to apply the theories of humanities and social science to the subject. Literature of *Psychology of Musicology* and *music cognition* laid a foundation for this study, and the sociology also is crucial for the establishment of the theoretical framework. In this chapter, I will focus on three parts: A theory of social engagement, an overview of music cognition, and the benefits of social engagement in the music activity.

#### 3.1 A theory towards Social Engagement

Engagement in activity is no rarity in different cultures, and people participate in different kinds of activity in different ways. Examples include engaging in a communication orientation event, participating in a music festival, and the attention given to join in a sport team, etc. But if we need to closely look at how people engage in the activity of making music, the engagement model is the key to it. Therefore, in this section I will provide an overview of a social engagement theory and explain how this adds to my study.

Lamont (2012) points out that *engagement* has been shown to be an essential component within Positive Psychology<sup>4</sup> which is the scientific framework of the methodology in my research; thus I decided to focus on engagement with music as a starting point for the construct of Theoretical Framework. But *What is engagement?* and *How do people engage in activity?* are the interesting facts I need to explore first I think. Engagement is defined as the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for an activity (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002); Russell, Ainley, and Frydenberg (2005) describes *engagement* as the connection between an individual and activity of interest. Based on the definition and the practice of engagement, there

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<sup>4</sup> Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2002) defines it as the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life.

is the hypothesis coming to me: Is there a mode or pattern for engagement in music? In considering the research on the topic of engagement, it is clear that there is no one widely accepted engagement theory in music. Within this mind, it is noteworthy that the field of socio-psychology has proven to be a relatively fertile ground for engagement theory and practice. Dr Kim Johnston (2018) seems to give the definition of engagement in a more specific way:

*Engagement is defined as a dynamic multidimensional relational concept featuring psychological and behavioral attributes of connection, interaction, participation, and involvement, designed to achieve or elicit an outcome at individual, organizational, or social level.*

She also points out that scholarship not only emphasize on the attributes of an engagement, ‘that is, what it means to be engaged and what an engaged state looks like-cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally’, but also on the understanding of the ‘nature, process, and outcomes’ of engagement. These scholarship acknowledges the socially situated nature of engagement (Heath, 2014) and associated roles for dialogic engagement (Taylor & Kent, 2014). Hence, based on such academic perspectives, she puts forward a social system framework of engagement and categorizes it as ‘a state or process at individual levels and collective or social levels of analysis within a social system’. With respect to such engagement framework, Arai and Pedlar (2003) argue that communitarians consider human as essentially social beings [...], and they emphasize the value of a sort of leisure that brings people together around practices of shared meaning, what Borgmann (1992) has called ‘focal practices’. By contrast, individualists value individuality highly, but some hold that it means rejecting society, others that it requires it (Stoutland, 1990). Such two opposite opinions could light a shed that there is the different degree to engagement as a state or a process at individual levels, and we need to find out what the mechanism is. The taxonomy of individual and social engagement presented by Johnston (2018) clearly demonstrates the structures of engagement in activity as a state or the process (figure 1).

	State	Process
Individual	Cognitive, affective, or behavioral, engagement dimensions measured at a point in time on an engagement continuum	Developmental states resulting from communication interventions to achieve engagement
Social	A collective, shared state of engagement represented by behavioral forms (collective action, group participation), cognitive and affective forms (orientation, intention, experience) oriented toward group outcomes	A structured program, of discourse and action, to achieve social representation of diverse community opinions and perspectives in decision-making to address social issues and create social capital



**Figure 1** Levels of analysis in engagement – a taxonomy

According to taxonomy of engagement, it is clear that individual engagement tends to represent the personal experience psychologically and behaviorally through both engagement state and engagement process. On the contrary, the focus of collective or shared involvement or experience, such as the group intention & outcome and the changes, is easily captured in the context of social engagement. The chart seems a little vague to understand, but Johnston (2018) gives the specific explanation to both the state and the process of engagement, which guides me to the analysis of engagement pattern in the activity of making music. Concerning *Engagement state*, Johnston (2018) argues that an ‘idealized’ engagement state should be represented by three elements – cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions’, which are elaborated as:

*Cognitively, an engagement state describes a high level of interest (personal/situational), knowledge, or understanding of a focal topic. An affective engagement state describes emotional states and reactions, incorporating both positive and negative emotional conditions such as enjoyment, fear, belonging, or repulsion. A behavioral engagement state captures activity associated with engagement, such as interaction, action, and participation.*

From a process perspective or *Engagement process*, she advocates that certain conditions or interventions may influence engagement outcomes and the subsequent value of these outcomes at both the individual and social levels. When people engage in social behavior, they need to apply cognitive functioning such as attention, memory, language, or executive functions (Wang, 2009). At an individual level, engagement as

a process describes developmental states as an outcome of communication actions or interventions to achieve engagement (Johnston, 2018). In line with Johnston’s theory, I try to interpret and translate the theory into the mode of engagement in music-making activity at an individual level. Likewise, this engagement pattern seizes two key elements, which is shown below (figure 2).

<b>State</b> 	Motivation, emotional experience (cognitive moods) and participation forms at an individual level
<b>Process</b> 	Satisfaction with the activity of making music, enjoyment attainment, the individual or collective goal achievement, potential changes, and affective forms in the context of social or non-social engagement

**Figure 2** The pattern of engagement in music activity

It is clear that this research is built in the context of making music in a social and non-social environment, and to figure out how making music in a group or individually connects with a person’s wellbeing. The comparative analysis of same engagement structure in these two music-making activity can give evidence for the research findings and discussion. Combination with the pattern of engagement in music activity, *Engagement State* refers to the domain Emotional Experience in the questionnaires, focusing on each respondent’s perception of moods while making music alone or with others. For example, the respondents were asked to answer ‘Which moods might your experience in group singing or playing instruments alone’, ‘Do you prefer singing with people to singing alone?’, and ‘How much positive/negative effects does group singing or playing music alone on your moods?’ Engagement as process is to probe how respondents experience during the making music activities, formulating the questions like ‘How satisfied are you with your engagement in the activity?’, ‘Is there any change in your life since you’ve join in the choir or playing music?’, and ‘How much fun do you experience while singing chorally or playing instruments alone?’. Based on this theory, there are some hypothesis when applying it into the context of making music, and I will response to it in the next chapter:

**Hypothesis 1** There is no difference between making music in a group or individually in terms of *Engagement State*.

**Hypothesis 2** There is the (obvious) difference between making music in a group or individually in terms of *Engagement State*, which might be caused by the levels of emotional experience in two music activities.

**Hypothesis 3** There is no difference between making music in a group or individually in terms of Engagement Process.

**Hypothesis 4** There is the (obvious) difference between making music in a group or individually in terms of Engagement Process, which might be caused by satisfaction with the engagement in the activity or the levels of fun attainment, or the levels of changes.

### **3.2 The benefits of singing in a social environment**

This section is to present an overview of the relationship between social activity and wellbeing. In this research, we also need to figure out how singing in a group contributes to participants' health. Hence, it is necessary to take the advantage of the existing literature to figure out what the research have found on the relevant study.

One of the most common ways of social engagement<sup>5</sup> is the practice of leisure which here 'is described as communal leisure, as community of people sharing and celebrating a focal practice, in this case singing, which is both created and preserved as a common or public good (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). Ternström & Karna (1997) points out that many people who choose to perform music as a satisfying pastime do so as choir singers; Singing in unison or in harmony with other people is a low-cost, enjoyable activity, which at the beginner's level demands little more than one's time and a certain

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<sup>5</sup> The term social engagement is commonly used to refer to one's participation in the activity of a social group, according to Anderson and Binstock (2012).



dedication to the task. Arai and Pedlar (2003) point out that in the choir the individual is engaged within a group to sing; that is, the individual is involved in both the means and the end of the leisure practice and is part of a larger group or collectivity. The environment and its characteristics provide the framework in which musical socialization takes place. In the context of this research, musical socialization takes place during the process of engaging in the choir by harmony, and communication. During the *Engagement process*, an individual could also try to achieve the mutual goals such as a concert or the establishment of a new social network, etc.

In such a social environment, Clift(2017) argue that since the early 1990s the question of health benefits associated with singing, and the role of singing as a form of music therapy for people with compromised health, have attracted many researcher and scholars' attention. A meta-analysis has shown that the use of music in a therapeutic setting improves motivation, social interaction skills and global functioning while providing an opportunity for emotional expression (Gold et al., 2009). Singing facilitate[s] body movement and appeared to alleviate pains and illness (Southcott and Li, 2017). Singing in a choir is a beneficial and positive experience (Clift et al., 2008) that can provide social bonding and feelings of accomplishment (Jacob, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2009), quoted in Southcott and Li (2017). Singing, according to Clarker, Dibben, and Pitts (2010), facilitates a variety of positive social interactions (group membership, collaborative activity, social cooperation. The studies which measured mood, emotional state or wellbeing of participants (Kuhn, 2002; Unwin, Kenny & Davis, 2002; Clift & Morrison, 2011; Busch and Gick, 2012; Sanal & Goesev, 2014) show that 'singing enhances positive mood/emotions and a sense of wellbeing' (Clift, 2017).In the context of elderly care and dementia, singing and musical activities are commonly referred to as "non-pharmacological interventions"<sup>6</sup>.

In summary, this section has reviewed the positive effects singing in a group has on the

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<sup>6</sup> Stephen Clift, "Singing, Wellbeing, and Health," in *Music, Health, and Wellbeing*,

personal wellbeing: the positive emotions, the improvement in mood state, and the beneficial social connection with others. These findings give the room for the research in my thesis, comparing the results of my findings with the existing research to reexamine if the social impact really fulfill our expectation, playing a vital role in participant's personal wellbeing, especially when looking at it in the context of the activity of making music.

### **3.3 An overview of Music cognition: emotions and expression in music experience**

Generally, I tend to focus on the emotional and enjoyable experience in the context of making music instead of focusing on the certain piece or the genre, or the musical elements like melody or texture. While engaging in making music, all the elements, including the music makers, the choir members, participation form and the way in which people make music, are as agents and connect with their emotions. Only do we understand the emotional mechanism in music experience, we discuss the findings in a reasonable way. Therefore, the focus of this section is to explore the emotions and expression in music experience, and the relationship between each of them and personal wellbeing.

Traditional paradigm in the context of music cognition focuses more on the mind and the challenge framework *embodied music cognition* focuses more on the body<sup>7</sup>. t As the novel theory emphasizes the perception – action loops that are mediated by the body (Lesaffre, 2018), which does not match the focus of the research in my thesis, the framework of this part is set up within the traditional theory of music cognition. According to the theory towards Engagement, the mechanism of engagement in making music is divided into two factors: Engagement State and Engagement process; but engagement is [also] ‘often described as an emotional or intellectual commitment to an activity or task (Saks, 2006). Radley (1988) argues that emotion is treated as a universal

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<sup>7</sup> Michelin Lesaffre, “Investigating Embodied Music Cognition for Health and Well-being,” in *Springer Handbook of Systematic Musicology*,

feature of the coordination of individual and social life. Emotions have a role within the sociocultural system (Averill, 1980) and emotions are an acquired response to the sociocultural order. (Armon – Jones, 1986). Kivy (2001) points out that the intimate relationship with music is supposed to have with the human emotions was already established philosophical doctrine in ancient Greece. Likewise, Aristotle as a philosopher also thought music could be used as an emotional catharsis or “psychocatharsis”, which is the purging or purifying of human emotions through music (Murrock, 2005). In the modern period, some scholars and researchers in psychology of music such as Dianna Deutsch, Erick Clarke, and Johan A. Sloboda prove that there is a strong and evident connection of music to emotional cognition from the perspective of music psychology.

But how exactly does music trigger the psychological response? Generally, researchers links music to cognition to study the cause and process of emotional experience including emotional wellbeing. Firstly, when considering the mechanism of music and its emotional response, Murrock (2005) argues that music produces psychological effects by engaging the right hemisphere of the brain, which is involved in intuitive, creative, and imaginative methods of processing information. This processing influences the limbic system, which is the center of emotions, sensations, and feelings. Secondly, Sloboda has a belief that the more intense emotions are the easier the emotion is experienced. He gives a further explanation for it: in general, positive emotions (such as love, being proud of, admiration, etc.) seem to make listeners more able to ‘own’ or ‘identify with’ the emotional peaks and troughs in the music (Sloboda, 2005). Gabrielsson and Lindström (1994) advocate that “emotion” comprises some 30 aspects provisionally feelings in the music experience. Crozier (2005) argues that there were 63 mentions of mood through music experience. These emotions generally are described as ‘joyful’, ‘excited’, ‘angry’, ‘aggressive’, ‘depressed’ and other positive and negative moods. Thirdly, the considerable research or experiments are the evidence that music as an intervention or a means is beneficial to maintain desired feelings or diminish passive emotional states (Koelsch, Offermanns & Franzke, 2010; Nora, 2001).

Aside from the attention to the relationship between music and emotion, there is the concern to the link between expression and music. Leech-Wilkinson (2013) also points out that in the wider context, [...], must links to other kinds of expressive communication, to manners, conversation, level-making, acting, public speaking, and so to styles of interpersonal relationship, which actually happens during the music experience. However, Kennedy-Moore and Watson's claim seems to challenge this opinion. They argue that generally, expression and experience do not necessarily correspond. For example, one person might refrain from expressing even though she or he is expressing a great deal of emotion. They also link individual expressivity to two dimension: a) the initial activation of emotional response tendencies and b) the subsequent modulation of emotional response tendencies. In other words, they advocate that expression connects with personality trait instead of experience. Even though there is the difference between how musicologists and emotion theorists observe the connection of expression to experience, one thing they have in common is that *Expression* helps mood state and psychological health such as the alleviation of distress (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2007), the active insight (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 2007) and the positive interpersonal relationships (Kosmicki & Glickauf-Hughes, 1997; Jacob, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2009).

The evidence from those literature suggests that emotion or mood is the key element in music experience, and music contributes to the positive emotions, which is beneficial to a person's wellbeing. In my research, it is important to study both aspects in the musical manner in a combined fashion; that is, an engagement in the activity of making music should be related to music and emotional experience not just social factor. The effect of music and social factor on personal wellbeing will be discussed after the analysis of data.

## 4 Findings

Data is analyzed based on the engagement model of the music-making activity. The methodology tries to find out how the individual-level engagement in the music activity contributes to personal wellbeing. The number of respondents for both questionnaire forms in total reaches 40. 38 respondents are Dutch students and two are international students who are from Indonesia and Cyprus. According to the demographic information of the questionnaire, there was a 15-year old respondent who should be excluded from the data analysis<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, the total number of the effective responses to both questionnaires is 53, with 39 responses for Questionnaire A and 14 responses for Questionnaire B. Fourteen people having experience in group singing and making music filled out two questionnaire forms individually. The findings are based on the two group. Group 1 (39:14) includes 53 of effective responses, and Group 2 (14:14) includes 14 respondents who filled out both forms. The analysis of the questionnaires and interview will be elaborated in turn in this chapter. The conversion of the questionnaire scores, which is derived from 0-10 scale; thus, the conversion is achieved by shifting the decimal point to the right. For instance, a point of 7.49 becomes 74.9 points. All the scores in the tables are already converted.

### 4.1 Questionnaire results

#### 4.1.1 Personal Wellbeing Index-Adults (PWI-A)

The chart below (Table 1) illustrates that how the section from the questionnaire is corresponding with the seven domains of the PWI-A; for instance, the element ‘how satisfied are you with your standard of living?’ stands for *Standard of Living*. However, the PWI (2012) points out that the seven-domain score (element) can be added to yield an average score that would represent ‘Subjective Wellbeing’. In general, the average score of this self-report examination comes to 7.49, which belongs to the normative

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<sup>8</sup> Personal Wellbeing Index-Adult (PWI-A) is a self-report for people who are at least 18 years.

range for Western means ‘70–80 points’<sup>9</sup>. With regard to each element, Table 2 demonstrates that the domain of *Personal Safety* has the highest score at 8.49, while the lowest score (at 6.85) might imply that the respondents are insecure about their future safety and they are not sufficiently satisfied with what they have achieved so far as well. Regarding the question ‘How much effect does group singing or playing instruments alone has on your general wellbeing’, the data results from Group 1 and 2 (see Table 3) show the same outcome that making music individually has more influence on the participants’ general wellbeing than making music in a group.

**TABLE 1.** Personal Wellbeing Index and specific seven domains

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Domains</b>
How satisfied are you with...?	
1. your standard of living?	[Standard of living]
2. your health?	[Personal Health]
3. what you are achieving in life?	[Achieving in Life]
4. what your personal relationships?	[Personal Relationships]
5. how safe you feel?	[Personal Safety]
6. feeling part of your community?	[Community-Connectedness]
7. your future security?	[Future Security]

**TABLE 2.** Results of Personal Wellbeing Index – Adults (Participants = 40, one excluded)

<b>Severn items</b>	<b>Scores</b>
1. How satisfied are you with standard of living?	76.7%
2. How satisfied are you with your health?	73.8%
3. How satisfied are you with what your are achieving in life?	71.5%
4. How satisfied are you with your personal relationships?	71.3%
5. How satisfied are you with how safe you are?	84.9%
6. How satisfied are you with feeling part of your community?	73.6%
7. How satisfied are you with your future security?	68.5%

<sup>9</sup> “Personal Wellbeing Index-Adult (PWI-A),” in *The International Wellbeing Group*, 2013.

**TABLE 3.** Items about the effect of group singing or making music alone on wellbeing

	Group 1 (N = 39:14)	Group 2 (N = 14:14)
How much effect does group singing has on your general wellbeing?	69.6%	71.7%
How much effect does playing the instrument alone has on your general wellbeing?	77.9%	77.9%

\*In Group 1, 39 of people filled out Questionnaire A and 14 of the 39 participants filled out Questionnaire B. In Group 2, 14 of 39 people filled out both two questionnaires.

#### 4.1.2 Engagement in making music as a state and process

Based on the combination of theoretical framework and methodology in this research, the analysis of the questionnaires focuses on the experience in the activity of making music through *Engagement state* and *Engagement process*. The summary statistics for the elements in state or process shed a light that there is the difference between making music in a group and individually at an individual-level engagement. They include:

##### A) *Engagement state – motivation*

Participants were asked to respond to the question ‘The motive/reason for joining in the choir/playing instrument(s)’, and the answers to both activities can be categorized as four types: personal interest in making music, relaxation, personal development, and parenting. There are the representative responses in Table 4. It is also noticeable that 4 of 39 participants are part of more than one choir. They gave the following explanation for it:

‘Because I absolutely love doing it so once a week isn’t enough for me.’

‘Because I like singing and I am a tenor/ Bass so most choirs need me to stay once I have participated once. Also, I like most of the people who are in choirs.’

‘To meet more maestros and have more experience.’

‘Diversity, different friends, different vibes and singing levels.’

‘One for regular singing and social network, the other for more challenge in singing.’

According to the responses to both questionnaires, aside from the common motives to engage in these music-making activities, it is clear that those who participate in the

choir community try to build a new/potential social network, which might motivate them to stay in this kind of group. By contrast, those who make music in a relatively less social environment tend to learn something or challenge themselves through the activities instead of meeting new friends.

**TABLE 4.** Motives to

<b>Singing chorally</b>	<b>Playing instrument(s)</b>
Just like singing/making music;	Parents put me on piano lessons and I have been playing ever since;
To practice music instead of only studying it theoretically;	For fun and to achieve great performances;
To become a better singer	Like making/playing music;
To relax, get positive vibes;	Stress relief and relaxation;
Integration, communication;	For my own interest;
Love singing with people;	For my development;
Continuously singing in choirs since at the age of 3;	Learning;
To meet people/create a new social network;	Playing more complex pieces motivated me to keep playing;
Personal development, and building a resume;	Like sharing music with others;
To relax, get positive vibes;	

B) Engagement state – mood state and personal emotional experience

This section has attempted to provide the findings relating to the individual emotions in an engagement state. There are two aspects which contribute to it: *Mood state* and *Personal emotional experience*. Regarding mood state, the research shows that the volunteers have positive moods during singing with people and playing music on their own. With the multiple-choice question of ‘Moods You Might Experience’ (see Appendix) in these two music activities, the data shows the participants tend to select the positive descriptions such as ‘Delighted’, ‘Expressive’, ‘Relaxed’. They are the most common answers the research volunteers give. It is also worth noticing that ‘Communicative’ feeling seems to have disappeared in the group of participants that made music on their own. The neutral-like description ‘Nothing Special’ is scarcely



associated with this activity. Although negative moods are perceived by responses from both forms, the proportion of passive emotion takes up less than 1% in the group of participants who made music individually or in a group. So, the selection of positive moods description imply that university students mainly perceive positive moods during the engagement in music-making activity in the context of both social and non-social activity. However, the analysis of 'Personal emotional experience' in two music activities, which leads to an interesting results. There are three elements involved in this analysis, there are:

- How satisfied are you with your emotional experience in group singing or playing the instrument alone?
- How much positive effect does group singing or playing the instrument alone on your wellbeing?
- How much negative effect does group singing or playing the instrument alone on your wellbeing?

Unexpectedly, respondents from Group 1 acquire more emotional satisfaction with playing music alone (at 8.07 points) than singing chorally with 7.72 points. Basically, both groups share a close response to the active effects of engaging in the social activity or enjoying solo music performance on their moods, with scores for group singing at 8.24 and for playing music alone at 8.21. However, playing music alone (at 3 points) probably triggers more negative moods than singing in a choir does (at 2.62 points). When looking at Group 2 (Number = 14) who filled out both questionnaire forms, it shows the same result: participants attain more affective satisfaction by making music on their own. The data of these two groups (Table 5) illustrates that making music on your own has a more positive influence on moods than singing chorally. Whether or not this difference contributes to a higher level of satisfaction will be discussed in the next chapter.

TABLE 5. Results of personal emotional experience

Questions	Group 1 (N= 39:14)	Group 2 (N =14:14)
1. How satisfied are you with your emotional experience in <b>Group sing?</b>	77.2%	75.7%
<b>Playing the instrument alone?</b>	80.8%	80.8%
2. How much positive effect does <b>Group singing</b> have on your wellbeing?	82.4%	80.7%
<b>Playing the instrument alone have</b> on your wellbeing?	82.1%	82.1%
3. How much negative effect does <b>Group singing</b> have on your moods?	26.2%	22.1%
<b>Playing the instrument alone have</b> on your wellbeing?	30%	30%

### C) Engagement process – social engagement

The most obvious difference between singing chorally and playing music alone is the participation form, in a social or a non-social engagement. This section will focus on the analysis of the following three questions:

- How important is social activity in your life?
- How satisfied are you with your social engagement in the choir?
- How satisfied are you with your social engagement in playing the instrument alone?

According to the results of the questionnaires, the scales of the significance of social engagement mainly lie between 6 and 10 (see Appendix), and the average score is 7.9 points. Participants also were asked to evaluate their personal ‘satisfaction with social engagement in singing chorally and playing the instrument(s) respectively through the self-report. The data demonstrates that the participants acquire more satisfaction with social engagement in singing in the choir (at 7.38) than playing music individually with 6.57 points. The comparative results can be found in Group 2. Hence, the results have an implication that the social engagement plays a role in university student’s life and singing in a group provides the environment in which socialization takes place.

TABLE 6. Social engagement

Questions	Group 1 (N = 39:14)	Group 2 (N = 14:14)
1. How important is social activity in your life?	79%	75%
2. How satisfied are you with your social engagement in the choir?	73.8%	74.2 %
3. How satisfied are you with your social engagement in playing the instruments alone?	65.7%	65.7%

#### D) Engagement process – Enjoyment attainment

In analysis of data from *Enjoyment attainment* during the process, two aspects (see Table 7) of an individual's engagement with music as a process were refined. The first aspect is to analyze the preference for the way in which university students engage in the activity of making music. Only one of 39 questionnaire participants preferred singing individually to singing with a group of people. Seven participants were not sure which way of singing they liked more. Even though all 14 responses showed that participants completely enjoyed playing or practicing music alone, three of them were not entertained by solo performance. The results imply that a majority of participants chosen from the choirs enjoy not only making music in a group but also making music individually.

Another aspect is the levels of fun gained from both activities. The data (see Table 7) from Group 1 demonstrates that the participants attain more fun by making music individually with 8.43 points than making music in a group (at 8.31). Likewise, based on the answers given by Group 2, the results imply that they enjoy making music in a non-social environment more than in a social activity. According to the data analysis of these two aspects, it is obvious that university students gain enjoyment by engaging in two music-making activity; but when they make music on their own, they might

acquire a higher level of enjoyment.

**TABLE 7.** Results of the level of Enjoyment attainment

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Study 1 (N = 39:14)</b>	<b>Study 2 (N = 14:14)</b>
<b>1.</b>		
<b>Do you prefer singing with people to singing individually?</b>	Yes = 31	Yes = 11
	No = 1	No = 1
	Not = 7	Not sure = 2
<b>Do you enjoy the solo performance if you had such experience?</b>	Yes = 9	Yes = 9
	No = 3	No = 3
	Not sure = 2	Not sure = 2
<hr/>		
<b>2.</b>		
<b>How much fun do you experience while Singing chorally?</b>	83.1%	82.9%
<b>Playing music alone?</b>	84.3%	84.3%

Participants also answered an open-minded question if there are elements which might affect how they enjoy both activities. The comparative analysis of data suggest that some key factors which affect how the participants enjoy singing in a choir include: the level of the choir as a whole, the connection with others, and the repertoires. The comments <sup>10</sup>given by the participants further explain their opinions:

‘When people start putting pressure on others because they think they don’t put enough effort in the singing. I don’t like that because I think everyone deserves to enjoy the singing in their own way and if practicing extensively isn’t involve in that I think it is their right (as long as they aren’t plain lazy and disrupting the rehearsals).

‘Singing makes me fell stressed then because I feel guilty for not studying. Also, I do not really have a good relationship with other choir members. I do like most of them, but I don’t know what to talk them about during the break or before the rehearsals. On some days this makes me feel a bit lonely during the rehearsals and that also influences my enjoyment.’

‘It’s the group I sing with is pleasant and nice to me, that helps me relax.’

In contrast, the data of playing instrument(s) individually illustrates that people more

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix.

emphasize their own feelings or personal experience by learning or the challenges, or the comfortable environment. There are some comments supporting this argument:

‘I preferably need to be alone or in a trustworthy surrounding. The gaze of critical people always affects the joyfulness while playing. Also, the better the instrument (compare an upright to a grand piano), the better the feeling while playing.’

‘A different room and different lighting affect how I read the sheet music. If I am nervous or if I haven’t practiced much this really affects my playing.’

‘There are many elements, for instance I like to play challenging solo pieces, or orchestra pieces which are very expressive.’

As indicated by the questionnaire results, it is clear that the external factors are the key to affect how the choir participants enjoy their engagement in singing chorally, such as the network in the community; the internal factors like personal feeling have an effect on how people enjoy making music on their own.

**TABLE 8.** Are there elements which might affect how you enjoy ...?

<b>Singing chorally</b>	<b>Playing the instrument</b>
The level of the choir (the technique, the beautiful harmony and the level of other signers);	Demotivated by hearing someone playing much better in the practice room next to yours;
The repertoire (if I like it or it is a difficult piece);	In the sense of learning (the notes, the details, the progress, or different characters);
People put pressure on others;	Challenging some complex or solo pieces;
The undesirable efforts made by other choir members;	Learning quickly or playing often;
The personal performance in the choir;	Getting nervous with playing with people I barely know;
The connection and understanding between the conductor and other choir members (good or just little);	Enthusiastic roommates;
Stress, low energy, insecurity or social anxiety when stays in a room full of people;	Stress;
Singing helps me relax.	In a trustworthy surrounding or being alone and the condition of the instrument;
	Room and lighting;

## E) Engagement process – changes

This section has analyzed ‘Changes’, the element of engagement in the music-making activity as process. Regarding the question ‘Is there any change in your life since you have joined in the choir or playing instrument(s)’, the result (see Table 9) from both Group 1 and 2 show that playing instrument brings more changes or new things to their life. Based on the open-ended questions<sup>11</sup>, the main changes contributed by both activities are: the discovery of more music, more positive mood attainment (happier, more confident, relaxation, self-satisfied, etc.), the way to express emotions, and socially active by making new friends.

Table 9. Is there any change in your life since you have joined

	Group 1 (N = 39:14)	Group 2 (N = 14:14)
Choir(s)	62.6%	73.6%
Playing the instrument(s)	75%	75%

## 4.2 Interview results

Many of Group 2 were reluctant to join the interview for different reasons, finally there were 5 interviewees recruited. As characterizes by the interview, the purpose of it is to find out the specific explanation of the answers given in the questionnaires. For example, the interview participant was asked: Why did you give such high score at 90% to the question ‘how much effect does playing music alone has on your general wellbeing?’ By the comprehensive analysis of the questionnaires and the interview, it can shed a light on the discussion of the data results. The data, of course, is still analysed within the engagement pattern of music activity. The complete interview text is shown in Appendix.

In general, the interviews with all five interviewees imply that they consciously realize that there is a different personal experience between singing in a choir and playing and making music on their own. This section focuses on the elements that affect their

<sup>11</sup> See the question in Appendix.

personal experience during the activity of making music by engagement as a state and process. To start with, within *Engagement State*, one of the obvious differences is that the participants are allowed to experience their emotions in deeper while playing music alone. For instance, an interviewee argues that she can improvise, or stop, or enlarge her music, do whatever she wants, she just saves music to her mind. All interviewees point out another difference between these two music activities is that they can just enjoy themselves rather than focus on other members while making music individually, which is impossible for singing in a group. On the contrary, it seems that singing in group has to follow the rules and are not allowed to express as much as they want. In addition, there are also factors responsible for the difference of *Engagement Process* between these activities. Firstly, one element which is not be found in the questionnaire is the Goal. According to the interview responses, in the case of singing chorally, participants try to collaborate with others and have a communal goal for a concert. An interviewee has a belief that he is feeling like a team when singing chorally, as a team player he wants them (other choir members) to do their best, not only for themselves but also for the results. However, the data indicates that it is not easy to achieve a communal goal in the choir because each of the members looks at singing chorally in a different way. In contrast, when people make music individually, they tend to concern the pursuit of their personal goal like learning or improving their levels of skills. For example, an interviewee states that when she plays the guitar on her own, she always has a goal to play the pieces that she played once because she wants to know if she got worse. Secondly, regarding the perception of fun attainment, some interview participants stress again if they can express themselves by putting more emotions when they make music. Also, they point out that they have more control over the learning process and over how music sounds while play the instruments alone compared to make music with others. The feeling of control themselves leads them to enjoy more during the activity and make them happier. Thirdly, the participant can select any pieces they want to enjoy themselves or just to challenge themselves when they make music without others. These three points reveal that there is an obvious difference between making music in a group and individually.

## 5 Discussion

So far this thesis has focused on the establishment of theoretical framework and the analysis of the results. This section will discuss the finding and the possible reasons responsible for it. This study has found that music is vital in the life of the choir members; and they do value making music in a group or individually. Also, the results show that **Engagement State** closely interacts with **Engagement Process**; for example, the levels of the individual fun attainment connects with personal emotions, the levels of the changes brought by joining the music activities are tied with the satisfaction with emotional experience or the social engagement, or the goal achievement. In other words, all elements within the pattern of the individual engagement in the music-making activity have an effect on a person's wellbeing, not just only the social factor or the element of self-achievement. That's what the engagement mode functions in this research, trying to decompose 'engagement in the activity' and reexamine the dramaturge of it. This re-examination helps us figure out if the social factor really contributes to personal wellbeing. Obviously, the findings suggest that the participants have more positive experience in making music in a non-social environment by engagement state and process. Therefore the results lead to the following statement: We overestimate the relationship between the social impact and wellbeing, and we also underestimate the effect of music on a person's health in the context of making music. There will be my reasons why I believe the results are remarkable:

### 5.1 Social impact

Admittedly, the results of this research confirm the previous findings that singing in a choir indeed is beneficial for the improvement in the negative moods. For example, the respondents felt relaxed, confident during singing in a group; singing chorally distract people from their personal problems. Also, singing in the choir could meet the need to socialization, which broadly supports the work of other studies in this area linking Clift & Hancox (2000) with Jacob, Guptill, and Sumsion (2009) and Scouthscoot & Li



(2017). However, the results also show that the social impact in turn has a negative effect on participant's experience during the activity. At first, there is not always easy to achieve the good social interaction. Johnston (2018) has a belief that participation, as power, is the active involvement by community members to jointly develop meanings and negotiate solutions to an issue through dialogic processes in interaction with the focal organization. Bellah et al. (1988) state that community is not about silent consensus, but where we communicate with others, deliberate, come to agreements about standards and norms, pursue in common an effort to create a valuable form of life. Based on the data, I do not completely agree with what Johnston (2018) and Bellah et al. (1988) argue in their research. It is noticeable that the members of the choir have different expectation for the overall level of the choir. Some think as a team would put stress on others to push them to make more efforts, and others feel stressed and unhappy with the choir community. Consequently, both parties are actually affected by each other emotionally in a negative way. This is the result of the lack of communication and interaction with each other in the choir community. Additionally, the previous chapter has shown that there is the lack of self-expression in a choir. People have to follow the rules and focus on others so that they relatively ignore their own needs like emotions or the aesthetic ability to music. Social factor indeed is the significant part in the university student's life and singing in a group can meet their needs, but it is also worth noticing that successfully being part of a social community is not as easy as we think. If there is not a good communication and connection with others like the members or the conductor, engaging in a social activity brings about the passive effects on the individual experience and mood states. In this research, social impact does not have an obvious positive influence on the participants.

The results of data analysis illustrate that there are elements which have a positive effect on a person's experience. Participants gain them from making music individually instead of singing chorally. Those factors also affect personal wellbeing in a positive way, and they include: expression of personal emotions, autonomy, and the achievement of personal goal.

## 5.2 Expression of personal emotions

Returning briefly to the subject of music cognition, the research on the relevant topic already shows that it is common to link music to emotions during the experience in music listening or music-making activity. The researchers also notice that music can evoke different emotions of music listeners or music players. In the case of this research, the previous findings illustrate that making music individually has more positive effect on personal mood state and emotional experience. This section will discuss what kind of personal emotions are triggered and how human beings embody their self-expression by making music in a social and non-social environment. The discussion will lead us to find out the reason for the results.

One of the points both making music in group and individually have in common is that the participants get distracted from their personal problems while singing in a choir or playing music alone. This finding is consistent with that of Koelsch et al. (2010) and Nora (2001) who claim that music diminishes passive emotional states. Another point is that the questionnaire results indicate that engaging in both such music activity triggers the positive emotions like ‘confident’, ‘relaxing’ or ‘joyful’, and a few of the respondents felt negative like ‘disappointed’, ‘insecure’ or ‘stressed’. This also accords with the earlier observation, which showed that music experience activates the positive or negative emotions.

However, the comparison of the questionnaire data indicates that making music in a social environment has less positive effect on personal mood state and satisfaction with emotional experience. It is interesting to note that expression of personal emotion is the key to the results. As stated in the theoretical framework, expression is beneficial for emotionally health. The term *expression* is used to refer to both the characteristic of specific pieces and the particular performance characteristic of specific individuals or groups (Clarke, Dibben, & Pitts, 2010). The former refers to the material or the certain genres, and they argue that certain music has an effect on the emotions. For example, Chopin’s E minor Prelude is an expressive piece, and it makes listener or players feel

touched. The results of this study did not show that the certain genres directly has a positive influence on the emotional expression of the music makers, but it suggests that some of the choir participants were not satisfied with the pieces they performed in the choir, and the participants very enjoy trying different kinds of music styles when they make music alone. Classical music such as the work of J.S. Bach or Gabriel Faure is the typical music genre performed by the choirs in this research, and the choir members have to sing the same pieces during the rehearsals until the concert. There are the comments about how the choir participants felt the pieces performed by the choir:

*'I don't like the composition, or say the requiem. I do not know, generally I don't like the composition. I don't think that is a great piece of music. I will never sit down and listen to it again, that specific requiem.'*

*'Piece is very important because some pieces I think are more beautiful than others. And when I can play a beautiful piece more or better, then I'm just more satisfying while playing afterwards, that's for guitar, also for singing. Pieces are really important but since you're in a group, it's not that interesting'.*

If we take the classical music as an example in the context of making music, it is easier to help us understand their views. It is well known that Bach employed the ultimately religious purpose of music in his music work and then forms his own unique musical style.<sup>12</sup> The choir has to do the rehearsal with his music every week, members of the choir only experience Bach's expressive way within a couple of month. Such Repeated music experience in the certain pieces diminish the opportunity to experience and express the participants' other emotions. However, when making music alone, the individual can choose other composers' work like Mozart or Rachmaninoff and they can just play one pieces every two week or one month. For instance, Rachmaninoff's music can increase people's thrills responsiveness to music<sup>13</sup> and music players experience more dynamic and the colors in Mozart's music. This does not mean to deny that other pieces are expressive, or that other emotions can be expressed music<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Schulenberg (1990) discussed the expression in the musical work of J.S.Bach' through the combination other musicologists' opinions including Bukofzer, Gottsched and Scheibe.

<sup>13</sup> Bade on the experiment conducted by Konečni, Wanic and Brown (2007), they found that both Rachmaninoff and Hayden's music induce participants' thrills psychologically.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Davies. "Emotions expressed and aroused by music: philosophical perspective," in *Handbook of Music*

Instead, it is to indicate that each music piece or genre is expressive in its own way. Music-evoked emotions are real emotions (Koelsch, Offermanns, & Franzke, 2010) and the different pieces itself can trigger the correspondent or stronger emotions. We can also state that the more pieces you experience or play, the more possible different emotions can be evoked, and then people can release what they feel by music making in their own way. Hence, it is feasible to argue that music pieces or genres contribute to the personal expression.

With respect to another aspect of *Expression* - the particular performance characteristic of specific individuals or groups - still takes Western art music as an example in this paragraph. In the context of group singing, the choir needs to perform the pieces on a basis of the conductor's understanding of the music; thus, the choir participants express themselves less by music and they make music in the conductor's way or in a systematic pattern. By contrast, the findings indicate that the individual who makes music in a non-social environment brings out more of the interpretation in the variations of dynamic by tempo, timing, rhythms, articulation, and sounds. In this case, people express themselves and release their emotions as much as possible. The interview further indicates the reasons: participants experience themselves in a deeper way and let the emotions, especially passive moods, out through making music in their own way. This finding was also reported by Kennedy-Moore and Watson (2007). We, thus, can argue that only does a person make music in his or her way, the self-expression makes sense since he or she conveys the personal interpretation of an engagement with music.

It would be easy to get an impression from the discussion above that expression in making music is closely tied with the communication with 'the music' and the music maker themselves. This study supports evidence from previous observation (e.g. Leech-Wilkinson, 2013). To sum up, the emotions that are conveyed or communicated while making music individually might be different from those people experience during an engagement in singing in a group. In the social context, nature of expression through

making music is relatively not apparent; in the individual context, there is more possibility to express how people feel about the music in their own way.

## **5.2 Autonomy**

Although a majority of research on the relationship between music activity and wellbeing actually has paid little attention to the effect of ‘autonomy’ on moods or experience, based on the research results, I would consider it a vital element of music experience. Also, the autonomy in the making-music activity contribute to the enjoyment during the activity and positive emotions. Next, I will present my arguments in this section step by step.

When speaking of the word ‘autonomy’, there is more common word which is used more often in our life - ‘self-control’, meaning the ability to control over your feelings or actions, according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary. The locus of control theory, developed by an American psychologist Julian B. Rotter, argues that internal and external control are important to human. People who have a strong internal locus of control believe that they can control over the outcome of the events in their life; those with an external attribution to some extent are controlled by the external forces instead of themselves. In other ways, the more internal control people have, the more possible positive outcomes people would have, and Benassi et al. (1988) advocate that there is the risk of clinical depression among people with an external locus control. Thus, it is trustworthy that people can benefit from having control over their life. As stated by Renwick and McPherson (2002), it has been found that when musicians feel more control and are given autonomy, there is perseverance in the face of difficulty, which suggest that those with more internal control would have a positive attitude or mind in their life.

Turning now to the context of the making-music activity, what does autonomy mean and how comes to the participants? Based on the research, firstly, it is the autonomy to select music pieces such as different genres or the level of the pieces. Secondly, the

participants have the control over how they perform music or how music sounds. The last point but perhaps as same important is that whether or not the music makers are given the autonomy to embody their interpretation through the dynamic of the piece or the skills. According to the findings, instead of making music in a group, people have more control over themselves when they make music individually. They can do improvisation or just play a very easy piece or even they can put their emotions to make their own music. By the contrast, those who singing in the choir or playing music with a team have more external locus control, they have to follow the rules, the conductor's instructions. As explained in the findings, it is clear that the level of autonomy attainment has a positive effect on how much fun people have when they engaging in the music activity. The research also suggests that the autonomy contributes to participants' satisfaction with the experience in making music and to the positive emotions. So, when music makers are given autonomy, there is an increase in the level of wellbeing.

### **5.3 Achievement of personal goals**

With the analysis of the results, there are some elements the participants emphasize when engaging in music activities: goals, social factors, progress, feeling, and music. The previous section has already discussed the social factor and its effect on the personal wellbeing, and this section will focus on *Goals*. Even though the research participants separate goals from the elements like progress or feelings, or music, I recommend that we can regard these elements as the specification of goals in the context of music-making activity. One of the reasons is that the research participants stress 'learning or learning process' to state what their goals are. They emphasize if they acquire the progressive development of singing or instrument playing; thus, the pursuit of musically music-oriented achievement should be considered the personal objectives. Another reason is that it is only logical that people have different objectives when joining a choir or making music on their own; in this research, to experience emotionally, or to experience music such as musicianship and music pieces are the respondents' goals. The findings also suggest that how self-achievement links to the

personal wellbeing. When we look back one of seven domains of Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) ‘How satisfied are you with what you are achieving in life?’, it is clear that the participants are more satisfied with what they have achieved by making music individually than in a group, including music-oriented achievement, the pursuit of a sensual-aesthetic motive and the pleasure. There is the difference of the level of goal achievement between making music in a group or individually.

First, the participants point out that they have looked for the personal progress of singing techniques and the higher level of playing music; however, due to the characteristic of the choir community, the choir members need to focus on the overall level of the community. And when the level of the choir community cannot reach their personal goal such as the progress, some negative emotions come to them such as ‘annoying’ and ‘disappointed’. Instead, as people are given the autonomy to learn or challenge themselves, there is an increase in self-satisfaction and self-value. Hallam (2008) argues that when a learner has completed a task successfully this will have an impact on self-esteem and motivation which will be carried forward to subsequent learning tasks. Conversely, when learning outcomes are negative, motivation may be impaired. Second, it is more desirable outcome of engagement that the participants are allowed to experience and pursue whatever they want during the activity, which has a positive effect on the emotional experience and mood state. Hallam (2008) also claims that where the environment satisfies individual needs and facilitates personal goals motivation is likely to be enhanced. So, that’s why participants gain more satisfaction with making music individually. This satisfaction in turn is beneficial for personal wellbeing.

To conclude this discussion, the findings of this research confirm the hypothesis put forward in the chapter of Theoretical framework.

**Hypothesis 2** There is the (obvious) difference between making music in a group or individually in terms of *Engagement State*, which might be caused by the level of

emotional experience.

**Evidence:** The questionnaire results show that there are higher scores in emotional experience in making music individually as well as satisfaction with personal emotional experience. The interview responses illustrate that music makers can experience in a deeper way and enjoy themselves more while playing music individually, which supports the questionnaire results. By discussion, it is clear that ‘Expression of personal emotion’ is the reason responsible for the results.

**Hypothesis 4** There is the (obvious) difference between making music in a group or individually in terms of *Engagement Process*, which might be caused by satisfaction with the social engagement in the activities or the levels of fun attainment, or the levels of changes.

**Evidence:** It is clear that the three aspects mentioned above lead to the difference of the engagement process between two music activities. Obviously, the findings demonstrate that engaging in singing chorally more satisfy the participants with the social factors. However, according to the questionnaires and the interview, the research participants acquire more enjoyment during making music individually. Likewise, the questionnaire shows that play instruments alone have brought more positive changes to the participants’ life. By discussion, I claim that ‘Autonomy’ and ‘Achievement of personal goals’ to big extent contributes to the hypothesis.

#### **5.4 Limitations and future directions**

This is a preliminary research and there are the limitations to it. First, the current study is based on a small sample of participants, and many of them are the members of the student choirs in Utrecht; thus, a less representative distribution of the population might lead to the less representative results. Second, the self-reported and interview results mainly focus on the psychological wellbeing and little on the physical health, which brings about less comprehensive discussion on personal wellbeing. Third, there is the



basic knowledge of music cognition or music psychology in this research; thus, the opinions given by the author might not be mature enough for this field.

However, the findings offer valuable insights into 1) the mode of the individual engagement in the activity of making music; 2) the reexamination of the relationship between the social factor and personal wellbeing in the context of making music in a group, and 3) the underestimated effect of music on personal wellbeing in the context of making music. Based on the current study, it is promising that there are other possibilities to conduct the relevant research in a deeper way. Hereby, I would like to suggest some possibilities.

1. The continuous research on this study: a long-term control subject experiment helps us observe the longitudinal effect of social impact versus that of music on personal wellbeing. The future study can further explore the results proved by the current study.
2. Positive emotions evoked by making music individually: The follow-up research can focus on if the university student can benefit from the positive emotions evoked by music such as the personal career development. This will contribute to the gap between the knowledge of musicology and society, or of music cognition and human resources.
3. The role of autonomy in music experience. My research suggests that people who are given an autonomy has a positive effect on fun attainment, and participants enjoy more while making music alone. There is little literature on the effect of autonomy on personal music experience. Hence, it would be interesting to exam if the member of a choir who have more control over themselves will are more satisfied with the experience than others without control over themselves.

## 6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study set out to re-examine the social impact and its association with personal wellbeing, and focusing on this topic in the context of group singing is the starting point. Using the methodology and the theoretical framework, I proved that the importance of social factor is overestimated during the engagement in the activity of making music; instead, music makers more value their music experience in the context. The good experience in such activity contributes to participants' personal wellbeing. It is clear that the results show that group singing indeed has a positive effect on people's wellbeing or health, confirming the outcomes of the current considerable literature. According to the comparative analysis of data, however, it indicates that there are some elements which contribute to the engagement in making music individually, the desirable engagement in turn has more positive influence on personal wellbeing. The factors involved in the results have been proved in this research are 'expression of personal emotions', 'autonomy', and the 'achievement of personal goals'. The research has also shown that all elements involved in **Engagement State** and **Engagement Process** interact with each other, we should not separate one from each other, especially when we exam the relationship between the individual engagement in the music-making activity and personal wellbeing. Based on the findings and the discussion, we can finally confirm that: **We overestimate the relationship between the social impact and wellbeing, and we also underestimate the effect of music experience on personal wellbeing in the context of the music-making activity.**

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## Appendix

### 1. General questionnaire questions

#### Questionnaire A in English

Link to the online survey:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe9uAdF89xS2MfRJH8\\_GrXEktx7XVfVXL5K5gg2aTmt8RtSsA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe9uAdF89xS2MfRJH8_GrXEktx7XVfVXL5K5gg2aTmt8RtSsA/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Results can be provided but are not completely included in this appendix due to privacy reason.

#### Email address:

#### Demographic questions

**Name:**

**Age:**

**You are enrolled in**

- Bachelor program
- Master program
- Pre-master program
- PhD program
- Other

**Are you**

- a Dutch student
- an international student
- having a gap year
- already graduated

**Do you play any instrument(s) as an amateur or as a professional musician?**

- Yes
- No

**Personal Wellbeing Index Scale (PWI-A) Satisfaction with Life as a whole (0-10 scales)**

1. How satisfied are you with standard of living?
2. How satisfied are you with your health?
3. How satisfied are you with what you are achieving in life?
4. How satisfied are you with your personal relationships?
5. How satisfied are you with how safe you are?
6. How satisfied are you with feeling part of your community?
7. How satisfied are you with your future security?

#### Section 1 Experience in the choirs

1. Motive to singing chorally
-

2. Are you a choir member of?

- Hucbald
  - The Utrecht Student Choir and Orchestra (USKO)
  - Studentenkoor Amsterdam (SKA)
  - Erasmus Studentemkoor Rotterdamsch Schoon
  - Other
- 

3. How long have you participated in the choir(s)?

- Less than 6 months
- For 1 year
- 1-2 year
- More than 2 years

If you are a member of two or more choirs, please specify this by stating the name of the choir with the corresponding amount of participation time.

---

4. How many choirs are you joining now?

- One choir
- More than one choir

Why do you join more than one choir?

---

5. What kinds of moods might you experience in group singing? (Max. three answers)

- a Nothing special
- b Delighted
- c Relaxed
- d Confident
- e Rise in confidence
- f Active
- g Expressive
- h Communicative
- i Stressed
- j Upset
- k Competitive
- l Negative
- m Bored
- n Unsatisfied
- o Isolated
- Other

6. Do you enjoy the rehearsals with the choir?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

7. Do you enjoy performing with the choir?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

8. Do you prefer singing with people to singing individually?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

9. Are there elements which might affect how you enjoy singing chorally? Could you please specify or give an example (Just think what comes to you when you look at this question)

---

10. How satisfied are you with your emotional experience in group singing?

No satisfaction at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely satisfied

11. How much positive effect does singing in the choir have on your moods?

No effect at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely affected

12. How much negative effect does group singing have on your moods?

No effect at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely affected

## **Section 2 Satisfaction with group singing**

1. How much fun do you experience while singing chorally?

No feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely enjoy

2. How important is social activity in your life?

No importance 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. How satisfied are you with the social engagement in the choir?

No satisfaction at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely satisfied

4. Is there any change in your life since you have joined in the choir?

No change at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely change

Could you please specify this?

---

5. How much effect does group singing have on your general wellbeing?

No effect 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### Questionnaire B

Link to the online survey:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd1YNXQdhtZEdiqfqiXMAqd6ph8\\_qJW\\_GdgC9GABhnYDXDr9w/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd1YNXQdhtZEdiqfqiXMAqd6ph8_qJW_GdgC9GABhnYDXDr9w/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Results can be provided but are not included in this appendix due to privacy reasons.

### Demographic questions

**Name:**

**Age:**

**You are enrolled in**

- Bachelor program
- Master program
- Pre-master program
- Phd program
- Other

**Are you**

- a Dutch student
- an international student
- having a gap year
- already graduated

**Do you play any instrument(s) as an amateur or as a professional musician?**

- Yes
- No

### Section 1 Experience in instrument playing alone

1. What kind of instrument(s) do you play?

---

2. Motives to play instrument?

---

3. Are you a choir member of?

- Hucbald
- The Utrecht Student Choir and Orchestra (USKO)
- Studentenkoor Amsterdam (SKA)
- Erasmus Studentemkoor Rotterdamsch Schoon
- Other

---

4. How long have you played instrument(s)

- For 1 year

- For 1-5 years
  - More than 5 years
5. You are
- A professional musician
  - An amateur
6. How often do you play music/the instrument alone?
- Every time
  - Never
  - Sometimes
7. What kinds of moods might you experience in practicing/playing the instrument alone? (Max. three answers)
- A Nothing special
  - B delighted
  - C confident
  - D rise in confidence
  - F active
  - G expressive
  - H communicative
  - I stressed
  - J upset
  - K competitive
  - L negative
  - M bored
  - N unsatisfied
  - O isolated
  - P lonely
  - Other
8. Do you enjoy playing or practicing the instrument on you own?
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
9. Do you enjoy the solo performance if you had such experience?
- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
10. Are there elements which might affect how you enjoy the instrument practicing or playing? Could you please elaborate a little bit?
-

11. How satisfied are you with your emotional experience in playing the instrument alone?

No satisfaction at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely satisfied

12. How much positive effect does playing music alone have on your moods?

No effect at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely affected

13. How much negative effect does playing music alone have on your moods?

No effect at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely affected

### **Section 2 Satisfaction with playing music by yourself**

1. How much fun do you experience while playing music alone?

No feeling 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely enjoy

2. How satisfied are you with the social engagement in playing the instrument(s) alone?

No satisfaction at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely satisfied

3. Is there any change in your life since you have played the instrument(s)?

No change at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely change

Could you please specify this?

---

4. How much effect does playing the instrument alone have on your general well-being?

No effect 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Completely affected

## **2. Interview transcript**

Interviewer: Xuan Huang, participant numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. All text marked in yellow and XX is for the privacy protection.

\*M – interviewer

I – interviewee

### Interviewee No.1

Age: 25

International student

M: How long have you stayed in the Netherlands?

I: 11 months.

M: So far, do you get use to life here?

I: kind of.

M: Do you like life in Utrecht?

I: Kind of.

M: How do you usually relax yourself?

I: Maybe playing guitar, singing, going to concerts, generally, listening to music. Or having exercise, and socializing.

M: So it seems that you like to relax yourself through (in the context of) music.

I: Yes.

M: What kind of music do you like?

I: Classical music.

M: Do you play classical music?

I: Yes. But I like other kinds of music as well. Like Rock, Alternative Rock, Jazz.

M: Do you also play these music?

I: Both rock and Jazz I haven't checked that. Usually I play modern classical music and pop music.

M: You also talk about you like socializing to relax yourself. So I am wondering, do you value the social engagement or social activity in your life.

I: Very much.

M: I am not surprise at all since, based on the questionnaire, you gave 10 points to the importance of social activity. Do you emphasize on the social engagement while participating the music activities?

I: Yeah, very much again.

M: When you join in music activities, what do you look for from them like making friends, or having a goal to reach or something else?

I: Most of time I look for musical experience, and concerts, generally progressing music, being engaged with this kind of materials. But I think the key to stay in a group is to feel comfortable and make friends after that. Not making friends but becoming a team member. You have a certain goal and then environment is friendly.

M: So you might emphasize more on musical experience but you also want to look for some, the team goal?

I: Yes.

M: In the questionnaire you mentioned that you have experience in singing in the choir and instruments playing, could you elaborate a little? Like when you started these, and the motivation? Maybe could you start with instruments playing?

I: The motivation for instrument playing is to become a better guitarist by collaborating with others, learning by others, networking, having a concert through which you gain a lot. I think that's it.

M: Do you usually play or practice the guitar on your own?

I: Yes. Normally I play at least two hours per day.

M: Have you tried to play guitar with others? Do you enjoy playing the guitar alone more than playing with others?



I: Yeah, I've tried to play music with others. And no, I prefer playing with people.

M: Why?

I: Because it seems more fun and more productive I guess.

M: Could you elaborate a little 'productive'?

I: I mean what you are learning in a group is much more than what you learn from practicing on your own. People generally make comments and you learn from other techniques.

M: How about singing in the choir? Do you prefer singing with people to singing individually?

I: Yeah.

M: Same? With the same reasons?

I: Yeah, but singing is not my main instrument, so I feel safe when I am covered by others.

M: You feel 'safe'? Why do you have this emotion (should be feeling)?

I: Because I am not as confident as a choir singer as a guitarist.

M: So do you feel secure even if you play the guitar alone, since you mentioned that you are kind of a guitarist?

I: Yes. The reason why I play with others is not because I feel insecure but because I like to play others. I think it is a game, and it is more fun, it is a game stuff anyway.

M: Ok. When I look at your questionnaire, you gave the similar points to the positive effects of joining in these two music activities. 10 for group singing, and 10 for playing instruments. Why did you give such high points? I mean, this is 10.

I: Yeah. I really appreciate my time creating music with others. It makes me feel I do something meaningful. Art is meaningful for me and I really like it. Actually, I have the experience being not feeling good, and after the choir rehearsal I forgot all my problems and everything was bad. And actually going out for drinks and socializing again after the rehearsal. But the change of the mood is during the rehearsal. I found myself again.

M: Do you perceive other emotions during these music activities?

I: Many and it depends on what I am asked to do. If I am asked to do on my own without others, or with others, generally it's a mixed feeling procedure because you are asked to perform something. So you are asked to prepare, you have to prepare. If you prepare, you will enjoy much more than you are not prepared. If you are not prepared you feel stressed and you feel challenged.

M: However I also notice that you gave 8 points to the playing instruments in terms of the negative effects on mood? Why is that? And there is a 6-point grade was given to singing chorally.

(\* Because the questionnaire was done two weeks ago, the respondent does not remember the detail. Hence I explained the item task and the points this person gave in order to remind the participant of the detail.)

I: Yeah, I think it was correct because it was the first time I saw the question, so let's keep it like that. I guess the reason I gave the answers because I value much more my

performance, and rehearsals. And generally when I play, so if it doesn't go that good or as I expect to be, I am disappointed.

M: You are disappointed by your performance? (Yes.) But by performance in guitar playing or singing in a choir?

A: I am disappointed with both. But as you can see, I feel more disappointed by my guitar performance and that is actually what I do. Singing is the secondary instrument I don't practice alone.

M: So the reasons why you gave the high points to these music activities (in terms of this item), because you emphasize more on your performance? (Yes) Ok, now let's talk about emotional experience. Are you satisfied with these two music activities? Could you say something about it? Like in which way or aspects?

A: I feel I kind of experience myself through performing, not actually in concerts but for me when I am alone or with friends. I like singing or playing, and it's like I need it in my life.

M: It seems that there is more change since you have playing the instrument compared to singing with people. What is the difference of changes between these two music activities?

A: Well, from what I can remember is that when I started learning guitar, how to learn guitar, it was a new field for me. So it was exciting to learning something new, something that I can't really experience with, that was the first feeling I got the first time. Yeah, it is kind of thing you can share with others, you can socialize with that.

M: Do you reach any goal in your life through this music activity, or say playing instrument alone, or does it reach your expectation?

A: Playing alone? Yes, I want to become better, so when I exercise I enhance my skills in general and knowledge. So yeah, I have reached a goal through that.

M: Do you still remember the first when you were the member of the choir?

A: Yes, 2010. It was not that professional but it was a nice choir at school.

M: Now, do you feel something different since you have joined in group singing for many years?

A: Yes, I am more confident, I have gained much more experiences. Yeah, I am the different person because it was a long time ago.

M: Could you explain a little bit about 'different person'?

A: Yes, I could consider myself more mature to do with things. Cause being a choir does not only require music skills, it requires team members as well and many other stuff.

M: let's talk about enjoyment? What kinds of factors do you think might be related to how you enjoy instrument playing and singing with people?

A: I think the connection I have with the other members are from the concerts or the rehearsal maybe. Mostly, no, generally the knowledge that I gain from these stuff, the rehearsal or the concerts. But I could say that social factor is important.

M: Is social factor important to your general wellbeing?

A: Yes.

M: How about pieces or technique? Do these factors affect how you enjoy music activities?

A: Yes.

M: You mentioned that you like classical music, jazz and rock. Are you satisfied with the pieces performed by the last choir you have joined in?

A: I am not, I actually did not like it.

M: Why?

A: I don't like the composition, or say the requiem. I do not know, generally I don't like the composition. I don't think that is a great piece of music. I will never sit down and listen to it again, that specific requiem. I would prefer listening to some other composers' versions.

M: Are you satisfied with the pieces you choose for playing guitar?

A: Most of the time.

M: Now back to the topic 'wellbeing'. For yourself, what kinds of elements would affect your wellbeing?

A: That is a very board question. Well, wellbeing is your health, physically and mentally I guess. Having mentally health means feeling stable in your life, achieving goals, having goals so you move to forward.

M: What kind of elements do you emphasize more when you engage in music activities?

A: Two factors are important for me, one is the knowledge part, I like to collaborate with people that they have knowledge to pass it on me and learn by them; and the other factor is social factor. When I play with people, when I sing with people, I like to have mental connection with them as well. That's ideal, but that does not happen every time, especially in a big ensemble, you can't actually have mental connection with everyone, but at least I like entering the place and feeling welcome.

M: But at the first question, you mention that you emphasize more on your self-achievement. (Yes). Is the knowledge attainment part of your self-achievement? Like what you have learned, the methods or technique?

A: What I meant by that is that what I provide to the ensemble, if my skills, my performance is sufficient enough to make the ensemble better.

B: But how about playing guitar alone?

A: If I have the progression, so I get enjoy out of that.

M: Last question, could you use three to five words to describe how these two music activities affect your wellbeing/ psychological health? What do you perceive through singing with people and playing music alone respectively?

A: I can say three words to go for both. Learning through the process, achieving things or new goals, and sharing same interest with other people, networking with people that are in similar way to me, similar experience & having fun. But when I play alone, having fun actually means I experience myself because the way I experience myself when I am alone is much deeper and much more expand than I play or sing with others. When I am alone, its normally that you are alone, you just save music to your mind at that time, but when you play with others you have to follow some rules that are not allow you to express or expand yourself. You have to follow the conductor's rules

or the guitarists', or generally the team you work with. Because when you are alone, you can improvise, or stop, or enlarge your music, do whatever you want.

M: So you would feel more free when you play music alone because you are allowed to experience yourself in depth?

A: Yes, transformer of music is what I want to be.

### Interviewee No.2

Age: 23

Dutch student

M: Are you having the gap year? (Kind of) What have you done during this year?

I: Since the beginning of this year, I have been working at **XX**, I was doing Marketing for classical music, I am doing right now as well. Also I am writing intern Newsletter that I am sending to like 800 people once every two weeks and I am working there four days a week, one day off per week. So you will continue with your study in September?

I: Yes, at least it's my plan, maybe I will apply for a job because my colleague of Marketing for classical music is leaving but I am still doubting, I think I will go on studying

M: How is everything going so far in general?

I: Good, I only have like luxury problems. I mean yeah, I live in a nice house in **XX**, I can cycle every day to my work. I often meet friends and visit concerts and I attend them for free.

M: It seems that you are busy with your life, but do you relax yourself?

I: Yes, especially now during the World Champion Soccer, I watch a lot of games so that's time of relaxation. And I consciously chose to work 4 days a week instead of 5 because I need some time to rest as well and it really works well for me. A lot of time I just make the decisions to go home to do something else.

Do you think you are a social person, or how do you value the social engagement in your life?

I: Ok, I think I am a social person, I think I am an introverted person but that does not exclude me being a social person, which is great, which is necessary for my job as well. So that's nice. And for my experience in social life is great actually. I have close friends, I can be open very easily. In general, I can be open very easily. And I can take good care of myself, like I know where my borders are socially. I can take my time and start my conversation easily and people accept it.

M: So do you think social engagement in your life is important to you generally?

I: Yeah, I think for everyone, but for me as well of course. I can not imagine my life without social engagement. I also did working test 'what kind of office guy I am', and my colleagues turn out be one of the most important elements of job. So that also proves to me that I am very social and a team player. And that's true. Yeah I notice that's myself almost every week.

M: I wanna talk about something about music. You mentioned that you play the piano.

Do you have preference for music style?

I: Yes classical music is definitely my cup of tea, I also listen to other kinds of music but these are quite exceptional I think. From my past, I was raised without any classical music, my parent didn't listen to it. But I think like at least 80%, maybe 90% what I listen to is classical music which is very broad.

M: But when you play the piano, what kinds of pieces do you usually play? Still classical music.

I: Classical music mostly from the romantic era, I am a great fan of Rachmaninoff but also Chopin and Liszt for example. I would take the romantic piano music

M: Do you play alone?

I: Alone? Yeah, almost I would say. Because my piano is in my room and I will close the door when I play the piano, and I hardly play any public piano.

M: How do you enjoy it when you play the piano alone?

I: It depends on which piano I am playing on. Sometimes yeah, I have an electronic piano at my home, like this is not working but most of time I am quite happy. If I am sad I will turn to the piano and get rid of it. If I am happy I will always turn myself to the piano.

M: Based on the questionnaire, you also mentioned that you are the member of the choir. Could you say something about it? Like the motivation for this kind of activity.

I: Well, I've been participated in the choir for 4 years now, and I started on my first year, I don't know 18 or 19. For me, it's like a nice way of experiencing the new context, new social engagement and making music together. And also it's promoted like that, it's very nice to singing together, have a goal like a concert, for example. That's why I want to try that and it really got me. In the first of place I was kind of, a bit skeptical because you had to practice a lot and it's like what I am doing. But then afterwards a concert I get used to singing a piece, I am in a different level.

M: So you enjoy singing with people? (Yes.) Could you elaborate a little bit about why?

I: It gives me a good connection with someone, it improves my musical abilities and I am also focusing on my technical abilities. But I also start listening differently to music I started noticing other patterns because I see different sheetmusic. Yeah it just gives me a good feeling if we accomplish together with singing.

M: Well, you mentioned that social engagement matters to your life, I am wondering, do you emphasize on the social engagement while participating the music activity?

I: I try to make a contact with other choir members. In some way I think I am kind of succeed because I know a lot of people, so it's very easy to make contact with other people. But sometime I think I can start the conversation with people I don't know. So that's something I can improve for example. But it's not really the goal of singing in the choir because I already know everyone almost. The goal is not for me to get new people, my goal is to make something happen together while singing.

M: Do you also go to the concerts generally?

I: A lot of classical music concerts. Since I work in X place (to hide the name for privacy), it's easy for me to go to the concert for free. And I am curious about what happen in the stage and I am curious the new repertoire and great artists.

M: When you join in music activities, do you try to look for something like the goal to reach, self-value, the new experiencing, or something else?

I: Last year I was working almost full time so that I really focused on relaxation. Of course, working brings stress element and I was focusing on if I could get rid of it while singing. Actually it surprised me, it can. Because you also are not using your phone and you are not distracted. So yeah.

M: Do you think you could achieve the same goal from both music activities like playing the piano alone and singing with people?

I: Yes, it's true, it gives me some time for myself as I am not distracted by anything else. But when I am at home playing the piano, of course my phone is with me, and I often put it on the piano, so I get easily distracted. While singing in the choir it's different because you are independent, I mean I am singing badly, or I am not focusing on the choir also. So I am less free and less distracted.

M: So you might get distracted easily when you play the piano alone?

I: No, it's not by playing the piano alone, but while playing the piano in my room. I can concentrate on 30 minutes or longer. I mean, it's different experience than singing in the choir.

M: Why is different?

I: Because I am not sharing it with anybody. So it's for myself, I am not playing for anyone, I am not playing for the concert, I am just playing to enjoy myself. Not get pressure, experiment and try to know, make up a new thing, try to I don't know, I compose something, improvise. But the choir is different, way more structured.

M: Do you feel more stressed when you play the piano compared to singing with people?

I: Maybe a little bit. Because, when I sing I need to stand very straight up, but when I play the piano, I am sitting down and in forward. Actually it causes me a little less relaxation than singing. And since I am in my room, I get distracted by my phone, it's then less relaxing than singing in the choir. And I also play when I am bored, so playing the piano is such normal thing for me, it's also something I would do like filling the time. Sometime I feel like guilty because I haven't done anything for two hours but playing the piano for two hours, and I still think it's like doing nothing because it's normal for me.

M: In the questionnaire, you pointed out that you enjoy playing the piano alone, but you prefer singing with people. This is the different preference, what makes you give such choice?

I: I don't know why because I need both I think everyone needs social contact, but everyone needs time for themselves including me. So I think that would be it, that's the combination I think, everyone would need it. I would prefer playing alone to being get together all the time. It's balancing all the time, I don't know my balance actually. Of course I only sing in the choir like once a year for four months or something, I can play the piano all year alone so I already have the balance in time.

M: About the fun attainment, what kinds of factors do you think it might be related to your perception of enjoyment?

I: My work, of course, is stressed from external factors, also of course, while singing, the conductor or the social atmosphere is one feeling like trying their best. I always want people to try their best together. But when I play the piano, do I have the motivation to play something new, like I play the specific piece or I am just wasting my time to just filling my time so that I don't know what to do. That's really affect my mood while playing in the piano, for example.

M: You mentioned that you want everyone tries their best to make the choir better, but do you think everyone could satisfy you? (No) But if they don't do their best, do you feel disappointed?

I: Yes because I am feeling as a team, as a team player I want them to do their best, not only for themselves but also for the results. Yeah so I always kind of disappointed when people singing in false and I am a bit annoyed or when people don't well and I am also a bit annoyed, but I can relate why it's happening, so I can easily get over it. But I prefer if everyone could be specifically perfect.

M: Do you think if it would affect your mood or emotion?

I: Yeah, definitely. If I sing in a professional choir, my experience would be totally different than singing in this choir. This is more social choir for me. It's like a casual concert for the main members to stay, and it's also a social activity because I know a lot of people. It's not only about making music together.

M: Generally, what kinds of elements do you emphasize more when you engage in music activities?

I: My feelings actually, I mean, I have a very strong preference of how music should sound especially when I know the music. So I am always trying to emphasize on that and do what's correct in my perspective, and I do that as well when I am playing the piano, so as well singing in the choir which sometimes conflicts other people's perspective. Yeah, I am creating for professional and technical practice. But I, it also depends on situation. There is no same situation in violin because I don't play violin, so it would be a joke for me.

M: Regarding the item 'how much positive effect does singing in the choir have on your moods', you gave the similar point to two music activities. 8 for group singing, and 9 for playing instruments. Why did you give such high points respectively?

I: Because it really has a strong influence on my mood, I mean, singing, I can reverse the question (Yeah). If it's not there, I would be totally sad; if I am away for like one-month holiday, I will notice my mood that I want to play the piano, and it's way stronger than singing in the choir. So for me it really has a great positive effect on my mood if I can play the piano or singing in the choir. That's why very high grades.

M: It seems that there is more negative effect on your mood while playing the music alone compared to singing with people. Why do you perceive during the process of play the piano alone?

I: It's more normalized activity for me, it's not special one because I can do whenever I want, when I am bored, when I am at home, or when I am not bored. That's not really mater, it's not that structured. And it really depends on my mood what I am going to do. While singing in the choir is really structured, it really meets the opportunity, just

go for any thinking, I really need to do this. We are going to practice this piece and this part and I am gonna get advice from the conductor. I can not really influence it so that's why it's probably more comforting in general because then I really get distracted. Because I am not in charge when I am playing the piano, it's way more to connect with my personal mood. And it influences each other.

M: Do you think if there is change in your life since you've joined in the choir and played the piano?

I: Well, I've joined in the choir since 4 year ago and what change is my knowledge of I can in general. I know the lyrics, the texts. I listen to like vocal music differently, I can appreciate it more. And I've played the piano since I was 12 or 13 and that really changes my life a lot because I went to study Musicology and then I work in classical music; because now it's my daily activities. So it really changes my life.

M: So could I just conclude that, you might know how to appreciate other vocal music and it seems that you would focus more on music itself regarding joining in the choir. But for playing the piano, it's more close to your life?

I: No, that's even stronger I think because I think I really focus on hear what I play the piano, and I'm really interest in if I hear the pianist playing the new piece or the piece I know, even stronger grasp my attention than a vocal piece, for example.

M: Now I am gonna ask you a broad question, please do not feel stressed. Speaking of wellbeing, what kinds of elements would contribute to it, as far as you're concerned?

I: My love life, my home situation including my parents but also my roommates something. And also my physical health, my mental health, my social activities, my connection, my ability to learn, my work, my studies, my financial situation.

M: Do you think music activities would be beneficial to your wellbeing.

I: Yes.

M: The last question. Could you use three to five words to describe how singing in the choir and playing the piano alone affect your psychological and physical wellbeing?

I: Relaxation for both, emotions for both, my personal interest for both; experimenting with piano playing, no distraction while singing.

### Interviewee No.3

Age: 23

Dutch student

M: Do you need to finish your thesis, assignment or something else at the moment?

I: Only internship at this point and I will finish my thesis later.

M: Regarding the internship, how is going so far?

I: I really like the practical part and I am doing research part which is hard and challenge sometimes but also it's really good, and I am satisfied with it.

M: Not much, not really. It's a one year project for the choir, so it means that every year I would sing like 10 weeks, every week once in a week. That's the only thing I do, I don't play the guitar a lot, I just did for fun like once two month something like that.



I don't touch instruments that often.

M: Do you think you are a social person, or how do you value the social engagement in your life?

I: To answer both questions, I think I am a very social person, I also very focus on social engagement in my life. I really focus on relationship with different kinds of people, and also different relationships, which is very important to me.

M: But why is important to you?

I: Because I like to know what my friends are doing, I like to know when they need or, just be there for fun, and I also wanted the other way around so if I am needed everything, I am very glad that I can always go to them , that's' why it's very important to me. For fun on the one hand, for helping others.

M: I would like you to talk about something about music, do you have preference for music style?

I: Not really, but I have to say it depends on my mood. If I am very, my mood influences what I listen to at that moment and also my activities, so if I work or study or read, I would always go to classical music; but for instance, if I work that doesn't ask that much of mental impact then I would listen to pop work kind of Indie or folk music, that's what I really like. But also Jazz and hard rock, and that's one genre I don't listen to at all, and also alternative genres.

M: Do you think classical music might relieve your stress more compared to other genres like Jazz or pop music?

I: No.

M: Based on the questionnaire, I know you also play the in instrument, how do you enjoy it?

I: I like it a lot, but like I said I don't do it that often. Because I don't it like that much, so it's like I have to, I already really want to play and I really like it. But if I just grab instruments I don't get happy out of it. I have to be happy before I grab my instruments, I have to feel the effect that I will get happy and satisfied playing the instruments. So I will not grab it to get happy and satisfied. Do you get the distinction between two of them?

M: Nee.

I: I am already happy and satisfied when I grab the instruments, and if it would just enhance those feeling a little bit more, but when I am, for example, not happy or satisfied, I will not grab my instruments necessary. I already have the idea in my head that I want to play that would play, so, that doesn't come that often, so, it's not affected by my mood, that's what I want to say.

M: Do you play instrument alone?

I: Not always. I also sing and play a lot with other people, also without being the choir, just my guitar.

M: Aside from playing music, you also join the choir. Could you say something about it? Like the motivation for this kind of activity. Why do you like joining in this kind of music activity?

I: Because it's really a social project which I really like, because I know a lot of people beforehand and I can see them during the project which it's nice. And because I am also familiar with Hucbald which is organizing the choir before I even went to the choir, so that's important and I was already part of Hucbald and also did activity for that. That's why it's so easy to just try classical music choir project for once.

M: Since you mentioned that social engagement means to your life, do you emphasize on the social engagement while participating the music activities such as singing chorally and playing instruments?

I: Yes but only singing chorally because playing my instrument is almost always solo so I don't do that often with other people, and that would not help my social engagement.

M: But when you join in music activities, do you try to look for sth like the goal to reach, making friends, or experiencing yourself, or something like that? You can just say whatever you want.

I: Yes, I have several goals when I make music in general. When I play the guitar, when I do that on my own, I always have a goal to play the pieces that I played once because I've played for many many years. And I always want to know if I got worse or if it's really like riding a bike, you know. So that's why I play alone. When I play together, I always try to find different pieces which real known, that's why I play the guitar with other people. And I just try different harmonies and see which one works the best, and what kinds of version we could make out of the songs and chose to play together. When I am singing chorally in that specific choir, it's most of the time just social engagement and working to work something with many people. Because people who come to there have many different levels of singing, which it's really interesting to see how far it get for such project. And that's always my goal, seeing what we got from last time we tried it that we really like.

M: Do you think you could achieve the same gold from both music activities.

I: No at al. No, it's very different for me, especially the social engagement part that's what we actually talked about. Also, the goal is very differently, for myself, the one goal is focusing all on me, the other goal is to focus all on other people, so they would never be same to me.

M: In the questionnaire, you pointed out that you enjoy playing the guitar alone, but you prefer singing with people. This is different preference, is it related to your different goals?

I: Definitely, yes, it's related to goals, because goals are different and that's why I prefer... The thing is I really like playing music with other people and I like more than I play music alone, that's why I do it more often. But still I just like making must by myself, so that's why I still play by myself on my own.

M: About the fun attainment, what kinds of factors do you think it might be related to your perception of enjoyment? Moods? The new social network? The pieces you performed? The technique or something else?

I: It definitely has to do with the pieces because some pieces I think are more beautiful than others. And when I can play a beautiful piece more or better, then I'm just more

satisfying while playing afterwards, that's for guitar, also for singing. Pieces are really important but since you're in a group, it's not that interesting. It can be a piece that I absolutely don't know that I can still like it because you can still talk with other people. But when I play on my own, it is important that I kind of think if the piece is beautiful or really hard. And I can learn something out of it as just like put it like that, not really hard but just I can learn something out of it. Then I have a lot of goals that I can try to reach.

M: So you're free to select the pieces you perform when you play the instrument on your own compared to singing with others in the choir?

I: Yeah, true, absolutely.

M: What kinds of elements do you emphasize more while joining in music activities, in general?

I: I think you can sort of copy and paste the goals I mentioned. For choir, it's social engagement, it's definitely learning for both of them, which is very important to me, I just like making progress, and that's absolutely important element. So on one hand is the social activity, on other hand is learning, fun definitely, also it's one of them.

M: Do you enjoy solo music playing more or performing with others in general?

I: I can't not choose.

M: I just showed you the questionnaire you filled out a couple of weeks ago. Regarding the item 'how much positive effect does singing in the choir have on your moods', you gave the similar point to two music activities. 7 for group singing, and 8 for playing instruments. What kinds of positive effects do you perceive from singing chorally and playing the piano alone respectively?

I: The difference between the 7 and the 8 came from the fact that I have more control over the learning process when I play on my own. Because there are other influences in my life as well when I sing in the choir, and that's something that I have control over when I play alone so that makes difference.

M: But it seems that there is no negative effect on your mood while you join in two music activities.

I: Yes, that's true. No, there is none. I would never get frustrated when I, you know, I really enjoy it when I learn a lot or when I make a progress. When I make a progress, I am really satisfied; but when I don't make progress, it's also fine because I have fun either way. So, no, I don't have negative mood when I play or sing. Only I did something really really terrible, but I don't think so.

M: Do you think is there any change in your life since you have joined in the choir or play the guitar?

I: That was a funny question because there was a lot of change in my life since I've play the guitar since I've played so long. But it has nothing to do with the guitar. It's just 15 plus years ago, I played since I was 8. So yeah, I started going to high school and going to college, living on my own and something like that. I am enjoying the choir, but there's not much change this year.

M: I like to ask you a broad question now, please do not feel stressed and see it as a test

any kind.

Speaking of wellbeing, what kinds of elements would contribute to it, as far as you're concerned?

I: Well, to start with, the less stress, the more better. Stress is very important factor that influence in wellbeing. Also the environment that you are in, if it is health, clean and, for me I can make a lot of different in my room, clean or not because it would affect my wellbeing. Also my social engagement with others, how well is going, how much social engagement I am having. No, no how much, it's I have to have solid quality, you know. You have to be able to express yourself when there is something that's trouble about. That's the most important thing I guess. Well, if others are doing fine that's very important to me. It would affect my wellbeing, but especially stress is really important factor.

M: Do you think music activities would be contribute to your general wellbeing?

I: Yeah, but it doesn't necessarily have anything to do with making music. Just that, when I make the music with a group, most of the time I have the social engagement part which I already talked about, which is good for me, I think for my wellbeing in general. So yeah that would affect my wellbeing but just because of the social engagement, not necessarily because of the music. I don't think just the activity of making music really changes my wellbeing.

M: Could you use three to five words to describe how singing in the choir and play the guitar affect your wellbeing/ psychological health?

I: Making music makes me relaxed, it gives me knowledge, learning is important; and it depends on whether I do it alone not, it gives me more social, so it's a social activity. It's enjoyable, I just love music in general.

#### Interviewee No.4

Age: 24

Dutch student

M: Are you doing internship or thesis?

I: Both actually.

M: How is going so far?

I: It's going, I am nearly finished my internship. My thesis, I just start writing it. So its really early face.

M: It seems that you are busy with your life, I am wondering do you relax yourself in spare time?

I: Yes, I do, especially about making music, and composing, reading, things like that.

M: Could you elaborate a little about making music, in which ways?

I: I sing in the choir once week and I play trumpet in one orchestra and sometimes in other projects. So at average I play like four times a week, which two times with others. So you play music or make music with others. (Yeah, as well.)

M: So, do you think you are a social person,

Yes, I do. About making music, or how do you value the social engagement in your

life?

I: I really appreciate, I think both at the choir and at the orchestra, the people I play with are really close friends. And, take out of the way because I played there, otherwise I would not have met people.

M: So are you a social person?

I: Yeah, I guess.

M: Do you think social activity is important to you? (Yeah!) Why?

I: It's more pleasure to do the activity. It's everyone like playing their own part, for example, when those parts come together and they interact with the way, which is also socially and comes more fun.

M: You make music, you play instrument, do you have preference for music style?

I: Mainly classical, although I play the cover band as well.

M: Do you also play classical music usually? (Yeah.) Do you play music alone, or with the choir members, or the orchestra members?

I: Yeah, it's mainly on the orchestra setting, sometimes also with smaller. Like I am preparing the concert with Jan Peter in September. At this phrase, I just start playing my part alone. So usually it starts being alone and it ends playing with other people.

M: So do you play music or make music alone? (Yes, sometimes I do). How often?

I: It's mainly for projects, I think it's like four or three concerts a year and I have to rehearsal for all of those. Like I had concert yesterday, and I studied, I think, for four sessions for this, solo thing. Do you enjoy playing music alone?

I: It's different. Yeah, sure I do enjoy it. (why?) I think in the solo piece you can really elaborate what you are able to do, like the piece which is, quite free well to seek. And I don't always get those feelings of part within the orchestra, sometimes, but not all the time.

M: So aside from play music or trumpet with the orchestra, you are also the member of the choir? Could you say something about it? Like the motivation for this kind of activity.

I: I think, singing in the choir is more relax, because when I play trumpet I have to alert all the time

Relax. I always play my part alone, usually there are like two or three trumpet players but they have different parts, so you really need to focus on your own part as well. You are kind of soloist. Another aspect is that it's really physical activity playing trumpet. It really takes a lot of, you need to give pressure hear, it's really intense. I feel like, singing in the choir is a little more relax, and you are also part of group. The activity is so much different cause you really stress on making music together and learning with others. Of course, with playing trumpet as well but it seems all different level.

M: I also notice that you join in more than one choir, right? (Yeah sometimes I do some projects). But why? You really enjoy singing with other people or you have other reasons for it?

I: Most of projects basically. If I think okay, this is exciting, sometimes within the USKO, when they are no trumpet in the program, I join in the choir as well, so it's really social I think. But the thing that I most often prefer playing trumpet to singing in the choir.

M: But do you prefer playing trumpet alone to playing trumpet with other people?

I: I prefer playing with other people.

M: What kinds of pieces do you usually perform in the choir? Still classical music?

I: Yes it's mostly classical music. Do you like them?

M: All of them?

I: Yes, of course, there are pieces which I don't like, I really have to think about this one. There are general some pieces I don't like. But generally I like it.

M: Back to the question on social engagement, you mention that social engagement is important to your life. But do you emphasize on the social engagement while participating the music activities such as singing in the choir and playing instruments?

I: Yeah, definitely. Cause it's like, it's always the goals and effects. If someone does something strange or odd in orchestra, then all other people are kind of free acting to that activity going on. So when I play with others, it always, all these engagement is going on while playing, so much fun I think.

M: Aside from the social engagement part, do you try to look for something during the choir or playing instruments, or other music activities?

I: I think it's combination, I think it's social activity or either social activities going on are very important for me, for joining. Both the choir and the orchestra, I think it's basically with the orchestra, I also try to reach the higher levels like pieces we are performing right now is, was really tough I've studied for one and half years for master this piece actually. So that's important goal, I think it's just to reach the level, to play as high as possible level.

M: Do you go to music concerts?

I: Yeah, a lot.

M: Do you think you could achieve the same gold from both singing in the choir and playing music alone?

I: Yes, about the social engagement I can do that in the choir as well. On the other hand, playing as high as possible levels I can achieve that when I play music alone, but not, vice versa.

M: In the questionnaire, you pointed out that you enjoy playing the piano alone, but you also singing with people. I mean, this is two different musical environment, what makes you give such preference?

I: I guess it's just, it's not that social activity when I play music alone. But actually when I play alone, it's to, first of all, enhance my technique and to prepare different parts to rehearse. On the one hand, if I play on the concerts and solo pieces, it's not really for the social engagement, it's just to gain sense of ... (not clear enough).

M: I am not sure, could I interpret that for group singing, you emphasize more on social engagement, but for solo performing, you might emphasize your technique, am I correct?

I: Yeah, yes.

M: Now I'd like to ask you to talk about fun attainment. What kinds of factors do you think it might be related to how you enjoy music activity? Maybe we can start with

playing music alone?

I: that's really mastery when you study hard, and you get something returned by actually accomplishing what you try to study. Like, for example, yesterday I played the quite hard piece in the Dom church, which was really nice because, like two months ago, 'ok, I couldn't do this', and I started studying and during study I was able to think 'oh well I might actually be able to do this', and the level of progress is fun I think.

M: When you recognize that 'oh yes I am able to do it', how do you feel?

I: Energetic, mainly energetic, I would say.

M: How about group singing? What kinds of factors might affect how you enjoy it?

I: If you made the sound together which xx, and also it's tune, and this is power which it creates, that's part of fun in group singing as well.

M: Well, generally, what kinds of elements do you emphasize more when you engage in music activities?

I: I think it's really 50% 50%. Let's suppose social and also, just for the fun part, and growing on your instrument, learning new things. Ideally, you actually are reaching something, some points which have never reached before.

M: now I turn to the questionnaire part. Well, regarding the item 'how much positive effect does singing in the choir have on your moods', you gave the similar point to two music activities. 9 for group singing which is very high, and 7 for playing instruments. Why did you give such high points?

What kinds of positive effects do you perceive from singing chorally and playing the piano alone respectively?

I: Actually, with singing, I always, mostly sing on Friday evenings. Friday nights are always tired because five days for work and studying, and it likes completely exhausted. And you start singing, in one hour you feel energy moving again. (Just one hour?) Yes. (Singing is magic.) Yeah! So, if my working days are seven days as well, after I sung, I feel much better than I haven't. Singing is also relaxing activity. Because when you start to hurt yourself, saying doing something very wrong, singing at least is also about being as relaxed as possible, making as comfortable as possible, usually gets sounds as well.

M: How about playing music alone? Why did you give 7 points, obviously, which is little lower than group singing.

I: Yeah, I think kind same aspects as well, but I think it's because of the trumpet. Sometimes after rehearsing you just, you feel a little bit dizzy or, because it's really intensive activity, sometimes you just push too much; especially when I play alone, it's easy to play more than you should have done.

M: You would work harder (Yeah. Work too hard, actually). Don't you like it?

I: Well, next day you feel that's not good.

M: But obviously, there is also negative effect of both music activities on your moods.

I: Yeah, negative thing, I think especially when I play trumpet. It's really easy to crack some notes, it just happens. (So you don't like it?) No, it's awful. It's nothing you can really do about it, it just happens. When it happens, it's a little bit insecure than happens more. I feel insecure when I crack notes, for example and trumpet is really ugly.

M: But do you feel insecure during the choir?

I: Generally, not. Sometimes when the first time for rehearsing the piece, I don't know my notes then I might feel a little bit insecure. Generally, that is just trying and sometimes there are wrong notes.

M: When you crack the notes, do you feel frustrated?

I: Sometimes yes. Seriously, you don't have to always control about this, but generally, if it really like the easy part of cracking noting. What can I do this?

M: So do you think if there is any change in your life since you have joined in the choir and playing instruments?

I: I also felt singing in the choir kind of boost my trumpet skills I would say (why?). Because when you learn to play trumpet, it's mainly ok, these notes and to play and need a few precious first files. If you play trumpet, you blow air through horn, press the first key then you are pretty sure you have somewhere close to an F. On the other hand, when you start singing, you really need to listen to pitches to make a sound, this is really different thing and from that moment, you really need to hear others before you can do your own stuff. I think starting to sing make me aware of the activity and I change this feel when I do my trumpet playing as well, that I much more listen to others while I play trumpet as before.

M: Do you think if there is different experience in the choir and playing trumpet alone?

I: Yes, it is definitely different experience. Especially with the social activity which is lacking in solo.

M: How about emotional experience?

I: Yeah, it's really when I play solo especially at the concerts, I get kind of anxious before I start. There are so many things which could go wrong, if I compare with singing, it's more like, ok sometimes you have a very awful day and you are just not able to make the sound you used to make, but it's usually quite stable so I have less anxiety for those concerts.

M: Now I am going to I like to ask you a broad question now, please do not feel stressed. Speaking of wellbeing, what kinds of elements would contribute to it, as far as you are concerned?

I: I would say psychologically, it's like feeling more energetic, definitely, and also it just lasts more than just a few hours. I think physically, it's also especially singing I think it makes me aware of my body, and I think that's health as well. You can explore on possibilities.

M: Aside from these music activities, in general, what kinds of elements would contribute to your health like happiness or social networking or self-value?

I: I think all aspects now we call.

M: Do you think music activity would be beneficial for your health?

I: Yeah, definitely. This is the way I put it. There are also some side-effects and if I speak for trumpet players, especially professional trumpet players, there is high risk of strokes, so it's not so good for my health.

M: Now, it goes to the last question. Could you use three to five words to describe how singing in the choir and playing music alone affect your psychological health?



I: Social activity for singing together which is not for performance playing alone, which just make you feel better having friends because of this activity, it's also important. I, also the idea of developing yourself musically makes you happier from reaching points, mastering new things, and also relaxation. If you have a day's work, you just do something musically, you kind of forgot your entire tire day.

M: So music activity could distract yourself from your personal problems? (Yes) You can gain relaxation from both singing in the choir and playing music alone (yes). Any.

### Interviewee No.5

Age: 20

Dutch student

M: How is your study going so far?

I: So far I pass everything except for my thesis, and I stop doing that this semester and I am doing next year for my Bachelor and starting my thesis again in September.

M: Do you do something to relax yourself in spare time?

I: Yeah, I like making music, watching series, and hanging out with my roommates something like that.

M: You mentioned about making music, what do you usually do?

I: Usually I play the piano, and if I feel comfortable with my surroundings, I also sing while I play the piano, and sometimes I play the guitar or ukulele and I also singing with it.

M: You learn a lot of instruments

I: Yeah, I am not good at playing guitar and ukulele, but it is enough to accompany myself.

M: Do you think you are a social person, or how do you value the social engagement in your life?

I: Well, I would say I am quite introverted, I also enjoy time alone but I do enjoy sometimes just hanging out with friends. Having interaction with other people.

M: Do you think hanging out with people is important to you?

I: Yes it is. (Why?) Well, because, it just takes your minds of all the things you can talk about.

M: You mentioned that you play lots of instruments like the piano, ukulele and guitar, right? How long have you play music?

I: I started play the piano, I think like, 8 years old, and I and the lessons for about 9 years or so. So since 8, I've played the piano. Guitar, I started, I would say, at 15 years old. And ukulele, like 16 or 17. I got into singing, afterwards I started solo a little bit when I was 17 maybe. But then I joined in the choir.

M: I also play the piano and ukulele. Singing while playing the instrument is a good experience (Yeah!) So what kings of genres of music do you usually play?

I: Well, When I play the instrument and sing, I most of the time just learn songs that I really like so much, most of the time just like pop music, alternative music. And when

I just play the piano, I most of the time just play the contemporary classical music. Things like that.

M: Do you have preference for music style generally?

I: Kind of like alternative Indie pop.

M: You mentioned that you enjoy your me time, and you are kind of introverted person. Do you like playing music alone?

I: Yes, I do.

M: How often do you play music alone?

I: I would say once every two days or every day.

M: Why do you like playing music alone?

I: Because it's just the way like I experience my emotions and I put my emotions into something. Just satisfying me to make something beautiful.

M: Aside from playing music, you also have the experience in the choir. Could you say something a little about it? Like the motivation for joining in this music activity?

I: I joined in the first choir I liked, really enjoyed it, was the one from Hucbald, and it was my second year. First year I couldn't join in because like I didn't have time. But I joined in just because it just sounded fun and it w. as a nice activity to do every week. And then I notice that how much I enjoy. I also studied in England for a few months and I joined in two choirs there as well, one normal, one acapella choir. Now I am still in Hucbald choir and a female student choir. I really enjoyed it while singing together. Do you get enjoyment by singing in the choir?

Yeah, I do. Because it is a different experience from singing alone. You just blend into all these voices together. It's really awesome to hear how everything comes together. You can just fill the whole room without any like microphone or something like that.

M: When you join in music activities, do you try to look for sth like maybe you have a goal to achieve you might want to experience yourself. Or you want to try to find out your self-achievement, something like that? Some people would say 'the reason I join in the choir is because I want to learn something, lean more skills'.

I: Yeah, I do have goals. I really enjoy learning that's also what I discover during the choir. I really like learning. I really apply all those techniques I learn also when singing alone. And I am gonna take singing lessons next year as well.

M: How about playing instruments. Do you have same goal or something else?

I: I do still enjoy learning, but I stopped the lessons with piano because I moved out of the city I lived in. But for now, I am quite satisfied with the environment and I really want to persist in singing more.

M: Do you think you could achieve the same gold from both music activities we are talking about?

I: Well, that is very different. Singing in the choir you really need to listen to everyone around you, you need to pay attention to a lot of different things like you do learn techniques for singing better, which can be applied to both, but it certainly is different.

M: But when you play music on your own, you would emphasize more yourself?

I: Yes.

M: In the questionnaire, you pointed out that you enjoy playing the piano alone, but you prefer singing with people. This is two different environment, so what makes you give such preference?

I: I think singing is easier to do with other people, because I wouldn't say that's skill I play instruments I really play with other people, and I just enjoy doing that more on my own. Yeah, singing is just easier to do other people for me.

Me: Now, I wanna talk about something about fun. What kinds of factors do you think it might be related to how you enjoy music activity? Maybe we can start with playing music alone?

I: It's that I could produce music all by myself and I can put my emotions into it, and have a control over how things sound. I really enjoy that control, I experience a lot of fun when I make something beautiful.

M: Could you elaborate about 'control everything'?

I: That's very big difference between me singing alone and singing in the choir because I am alone I don't need to pay attention to anyone else and I can choose how I would want to have a sound. When I sing in the choir, I have to pay attention to everyone around me, and I can't really focus on like what kind of emotions I put into it. It's very different because I lose that control.

M: Could I just interpret as the big difference between playing music alone and singing in the choir is that you can put more your emotions inside?

I: Yes, that's correct.

M: What kinds of elements do you emphasize more while joining in the music activity? Some people might say 'I would like to make more friends' or 'I just want to have fun', or 'social activity' something like that.

I: For me, with the choir, music is the most important for me. I do really value also is that, like being fun with other people because that's not the case that also music is gonna be fun. So I think music is like the first place for me and then like people around me.

M: So generally, do you enjoying playing music alone or playing music with people?

I: I think, in the end I really enjoy playing alone. Well when it comes to performing, I really enjoying doing alone. Just like practicing or playing, I think it is kinda equal between both.

M: Now, I will turn to the item in the questionnaire. Regarding the item 'how much effect positive effect does singing in the choir and playing music alone have on your moods', you gave the similar point to two music activities. 8 for group singing, and 9 for playing music alone. They are high points, why do you give high points?

I: Yeah, I don't know. Just the way experience myself, just take my mind of things when I am stressed so I feel a lot happier when I am done with like practice or just singing alone. So that's why I gave such high points.

M: Regarding the item 'how much negative effects of playing music alone and singing with people have on your moods', it seems that there is more negative effect on your moods while singing in the choir. Why is that?

I: Because sometime I really get frustrated when things are going wrong. I really value practicing for choir very high. So when people around me really don't practice, I try to sing very well but people around me don't sing very well then also I can't sing because I am like being put down. So then I get really frustrated so that's why when I sing alone I don't have that so, because I just can't move on my things.

M: Do you think it is easy for everyone to do the best to make the choir better together? You mentioned that if people practice well, you could sing well then. But do you think it is easy to reach your expectation?

I: No, I don't. Sometimes I have too high expectation. Sometimes people don't practice at all I think when you join in the choir, also you need to do some work at home. But yes, it's just my personality that, I also enjoy just practicing with other people.

M: But you might feel frustrated right? (Yes) But how do you usually adjust the negative moods when you feel frustrated?

I: I don't really express anything. Sometime when it is going bad, I can't express to people around me like when bad, but I don't say it to people in the choir. Most of time I just complain when I get home like 'what a horrible' 'I don't like it this time'.

M: Do you think is there is change since you've joined in the choir and played music respectively?

I: For sure, my voice is improved a lot, and I am a lot of confident with playing music and singing. It is just the fun activities I add in my life I would say. I really discover how much I like singing so that's why I am also really presuming singing instead of playing music.

M: In your questionnaire, you said there is change in your life since you've play the instruments and you said, 'I have a way to express emotion I am not able to in other ways', what do you mean by this?

I: Sometime I can be very close to my emotions, for examples, when I play the piano, I can really put my emotions into the song and, you just have a way to let those emotions out. And it's great because I can hear something back. (Still about your experience and your emotional experience?) Yes.

M: Now I like to ask you a broad question, please do not feel stressed. Speaking of wellbeing, what kinds of elements would contribute to it, as far as you'r concerned?

I: I think a comfortable environment with people around me I feel comfortable with and the place I know, and not have to worry about things that are coming that day. And knowing I can do fun things.

M: Do you think music activities to some extent affect your general wellbeing?

I: Yes, they do. (But why and how). If the environment, for example, really smells bad or the people are surrounding me are really mean, then I feel really really bad, and that like, has affected me for a whole day. And I start overthinking a lot. Yeah, and if I worry about things, for example, if I have to do presentation, it really bothers me so yeah.

M: So the last question, could you use three to five words to describe how singing in

the choir and playing instrument alone affect your psychological health or wellbeing?

I: It's hard to think about one word. Like expressive (for both or?), yeah, for both. I think, social for the choir part, and satisfying for both. Beautiful, I don't know, like the product you are making is beautiful.

M: It's beautiful if you make the product beautiful, would it satisfy you and make you feel more confident and happier? (Yes, exactly) Could I put them into the answer?

I: Yes, sure. (for both?) Yes, that's what I meant.



