

Choral Singing and the Subjective Sense of Life Satisfaction

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Leisure has a rich social, psychological and educational potential. Choral singing is one of the most common organized musical leisure activities, which is, according to numerous studies, in addition to the obvious primary musical function, unattributed to various psychological, therapeutic, educational and other benefits. This paper presents the results of research aimed at determining the relationship between quality leisure time spent participating in choir activities, determinants and dimensions of subjective and psychological well-being and elements characteristic of the sense of life satisfaction (global and situational). The aim of the research was to determine the level of the subjective feeling of life satisfaction of choir singers, to point out possible benefits arising from active and organized music engagement in choirs and to check whether there is a connection between these activities and the subjective sense of life satisfaction in active singers of different ages, genders, and professional or amateur groups. The results indicate that choir singers show a relatively high level of life satisfaction and that there are certain differences in relation to their age, gender and status, but not in relation to the duration of their participation in the activity.

Key words: amateur musicians; choir; leisure; professional musicians; well-being.

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Introduction

Living a free and fulfilled life and feeling satisfied can be considered the universal ideal of living. This ideal, as well as the eternal civilizational aspiration for happiness, can be observed from the point of view of various scientific and artistic disciplines – philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, music, fine and dramatic arts, literature, history, ethics, theology, economics, and others. Given the broad perspective of the disciplines that study and research the phenomenon of free time, it is clear that leisure is considered to be a significant determinant of potential progress, improving the individual's quality of life, but also civilization. Leisure is always studied in relation to the working and existential dimension of life, and in the context of work as a traditionally accepted significant human activity, it is given equal importance. It is important to point out that leisure, as an integral and important part of life, must be viewed in relation to age, because the needs, possibilities and time constraints change during one's lifetime. For this paper, the most important activities are those related to the development of personality¹, which include educational,² cultural,³ artistic⁴ and social activities.

Stebbins is credited with making a system of conceptual distinctions of the ways people spend their free time.⁵ He divides leisure into serious or organized and indeterminate or casual. In addition to those basic divisions, leisure activities are further divided into project-based activities and the work of supporters or amateurs. Casual leisure is focused on meeting the needs of participants for rest, entertainment, socialization and taking care of their own health. These are occasional, unstructured activities that include play, fun and relaxation. Project-based leisure refers to those activities that have a one-time or occasional character. Serious ventures are a heterogeneous group of leisure activities, which are divided into the work of supporters and activities in the area of serious leisure. The basic characteristics of serious leisure are structure and continuity. Such activities are divided into amateurism, volunteering and hobbies.

The organization of serious leisure is based on these basic principles: perseverance and persistence, desire for non-business success, significant personal

¹ Cf. Zvezdan PENEZIĆ, Zadovoljstvo životom u adolescentnoj i odrasloj dobi, *Društvena istraživanja*, 15 (2006) 4-5, 643-669, 647.

² Cf. Vesnica MLINAREVIĆ, Maja BRUST NEMET, *Izvanastavne aktivnosti u školskom kurikulumu*, Osijek, Sveučilište J. J. Strossmayera u Osijeku, Učiteljski fakultet u Osijeku, 2012, 24-29.

³ Cf. Sabina VIDULIN ORBANIĆ, Fenomen slobodnog vremena u postmodernom društvu, *Metodički obzori*, 3 (2008) 2, 19-33, 23.

⁴ Cf. Antoaneta RADOČAJ-JERKOVIĆ, *Zborsko pjevanje u odgoju i obrazovanju*, Osijek, Umjetnička akademija u Osijeku, 2017, 49-57.

⁵ Cf. Robert STEBBINS, *Amateurs, professionals, and serious leisure*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992, 1-58.

effort, long-term well-being, personality development, fulfilled moral and social life.⁶

Life satisfaction, fulfillment, happiness, well-being and joy of life are currently very popular terms in the so-called positive psychology, which are often used in everyday life, the media, but also in science, especially in the disciplines that aim to improve human life in physical, psychological and spiritual terms in response to the challenges of modern living. Life satisfaction may be defined as a cognitive component of subjective well-being, and it refers to the assessment process in which an individual evaluates the quality of their life according to personally and subjectively set criteria.⁷ On the other hand, the feeling of happiness is an emotional component of life satisfaction and Diener describes it as feeling of positive emotions.⁸ Also, it is possible to define life satisfaction as an overall assessment of personal life and also considers it, along with current mood or emotions, a cognitive component of subjective well-being.⁹ General feeling of life satisfaction may be considered on two levels, cognitive and affective, where at the cognitive level the subjective well-being includes the general feeling of life satisfaction, and at the affective level the subjective well-being includes the experience of positive, i.e. the absence of negative emotions.¹⁰ At the cognitive level, subjective well-being and life satisfaction are related to satisfaction in certain aspects of life, such as satisfaction with career, marriage, standard of living, health and the like. It follows that life satisfaction assessments are in fact instantaneous, subjective assessments that allow individuals to assess their life by their own criteria and use the information and criteria that they consider important for themselves and their life. Research shows that there are certain similarities in the elements that contribute to the prediction of the life satisfaction assessment, and these are primarily good health, successful marital and other social relationships, career achievement, age, personal characteristics of the individual.¹¹ The psychological and medical research has found that individuals who maintain good social relationships and remain involved and active in the community show a tendency

⁶ Cf. Hillel RUSKIN, Formal and Informal Education for Leisure-centered Living: Implications for Educational Frameworks, in Hillel RUSKIN (Ed.), *Leisure: Toward a Theory and Policy. Proceedings of the International Seminar on Leisure Policies*, Vancouver, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1984, 64-79.

⁷ Cf. William PAVOT, Ed DIENER, Review of the Satisfaction with Life Scale, *Psychological Assessment*, 5 (1993) 2, 164-172.

⁸ Cf. Ed DIENER, Subjective well-being, in: Ed DIENER (Ed.), *The science of well-being: The collected works of Ed Diener*, Social Indicators Research Series, vol. 37, The Netherlands, Springer, 2009, 11-58.

⁹ Cf. Penezić, *Zadovoljstvo životom...*, 647.

¹⁰ Cf. Denis BRATKO, Jasminka MUŽINIĆ SABOL, Osobine ličnosti i osnovne psihološke potrebe kao prediktori zadovoljstva životom: rezultati on-line istraživanja, *Društvena istraživanja*, 15 (2006) 4-5, 693-711, 694.

¹¹ Cf. Philip BRICKMAN, Dan COATES, Ronnie JANOFF-BULMAN, Lottery winners and accident victims: Is happiness relative?, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36 (1978) 8, 917-927, 925.

toward better mental and physical health and even longer life.¹² The quality of life of an individual is achieved in three basic areas of life:¹³

a) *being*

- physical (health, diet, exercise, appearance);
- psychological (mental health, feelings and perceptions, thought constructs);
- spiritual (personal values and beliefs)

b) *belonging*

- physical (family, work, neighborhood and community);
- psychological (family members, friends, neighbors and colleagues);
- belonging to the community (availability of services and activities in the community)

c) *becoming*

- practical activities (household chores, education, volunteering, health care services);
- leisure (activities performed by people in their free time, recreation);
- personal growth and development (activities that people undertake to adopt and improve their knowledge and abilities).¹⁴

To understand the concept of life satisfaction, it is possible, but also necessary, to explore the topic from the point of view of various relevant theoretical approaches, namely the endpoint theory, comfort theory, pain theory, activity theory, various associationist theories, and assessment theories¹⁵. In order to connect, i.e. determine the level of life satisfaction and participation in the work of an amateur choir, it is most appropriate to approach the problem from the perspective of activity theory, which starts from the hypothesis that people will be more satisfied if involved in an interesting activity. If the activities that a person is involved in are too difficult for them, it can lead to anxiety, and if they are too easy, it can lead to boredom. Proponents of this theory believe that, rather than the achievement of goals, just the involvement in a quality activity will in itself lead to happiness, i.e. satisfaction¹⁶.

¹² Cf. Harry T. REIS et al., Daily Well-Being: The Role of Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26 (2000) 4, 419-435, 428.

¹³ Cf. Rebecca RENWICK, Ivan BROWN, The Centre for Health Promotion's Conceptual Approach to Quality of Life: Being, Belonging, and Becoming, in: Rebecca RENWICK, Ivan BROWN, Mark NAGLER (Eds.), *Quality of Life in Health Promotion and Rehabilitation: Conceptual Approaches, Issues, and Applications*, Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage, 1996, 75-88.

¹⁴ Cf. Rebecca RENWICK, Ivan BROWN, Dennis RAPHAEL, Quality of Life: Linking a conceptual approach to service provision, *Journal on Developmental Disabilities*, 3 (1994) 2, 32-44, 33.

¹⁵ Cf. Penezić, *Zadovoljstvo životom...*, 644.

¹⁶ Cf. Lovorka BRAJKOVIĆ, Gorka VULETIĆ, Teorije subjektivne kvalitete života, in: Gorka VUČETIĆ, (Ed.), *Kvaliteta života i zdravlje*, Osijek, Hrvatska zaklada za znanost, Filozofski fakultet u Osijeku, 2011, 17-20.

1. Choral Singing and Life Satisfaction

According to the results of several studies conducted in Europe¹⁷ and USA¹⁸, choral singing is the most common form of group music making in the western world.¹⁹ The number of choir singers is extremely large. According to the Singing Europe survey²⁰, there are around 37 million active choir singers in Europe, making up a population of 4.5% of the total number of EU citizens. These are individuals who gather regularly, socialize and sing, motivated by an interest and love for music and singing. The basic function of choral singing is its musical, artistic nature, but in the context of analyzing the work of amateur choirs or choirs in the education system, other potential functions are imposed that contribute to the popularity and sustainability of this form of group music. The advantages of singing in a choir, in relation to participation in instrumental ensembles, are manifested in the following assumptions:

- a) inclusiveness – choral singing can bring together participants of different generations, musical background and abilities;
- b) content – music literature (music content) that generates the interest of participants to participate in the work of the choir is extremely rich and provides wide and diverse opportunities for musical expression to singers and conductors of different musical aesthetics and tastes;²¹
- c) availability and economy – because the activity can be organized relatively easily and does not require special financial and material conditions as is the case with instrumental ensembles.²²

Lately, however, in addition to the obvious musical benefits, the physical, psychological and spiritual benefits associated with choral singing have become the subject of an increasing number studies. Research into the possible health benefits of choral singing and the use of activities for music therapy purposes has also increased in recent years and is attracting the attention of the

¹⁷ Cf. Singing Europe 2015, *VOICE – Vision on innovation for Choral Music in Europe*, https://europeanchoralassociation.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/05/VOICE_report_ecmag2015_01.pdf, (18.02.2021).

¹⁸ Cf. The Chorus Impact Study: How Children, Adults, and Communities Benefit from Choruses, 2009, <https://www.chorusamerica.org/publications/research-reports/chorus-impact-study>, (18.02.2021).

¹⁹ Cf. The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime, 2019, <https://www.chorusamerica.org/resource/chorus-impact-study-singing-lifetime>, (18.02.2021).

²⁰ Cf. Singing Europe 2015, *VOICE – Vision on innovation for Choral Music...*

²¹ Cf. John HYLTON, *Comprehensive choral music education*, Englewood Cliffs, New York, Prentice Hall, 1995, 252-256.

²² Cf. Tihana ŠKOJO, Antoaneta RADOČAJ-JERKOVIĆ, Majda MILINOVIĆ, Utjecaj zbornskoga pjevanja na razvoj glazbenih preferencija djece predškolske dobi, in: R. Jukić et al. (Eds.), *Zbornik znanstvenih radova s Međunarodne znanstvene konferencije Globalne i lokalne perspektive pedagogije*, Osijek, Filozofski fakultet u Osijeku, 2016, 59-72, 62.

scientific and artistic communities²³. Some of the most commonly cited benefits of choral singing are the following: bringing more oxygen into the body during singing improves circulation; singing affects the feeling of alertness and composure; it improves muscle tone of all singing organs (face, throat, neck, jaw, larynx, respiratory and abdominal muscles); it helps to improve concentration, practice focus and control distracting thoughts (similar to meditation); it improves the ability to listen consciously; it releases endorphins that relieve stress²⁴, promotes happiness and creates an effect similar to exercise; it affects feelings of self-esteem; and it affects the development of relationships and connections among people.²⁵

In an international study on *Choral Singing, Wellbeing and Health*²⁶, it is found that choral singing contributes to the health of especially older participants (the average age of respondents was 61). The survey was conducted with 1124 respondents in the UK, Germany and Australia and found that choral singing has the following benefits:

- creating the feeling of happiness and reducing feelings of sadness and depression;
- positively affecting focused concentration, which blocks preoccupation with worries;
- preventing and influencing the occurrence of anxiety due to deep controlled breathing while singing;
- creating the sense of social support and friendship, which reduces the feeling of isolation and loneliness;
- learning new contents keeps the brain active and neutralizes the decline in cognitive functions;
- motivating people to be physically active because it involves the obligation to regularly attend choir rehearsals.

It can be concluded that choral singing has a great potential for developing a sense of subjective satisfaction. Provided that the activities are carried out in the circumstances of a well-organized and guided, tolerant and positive choral atmosphere, it can affect the physical, psychological, social and spiritual well-being of singers. In this regard, it is necessary to invest more efforts in inform-

²³ Cf. Genevieve DINGLE et al., An agenda for best practice research on group singing, health, and well-being, *Music Sci*, 2 (2019) 1, 1-15.

²⁴ Cf. Ann SKINGLEY, Hilary BUNGAY, The Silver Song Club Project: singing to promote the health of older people, *Br J Commun Nurs*, 15 (2010) 3, 135-140.

²⁵ Cf. Stephen CLIFT, Singing, wellbeing and health, in: R. MacDonald, G. Kreutz, L. Mitchell (Eds.), *Music, health and wellbeing*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, 113-124, 119.

²⁶ Cf. Stephen CLIFT et al., *Choral Singing, Wellbeing and Health: Summary of Findings from a Cross-national Survey*, Sidney, Sidney De Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health, 2008, 19-32.

ing, educating and supporting those amateur ensembles and their conductors who find the purpose of their work in this important area of choral activity, too.

2. Methods

The research was conducted in order to determine the relationship between quality leisure time choral activities and the elements of the subjective sense of life satisfaction.

The aim of this research was to determine the level of life satisfaction of the respondents, active members of Croatian choirs. The following research questions were addressed:

- is there a difference between life satisfaction of choral singers of different age and gender groups and in relation to the years of participation in the work of the choir and
- is there a difference in life satisfaction between professional musicians and amateur singers?

For the purposes of this research, the standardized questionnaire *The Satisfaction With Life Scale*²⁷ was used. The scale consists of 20 items, of which 17 are related to global satisfaction assessments, and three are used to assess situational satisfaction. Respondents were asked to assess their life satisfaction taking into account their participation in the choir, especially in the part of the questionnaire related to the expression of situational satisfaction. The first part of the questionnaire explored the basic socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents: the name of the choir in which they sing, gender, age, years of singing experience in the same choir, and the status of a professional or amateur musician. Respondents selected answers on a five-point Likert scale, with a higher score indicating a higher level of satisfaction. The survey was conducted using an online form. Although very simple, this type of survey proved impractical for collecting data from elderly singers, because the response of the age group of singers over 65 was very low. The research was conducted before the start of the Covid19 pandemic. After the survey, data processing was performed. Basic statistical parameters were calculated for the collected data. The results are presented as frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations. In order to get answers to our research questions, we used t-tests and one-way analysis of variance. Statistical processing of the collected data was performed using the statistical program IBM SPSS Statistics 20.

²⁷ Cf. Zvezdan PENEZIĆ, Skala zadovoljstva životom, in: K. Lacković-Grgin et al. (Eds.), *Zbirka psiholoških skala i upitnika*, Zadar, Filozofski fakultet, 2002, 20-22.

3. Results and Discussion

The research involved 210 participants, choir singers who are active in 23 established Croatian choirs²⁸. This convenience sample consisted of 76.2% of female singers and 23.8% of male singers of Croatian choirs who achieved real success in the period before the research at national or international choir singing festivals, and who do not represent the choirs of educational institutions according to the founding structure. Artistic quality was not a selection criterion, but their recently achieved result was. Table 1 shows the structure of the sample with respect to gender, age, years of singing in the choir, and musical profession.

Table 1. Sample structure

Gender	N	Percentage (%)
Male	50	23.8
Female	160	76.2
Age	N	Percentage (%)
under 18	20	9.5
18 – 39	148	70.5
40 – 65	39	18.6
over 65	3	1.4
Years of singing in a choir	N	Percentage (%)
0 – 3	49	23.3
3 – 5	32	15.2
5 – 10	50	23.8
10 – 20	48	22.9
more than 20	31	14.8
Music profession	N	Percentage (%)
Professional musicians	36	17.1
Amateur musicians	174	82.9

To check differences in life satisfaction with regard to age²⁹, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The results show that there are some statistically significant differences with regard to age, although it is noticeable

²⁸ List of participating choirs: Academic Choir of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb *Concordia discors*, Youth Choir of the Glorious Name of Mary Osijek, Chamber Choir »Ivan Filipović«, Croatian Choir *Kalnik*, Križevci, Rijeka Chamber Choir *Val*, Croatian Singing Society *Rodoljub*, Virovitica, Renaissance Ensemble *Laudate*, Mixed Choir *Roženice*, Pazin, *Brevis* Vocal Ensemble, *Leticia* Youth Choir, Mixed Choir of KUD »Ban Josip Jelačić«, *Izvor* Choir, Female Vocal Ensemble *Zwizde*, *Sunce*, *Čipkice*, »Josip Štolcer Slavenski« Choir, Čakovec, *Spiritus Dei*, City Choir »Vila Velebita«, Youth Choir »Josip Kaplan«, Academic Choir »Ivan Goran Kovačić«, *Cappella Odak*, *Adoramus*, *Alte Kameraden*.

²⁹ With regard to age, the results of the age group over 65 were excluded from the processing because only three participants of that age group participated in the research.

that all age groups showed very high agreement with positive statements, with the lowest average agreement score being $M = 3.31$, and very high disagreement with negative statements.

The results obtained at the descriptive level (Table 2) indicate that younger participants are more satisfied with their lives than older participants on most of the assessed items. There are some significant differences in the life satisfaction of participants of different age groups. The youngest participants, under 18 years of age, rated that their life is close to ideal from several perspectives statistically significantly more ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.725$) than older participants aged 40 to 65 ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.832$). The youngest participants ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.681$) also rated their living conditions significantly higher than the participants aged 18 to 39 ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.871$) and the older participants aged from 40 to 65 ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.694$). The youngest participants are the most satisfied with their lives ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.444$), significantly more satisfied than participants aged 18 to 39 ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.789$) and participants aged 40 to 65 ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 0.510$). The youngest participants again state to a significantly greater extent that life brings them a lot of satisfaction ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.587$) as opposed to participants aged 40 to 65 ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.875$). Participants aged 18 to 39 ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.736$) were significantly more likely to have been satisfied in the few weeks prior to the study because other people liked them as opposed to the ratings of participants aged 40 up to 65 ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.664$).

For other items and for overall life satisfaction, as well as for global and situational satisfaction, there are no statistically significant differences between age groups.

From the descriptive results obtained in relation to the gender of the respondents, it can be concluded that female singers are generally more satisfied with life than male singers. There are significant differences in certain aspects of life satisfaction and in situational satisfaction with regard to gender. Women, significantly more than men, state that they have all the important things they wanted to have in life so far ($M_F = 4.01$, $SD_F = 0.828 > M_M = 3.66$, $SD_M = 0.982$), that all in all they are very happy people ($M_F = 4.25$, $SD_F = 0.847 > M_M = 3.92$, $SD_M = 0.877$) and they think they are happy people ($M_F = 4.34$, $SD_F = 0.801 > M_M = 4.04$, $SD_M = 0.925$). Women, also significantly more than men, state that in the few weeks prior to the study they have been more satisfied because other people love them ($M_F = 4.30$, $SD_F = 0.708 > M_M = 4.04$, $SD_M = 0.832$) and that they felt completely happy ($M_F = 4.25$, $SD_F = 0.824 > M_M = 3.94$, $SD_M = 0.867$). There is also a significant difference in overall situational satisfaction with respect to gender, with women being significantly more satisfied than men ($M_F = 4.25$, $SD_F = 0.661 > M_M = 4.03$, $SD_M = 0.731$).

Descriptive data on life satisfaction with regard to the years of participation in choir activities showed that there are no statistically significant differences in life satisfaction compared to the years of participation in the activity. It can

Table 2. Differences in life satisfaction of choral singers with respect to age

	under 18		18 – 39		40 – 65		F
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
1. In many ways, my life is close to ideal	4.00	.725	3.66	.822	3.31	.832	3.46*
2. My life conditions are excellent	4.60	.681	3.84	.871	3.69	.694	5.92**
3. I am satisfied with my life	4.75	.444	4.16	.789	4.05	.510	4.71**
4. I have all the important things I wanted in life so far	4.30	.657	3.86	.908	3.95	.857	1.47
5. If I lived my life again, I would change almost nothing	3.85	1.309	3.43	1.108	3.33	.927	1.09
6. All in all, I am a very happy person	4.55	.759	4.16	.889	4.00	.795	1.85
7. Life brings me a lot of satisfaction	4.65	.587	4.18	.780	3.85	.875	4.78**
8. I generally feel good	4.55	.686	4.10	.823	4.03	.778	2.18
9. I think I am a happy person	4.65	.587	4.26	.860	4.10	.852	1.91
10. Generally speaking, I am less happy than others ⁺	4.40	.821	4.07	.981	4.41	.818	1.82
11. I am often depressed and sad ⁺	4.50	.761	4.03	1.013	4.18	.970	1.58
12. I think I am at least as happy as other people	3.70	1.081	3.83	.876	3.49	.942	1.56
13. My future looks good	4.15	.745	4.12	.799	3.85	.745	1.36
14. I am satisfied with the way my plans are being realized	4.25	.639	3.78	.910	3.72	.826	1.97
15. Whatever happens, I can see the bright side, too	4.25	.716	4.03	.918	4.13	.864	.89
16. I enjoy living	4.60	.598	4.30	.838	4.38	.815	.81
17. My life seems meaningful to me	4.55	.826	4.24	.870	4.26	.785	.78
18. ... that you were more satisfied because you achieved something	4.30	.865	4.18	.825	4.05	.724	.51
19. ... that you were happy because other people love you	4.35	.875	4.31	.736	3.92	.664	3.14*
20. ... that you felt completely happy	4.45	.826	4.14	.888	4.13	.656	1.16
Global Satisfaction	4.37	.477	4.00	.654	3.92	.583	2.45
Situational Satisfaction	4.36	.748	4.21	.703	4.03	.571	1.17
Total Satisfaction	4.37	.492	4.03	.633	3.94	.558	2.33

** Significance level $p \leq 0.01$; * Significance level $p < 0.05$; + recoded claim

be concluded that this study did not confirm that the duration of activities affects the increase or decrease in life satisfaction of respondents. The difference in the sense of life satisfaction of choir singers with regard to the years of participation in the work of the choir was checked by conducting a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the differences between these five groups were calculated: 1-3, 3-5, 5-10, 10-20 and more than 20 years. The obtained results again showed that there are no significant differences in life satisfaction with regard to the duration of participation in the choir.

The difference in the sense of life satisfaction between professional musicians and amateur singers was found in several of the examined items, showing the tendency of professional musicians to be generally more satisfied with life than amateur singers. Professional musicians state significantly more that their life is close to ideal from many points of view ($M_{\text{PROF}} = 4.00$, $SD_{\text{PROF}} = 0.828 > M_{\text{AM}} = 3.55$, $SD_{\text{AM}} = 0.809$), that their living conditions are excellent ($M_{\text{PROF}} = 4.17$, $SD_{\text{PROF}} = 0.811 > M_{\text{AM}} = 3.83$, $SD_{\text{AM}} = 0.847$), that all in all they are very happy people ($M_{\text{PROF}} = 4.50$, $SD_{\text{PROF}} = 0.845 > M_{\text{AM}} = 4.10$, $SD_{\text{AM}} = 0.854$) and that life brings them a lot of satisfaction ($M_{\text{PROF}} = 4.42$, $SD_{\text{PROF}} = 0.806 > M_{\text{AM}} = 4.11$, $SD_{\text{AM}} = 0.793$). However, amateur singers ($M_{\text{AM}} = 3.83$, $SD_{\text{AM}} = 0.863$) significantly more than professional musicians ($M_{\text{PROF}} = 3.42$, $SD_{\text{PROF}} = 1.079$) state that they think they are at least as happy as other people.

Conclusion

Singing is generally accepted to be a positive activity. There are many sayings that support this claim, such as *bad people don't sing, those who sing think no evil, those who want to sing, will always find a song* and others. Exploring the sense of life satisfaction in people who actively participate in choir activities, an attempt was made to establish how much and in what way these people consider themselves satisfied with their lives. Taking into account the activity theory and the fact that respondents are involved in an activity that interests them, that they have chosen and that fulfills and satisfies them in a way that they have decided to participate in it for many years, we studied the global and situational satisfaction associated with recent choral successes of the surveyed singers. The results showed that the respondents were indeed satisfied and accomplished individuals. None of the claims were rated negative on average. Although in the Croatian society there is a general impression of prevalent feelings of dissatisfaction and pessimism in the general population, choir singers have confirmed their mostly positive attitude towards life, most often choosing positively oriented statements – *I mostly agree* and *I fully agree*. Therefore, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis was confirmed (choral singers consider themselves to be satisfied with life), which is evident from the highly rated answers, and that the second hypothesis (about the differences in choir singers' satisfaction with regard to gender, age and the status of the respondents, but not in relation to the duration of the activity) was partly confirmed. In relation to gender, there was a statistically significantly stronger life satisfaction among female singers in several statements and in the overall results related to situational satisfaction. In relation to age, the results indicated a statistically more significant satisfaction in younger respondents. In relation to the status of musicians, a statistically more significant satisfaction was proven

among professional singers compared to amateur singers. The results did not confirm the existence of a statistically significant difference in satisfaction among respondents in relation to the duration of activities (from one year to over 20 years of participation), so based on this research it would be wrong to conclude that choral singing contributes to strengthening participants' sense of life satisfaction, but the results can be used as a basis for future, more specifically structured research. There is no doubt that participating in an activity in which an individual feels the support of a community of people of the same or similar interests who work together to achieve the set goals, and succeed in these efforts (situational satisfaction), has the potential to contribute to instant emotional fulfillment that can be transferred to general (global) life satisfaction as well. In this regard, it is necessary to constantly expand the range of research on possible benefits of choral singing, in order to effectively achieve the full potential of the activity and to implement such knowledge in improving the work of ensembles.

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Zborsko pjevanje i subjektivan osjećaj životnog zadovoljstva

Sažetak

Slobodno vrijeme ima bogat društveni, psihološki i odgojni potencijal. Zborsko je pjevanje jedna od najčešćih organiziranih glazbenih aktivnosti slobodnog vremena kojem se, prema brojnim istraživanjima, pripisuju različite psihološke, terapijske, odgojne i druge dobrobiti. Rad donosi rezultate istraživanja koje je bilo usmjereno na utvrđivanje povezanosti između kvalitetnog provođenja slobodnog vremena u okviru aktivnog sudjelovanja u pjevačkim zborovima i odrednica subjektivne i psihološke dobrobiti te elemenata karakterističnih za osjećaj životnog zadovoljstva (globalnog i situacijskog). Cilj istraživanja bio je utvrditi razinu subjektivnog osjećaja životnog zadovoljstva zborskih pjevača, ukazati na moguće dobrobiti koje proizlaze iz aktivnog i organiziranog bavljenja glazbom u okviru pjevačkih zborova te provjeriti postoji li povezanost između tih aktivnosti i subjektivnog osjećaja zadovoljstva životom kod aktivnih pjevača različitih dobnih, spolnih i profesionalnih, odnosno amaterskih skupina. Rezultati su pokazali da zborni pjevači pokazuju relativno visoku razinu osjećaja životnog zadovoljstva te da postoje razlike u odnosu na dob, spol i status pjevača, no ne i u odnosu na trajanje sudjelovanja u aktivnosti.

Ključne riječi: glazbenici amateri; glazbenici profesionalci; dobrobit, pjevački zbor; slobodno vrijeme.

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