HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY

The Relationship between Social Phobia and Music Performance Anxiety among Choir Singers

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Social & Behavioral Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Education – Emphasis Counseling at Haigazian University

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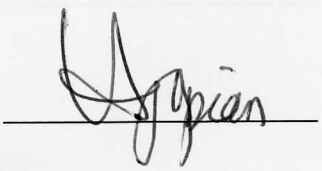

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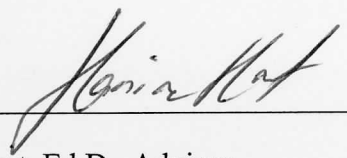

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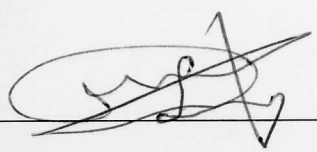

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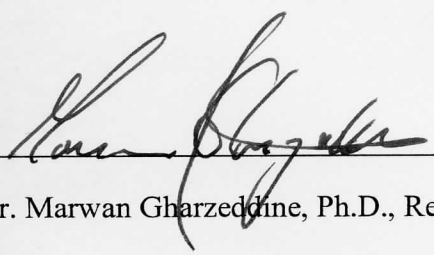

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Sarkis and Ani Agopian for their unconditional love, support and encouragement

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents and sister for without their love and support I would not be who I am today.

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Finally, praises and gratitude to God from whom all blessings flow.

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined music performance anxiety and its relationship with social phobia on a sample of school and university students who are enrolled in choir ($N = 100$). In addition, this study sought to investigate the effect of gender, age, previous experience and musical training on music performance anxiety. The study relied on self-report measures where participants were asked to provide demographic and music-related information and fill two questionnaires: the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) and the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety (KMPAI). Results were computed using analyses of correlations, regression and variance. The results of the study showed that social phobia and music performance anxiety are positively correlated ($r = .599$) and that age is the variable that positively predicts music performance anxiety.

The Relationship between Social Phobia and Music Performance Anxiety among Choir Singers

It is common experience among performers to feel a little nervous before a performance. No matter how prepared they are and how well they know the audience, there still is that little feeling, those butterflies that seem to animate themselves deep within.

Most musicians and music students experience what I just described in the previous paragraph. Over the years, professionals have termed these feelings by various names. At first, it was simply called "stage fright", followed by the more professional term "performance anxiety" and then specifically by the term "music performance anxiety".

The present study examined music performance anxiety (MPA) and its relationship with social anxiety and social phobia. The first chapter introduces the background of the study, states the problem of the study and presents its significance to the field and the methodology used in data gathering and analysis.

Statement of the Problem

Performance anxiety is a pervasive matter that affects all kinds of performers. It manifests itself in such small tasks as taking a test or solving a mathematical equation, all the way up to the more complex social activities, such as participating in a sports match, giving a public speech or performing on stage as a musician, actor or dancer (Kenny, 2004). Musicians are particularly susceptible to performance anxiety – and hence the term music performance anxiety – because they are required to perform many times during the year in front of different audiences. Although a little anxiety is always helpful to "jump-start" the performer, its extreme symptoms may render it debilitating and incapacitating (Larsen, 2005) and may harm the performer and even put the performing career at stake (Sandgren, 2009).

According to Kenny and Osborne (2006), negative cognitions and dysfunctional thoughts are the most crucial in causing disturbances in the performance. Similarly, Yondem (2007) put negative cognitions and irrational beliefs at the top of the list of the leading characteristics of performers who experience anxiety, along with fear of negative evaluation and criticism from the audience or important people in their lives.

Although Kenny and Osborne (2006) and Brugués (2009) have argued that negative cognitions contribute to MPA more than somatic and health issues, one cannot deny the presence of physiological symptoms as an important component of MPA. Physiological distress is manifested by "exhaustion, stomachaches, headaches…sleep disturbances" (Kenny, 2004, p.9), sweating, dry mouth, accelerated heart beat, shaking (Thomas, 2009), nausea and shortness of breath (Brugués, 2009).

Research has shown that MPA is also related to social phobia. Thurber (2009) explicitly states that "MPA meets criteria for social phobia when it is marked with significant distress, anxiety, and/or avoidance" (Thurber, 2009, p.4). Sandgren (2003), upon investigating the similarities between MPA and social phobia, found that there are some common characteristics between the two such as fear of embarrassment, exposure and weakness, occurrence of anxiety before and during the event, and worry about negative reactions from others.

As far as gender is concerned, Brugués (2009) claims that women experience MPA more than men. Thurber (2009) and Thomas (2009) report similar findings. Kenny and Osborne (2006) reported that females were two to three times more anxious than males when it comes to music performance. In accord with Kenny and Osborne's results, Yondem (2007) also found that females were significantly more anxious than males when required to perform, and hence concluded that gender is of paramount importance in predicting MPA.

Most authors and researchers unanimously state that age is not an important factor in the prediction of MPA (Papageorgi, 2007). For instance, Gorges et al. (2007) found age to be not related to MPA; it was the professional experience of the performer that was crucial to the prediction of the MPA scores. Thurber (2009) found results that confirmed the lack of correlation between age and MPA. On the basis of obtained data, he claimed that the prediction of MPA was due, in addition to experience, to the professional status of the performer.

Sandgren (2003) stated that the development of technical ability and musical ability is important in reducing MPA. Larsen (2005) also found that professional musicians experienced levels of MPA significantly lower than those experienced by students. This is because professional musicians have the chance of frequent performance opportunities through which they learn to manage anxiety.

Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) combined the constructs of experience and professional status together when they reported that professional musicians experience lower MPA levels because of two very important factors. The first factor is musical experience in that professional musicians have had more experience in the musical field due to their chance of performing frequently in front of different audiences. The second factor is their level of training. Professional musicians have had enough training to master the musical concepts and the ways in which the instrument is played.

In short, MPA is not just a state of mind. Although it is a product of faulty cognitions and a negative view of oneself, it manifests itself through somatic distress and behavioral symptoms. Fear of negative evaluation from the audience and the tendency to avoid social situations produce more anxiety which tends to weaken the quality of performance, and in extreme cases

may cause musicians to stop performing altogether. Age, gender, musical experience and training all play their part in maintaining or reducing MPA.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between social phobia and music performance anxiety. In addition, this study sought to investigate the effect of gender, age, and musical experience on music performance anxiety among a sample of non-music major students who are enrolled in choir.

Hypotheses

Based on the purpose of this study, which is to examine the relationship of social phobia and music performance anxiety, taking into consideration the factors of gender, age, previous experience and musical training, and taking into account the relevant literature, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. There will be a positive relation between social phobia and music performance anxiety.
2. Scores of the subscale "fear of embarrassing situations and criticism" will positively predict music performance anxiety.
3. Female participants will score higher on the Music Performance Anxiety scale than male participants.
4. There will be a negative relation between the number of years of choral experience and music performance anxiety.
5. There will be a negative relation between the number of years of musical training and music performance anxiety.

Significance of the Study

As mentioned earlier, MPA is a debilitating condition that weakens the quality of the performance. High school and university students are vulnerable to MPA especially that they have to perform in front of different audiences.

A large number of research articles, experiments and empirical studies have examined MPA; however, almost all studies in this field have targeted either professional musicians (opera singers, pianists, choristers, etc…) or music students who are enrolled in a music program at university or a piano or singing class at school. In this study, the participants were random school or university students who are enrolled in the choir course. None of the participants was majoring in music and there was no one who is a professional musician.

Therefore, this study examined MPA among regular school and university students. Furthermore, this study viewed MPA in light of social phobia and investigated the effect of the different components of social phobia on MPA.

Finally, if young performers become aware of the factors that most affect MPA, they can cope with them or seek to prevent them in order to enhance the quality of their performance and alleviate anxiety. Furthermore, music teachers and choir conductors can work on techniques to diminish performance anxiety among their performers.

Nature of the Study

The present research employed the quantitative method of statistical analysis to measure variables by using correlational and regression analyses in addition to tests of comparison of means. It relied on self-report measures where participants were asked to provide demographic and music-related information, and fill two questionnaires: the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN)

and the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety (KMPAI). One hundred students from the choir classes of three different schools and the choir courses of two universities participated in the study. Analyses of correlations, regression and variance were used to test the hypotheses.

Definition of Terms

Avoidance: an act of practicing avoiding or withdrawing from something (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary).

Choir: an organized company of singers (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary).

Cognition: cognitive mental processes; *also*: a product of these processes (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary).

Music Performance Anxiety: the experience of marked and persistent anxious apprehension related to musical performance that affects musicians and has arisen through specific anxiety conditioning experiences and which is manifested through combinations of affective, cognitive, somatic and behavioral symptoms. It may or may not impair the quality of the musical performance (Kenny, 2008, as cited by Brugués, 2009, p.1).

Performance Anxiety: an exaggerated feat that an individual has with regard to exhibition of performance in front of others (Wilson, 1999, as cited by Yondem, 2007, p.1415).

Physiological: of, or related to, physiology (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary).

Physiology: a branch of biology that deals with the functions and activities of life or of living matter (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary).

Social Anxiety: anxiety (emotional discomfort, fear, apprehension, or worry) about social situations, interactions with others, and being evaluated or scrutinized by other people (Leitenberg, 1990).

Social Phobia: a marked and persistent fear of one or more types of social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or to possible scrutiny by others. The individual fears that he/she will act in a way (or show anxiety symptoms) that will be humiliating or embarrassing (DSM-IV-TR, 300.23 as cited by Brugués, 2009, p.4)

Somatic: of, relating to, or affecting the body especially distinguished from the germplasm or the psyche (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary).

Delimitations

There were a couple of boundaries to the study which may lack generalizability. First, the number of female participants was almost double that of males ($N = 64$ for females, $N = 36$ for males). This is very representative of a choir where the number of females is almost always more than the number of males. However, for research purposes, this was considered one of the delimitations that might have affected the results and cannot guarantee generalizability.

Another delimitation was the time during which the study was conducted. The participants filled the questionnaire in a time interval between one or two weeks before their Christmas concert. This, again, might have affected the performance anxiety levels of the participants and thus altered the performance anxiety scores.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Many articles and empirical studies have investigated music performance anxiety among musicians and music students, discussed its effects on performance, and examined its critical factors. Comparisons between MPA and social phobia have received vast attention as well due to the commonalities between these two constructs. Researchers have also studied the influence of additional variables such as gender, age, previous experience and musical training on MPA.

Performance Anxiety

Performance anxiety is highly common among those who perform in front of people (Kenny, 2004). Though young children love to perform, enjoy their audience and ask them to watch and evaluate their performance, oblivious to the mistakes they make (Kenny & Osborne, 2006), most adults who perform report an experience of "stage fright" supplemented by sweaty palms, dry mouth, shaking, doubting one's abilities, expecting a negative outcome, and fear of failure (Brugués, 2009). In other words, performers experience anxiety – a negative psychological state – before performing and during the performance (Sandgren, 2009). "Accompanying this negative affective state is a strong physical or somatic component" (Barlow, 2000, p.1249 as cited by Kenny, 2004). Interestingly, low and mild levels of anxiety are actually helpful and contribute positively to the performance (Larsen, 2005). Sandgren (2009) also claims some anxiety is actually advantageous and Kenny (2004) states that it facilitates the act of performance; however, when the symptoms of anxiety are extreme, it becomes debilitating and incapacitating (Larsen, 2005). Sever anxiety may harm the performer and even put the

performing career at stake (Sandgren, 2009). Ironically performers experience performance anxiety in areas which they like, are committed to, and are experienced in (Sandgren, 2009).

Performance anxiety manifests itself in small tasks, such as test-taking or solving a mathematical equation, all the way to participating in a sports match, giving a public speech or performing on stage as a musician, actor or dancer (Kenny, 2004). Hence, it is a "widespread and problematic phenomenon for all types of performers" (Yondem, 2007, p.1415).

Music Performance Anxiety

In addition to dancers, actors, public speakers and athletes, musicians are also subject to performance anxiety (Brugués, 2009). According to Kenny (2004), Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) occurs in different settings that require music being performed in front of an audience. MPA affects the cognitive, social and emotional domains and displays itself through a range of somatic and behavioral symptoms (Kenny, 2006). Some musicologists and music teachers believe that MPA is a result of inadequate training and preparation and the way to alleviate it would be preparing better before a performance (Yondem, 2007). Kenny (2006) found that experiencing MPA is separate from the hours of practice or level of training of the musician.

MPA weakens musical performance in many ways. First, musicians cannot concentrate on stage because the anxiety takes the attention away from the actual performance (Kenny, 2004) and reallocates it to self-focus (Bonastre & Nuevo, 2006). Furthermore, singers need a steady voice to be able to sing properly; however, because they experience anxiety, they suffer from vocal indisposition which is "an inability to sing satisfactorily… [because of] somatic problems" (Sandgren, 2009, p.468). Moreover, shaking and trembling may hamper the movement of the

pianist's fingers, intervene in the smooth passage from one string to the other on the violin and make it impossible for the drummer to keep a steady beat (Thomas, 2009).

In short, MPA is a prevalent and extensive problem that affects musicians of different ages, genders, types and experience (Thomas, 2009) whether children, adults, beginners or professionals; however, because of individual differences, some performers experience more MPA than others (Kenny, 2006). The present study measured MPA among the choir singers and investigated its relationship with social phobia.

Components of MPA

One of the chief components of MPA is the worry about negative evaluation. According to Sandgren (2003, 2009), most opera singers worry that their performance will not be successful regardless of their practice and efforts. Opera choristers also fear the negative evaluation of their audience. They are concerned about how well they sound and whether the audience likes what it hears or not (Sandgren, 2009). According to Thomas (2009), musicians perceive the audience as judges who are there to point out all the mistakes and faults, and according to Brugués (2009) this is true because, in fact, there is an audience there to watch the performance and evaluate it. Gorges et al. (2007) also state that MPA is maintained by the belief that the audience should like the performance. Most performers are also concerned of the opinion of their significant others or important people in their lives (Sandgren, 2009)

Another component of MPA is negative cognitions and dysfunctional thoughts, which are, according to Kenny and Osborne (2006) the most crucial in causing disturbances in the performance. Yondem (2007) puts negative cognitions and irrational beliefs at the top of the list of the leading characteristics of performers who experience anxiety, along with fear of negative

evaluation and criticism from the audience or important people in their lives. Additionally, Lundh, Berg, Johansson, Nilsson, Sandberg and Segerstedt (2002), state that "negative and distorted images of the … self play a central role" in performance anxiety in general and MPA in particular (Lundh et al., 2002, p.25). Alternatively, the fear of negative evaluation is largely due to distorted schemas caused in the minds of the musicians and their internal dialogs which tend to catastrophize any failure or mistake (Yondem, 2007); hence they expect to perform poorly, make many mistakes and be weakly evaluated by their audience (Lundh et al., 2002).

An additional component of MPA is the somatic symptoms and health problems. Although Kenny and Osborne (2006) and Brugués (2009) argue that negative cognitions contribute to MPA more than somatic and health issues, one cannot deny the presence of physiological symptoms as an important component of MPA. Kenny herself lists the physiological symptoms of MPA, "exhaustion, stomachaches, headaches, and sleep disturbances" (Kenny, 2004, p.9), to which Thomas (2009) adds sweating, dry mouth, accelerated heart beat, and shaking. Other symptoms include nausea and shortness of breath (Brugués, 2009). Sandgren (2009) describes the performance anxiety of opera singers as "health anxiety" because opera singers and choristers use their voice as an instrument and hence any illness can jeopardize the success of the performance. The same idea is supported by Brugués (2009) who also claims that good health is a necessity for all kinds of musicians. Unfortunately these somatic and physiological mishaps adversely affect the performance, as some symptoms may be seen by the audience, such as sweating and trembling (Brugués, 2009) and others have a destructive effect of the overall performance (Yoshie, Shigemasu, Kudo, and Ohtsuki, 2009).

In summary, MPA affects the cognitive, emotional and physiological domains, and its symptoms weaken the quality of performance. In the present study, the effect of fear of

embarrassing situations, fear of criticism, physiological distress and avoidance on MPA was tested.

Music Performance Anxiety and Social Anxiety

Gorges et al. (2007) state that the literature about MPA and social anxiety is mixed. Some authors argue that MPA and social anxiety are the same; others claims MPA to be a form of social anxiety, yet many others allege that the two constructs, though related, are also different from and independent of each other (Gorges et al., 2007).

The literature about MPA and social anxiety reports mixed findings. For instance, Thurber (2009) classifies MPA as a form of social anxiety that affects musicians. According to him, the two constructs are similar as he finds that there is a significant correlation between MPA and fear of social situations. Yondem (2007) also classifies performance anxiety as a form of social anxiety because one performs in from of others, which makes it a social situation. There is no performance without an audience, and the presence of an audience provides a social situation. He goes on saying that anxiety increases as a function of the fearfulness of the social situation (Yondem, 2007). Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) also place MPA under the hierarchy of social anxiety based on the idea of fear of social evaluation.

In line with this, Lundh et al. (2002) initially found that "socially anxious individuals tend to underestimate their performance in social/evaluative situations" (Lundh et al., 2002, p.25). However, upon closer investigation, they discovered that socially anxious individuals also lack the social skills necessary for a successful performance. Therefore, it is not social anxiety that is causing MPA; rather, due to the deficiency in social skills, the performance of socially anxious individuals is, in fact, unsuccessful. That is why they experience MPA (Lundh et al.,

2002). Based on their results, Ashbaugh, Antony, McCabe, Schmidt, and Swinson (2005) state that although socially anxious individuals do tend to evaluate themselves more strictly and negatively than they evaluate others, their lack of social skills does, in fact, tend to diminish the quality of their performance and generate negative evaluation from the observers or the audience.

On the other hand, Sandgren (2009) claims that performance anxiety and social anxiety are separate constructs that are highly associated with one another along with other personality characteristics and state and trait anxiety. Sandgren (2009) argues that many factors go into MPA and social anxiety is only one of them. Correspondingly, in an empirical study, Gorges et al. (2007) report that a major finding was that "social anxiety and MPA are strongly related but also unique in several ways" (Gorges et al., 2007, p.69). According to the results they found, it is performance anxiety that best predicts MPA and neither social interactions, nor social situations. In accord with Sandgren (2009), Gorges et al. (2007) also claim that there are other factors such as negative evaluation, public self-focus, gender, and professional status that predict MPA.

Kenny and Osborne (2006) conducted an empirical study on adolescents in which they argued that the reason why MPA and social anxiety are thought to be the same construct is because MPA shares many similarities with social anxiety and its most severe expression closely resembles social phobia. In their line of reasoning, "the conditions under which one performs [and] the degree of social evaluative threat perceived by the performer [are] the defining feature of social phobia (Kenny & Osborne, 2006, p.104). Therefore, musical performance as a social situation is related to social anxiety. In the same research, Kenny and Osborne (2006) found that MPA is related to social anxiety more than state and trait anxiety.

In summary, Social Anxiety and MPA have many commonalities. The present study studied social phobia, which is a severe form of anxiety, as one of its independent variables and investigated its relation to the dependent variable, MPA.

Music Performance Anxiety and Social Phobia

Thurber (2009) demonstrates the relationship between MPA and social phobia by referring to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual on Mental Disorders Fourth Edition, Text Revision* (DSM-IV-TR). "MPA meets criteria for social phobia when it is marked with significant distress, anxiety, and/or avoidance" (Thurber, 2009, p.4). Some diagnostic criteria for social phobia that appear in extreme cases of MPA include fear of a performance or social situation where the performance might be scrutinized or negatively evaluated causing embarrassment and shame, avoidance of anxiety-provoking social situations to the extent of interruptions in the daily life and routine of the individual, and excessive and unreasonable fear that paralyzes the individual (Thurber, 2009). As Kenny and Osborne (2006) attest, under its most severe expressions MPA resembles social phobia. However, and in contradiction to his claims, Thurber (2009) reports that even among musicians who reported high levels of MPA, only 27% met DSM-IV criteria (Osborne and Franklin, 2002, as cited by Thurber, 2009). This finding is also cited by Gorges et al. (2007).

Ashbaugh et al. (2005) describe a social phobic individual as someone who is concerned of leaving a negative, long-lasting impression on others which will result in dire consequences. They draw a similarity between performance anxious individuals and social phobic individuals in that both set very high, almost unreasonable standards for themselves to the extent that, no

matter how positively the audience reacts, they still feels a discrepancy to what they expected and what they received as feedback (Ashbaugh et al., 2005).

Brugués (2009) describes MPA as a unique disorder which might be co-morbid with other anxiety disorders such as social phobia. According to him, there are many differences between social phobia and MPA. For example, individuals with MPA have high expectations of themselves when it comes to performance and fear negative evaluation; those with social phobia, on the other hand, fear scrutiny in all areas of life that include social interactions. Individuals with social phobia also avoid social situations because they fear that everyone is watching and evaluating them. Finally, musicians experienced MPA because their audience is real and they are subject to negative evaluation and also because music is their career and failing as a performer might mean that they have failed as individuals; whereas, social phobic individuals fear of criticism and scrutiny from an "audience" that only exists in their heads (Brugués, 2009).

Sandgren (2003) investigates the similarities and differences between MPA and social phobia. There are some common characteristics between the two such as fear of embarrassment, exposure and weakness, occurrence of anxiety before and during the event, and worry about negative reactions from others. In contrast, there are many differences between MPA and social phobia. Individuals with MPA experience symptoms of anxiety only when they are required to perform while social phobic individuals experience similar symptoms in almost all social situations. Individuals with MPA also tend to tolerate high levels of stress and anxiety because of their commitment to their professions as musicians while social phobic individuals tend to avoid anxiety-provoking situations (Sandgren, 2003).

Based on the reported findings and the similarities between social phobia and MPA, the present study investigated the relationship of social phobia and MPA.

Gender, Age, Professional Status and Experience

Aside from fear of negative evaluation by an audience, observers or significant others, apart from fear of social situations and their avoidance, and in addition to physiological distress, somatic symptoms, and health issues, there are numerous other factors that predict MPA and can be helpful in its reduction.

One of these factors is the gender of the performer. Brugués (2009) claims that women are generally more anxious than men and the same can be seen in MPA. Thurber repeats similar findings, "women are more likely to experience MPA" (Thurber, 2009, p.7). Likewise, Thomas (2009) found that females experience performance anxiety much more than their male counterparts, and hence he concluded that gender is one of the very strong predictor of MPA.

De Menezes, Fontenelle, and Versiani (2008) devoted a full study on the effects of gender on social anxiety and social phobia. According to them, men present equal or higher levels of social anxiety than women, unlike in other anxiety disorders where women always report higher levels than men. They found that males even exhibited more serious symptoms and had more co-morbid disorders than females.

Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) found to be no difference between males in females in regards to performance anxiety, and hence they asserted that "it cannot be concluded that the female singers are more … anxious compared to the male singers" (Kokotsaki & Davidson, 2003, p.52); however, they explained that males displayed more physiological anxiety while females experienced subjective anxiety (Kokotsaki & Davidson, 2003). In total contrast to this, Kenny and Osborne (2006) found out that girls experienced accelerated heart rate right before the performance while boys displayed more anxious behavior. As far as social anxiety is concerned, Kenny and Osborne (2006) found no difference between boys and girls.

In the same study, Kenny and Osborne (2006) administered the MPAI-A (Music Performance Anxiety Inventory – Adolescents) to a sample of 84 adolescents. Based on the review of the literature, she predicted that girls will score higher on the MPAI-A than the boys. The results showed that the scores of the girls were higher than those of the boys (Kenny & Osborne, 2006). She reported that females were two to three times more anxious than males when it comes to performance. In accord with Kenny and Osborne's results, Yondem (2007) also found that females were significantly more anxious than males when required to perform, and hence concluded that gender is of paramount importance in predicting MPA.

Another factor is the age of the performer. The literature is quite clear when it comes to age. Most authors and researchers unanimously state that age is not an important factor in the prediction of MPA (Papageorgi, 2007). For instance, Gorges et al. (2007) found age to be redundant in the prediction of MPA. According to them, it was the professional experience of the performer that was crucial in prediction of MPA.

Thurber (2009) found no correlation between age and MPA. He also discussed that there was no correlation found between age and experience. Based on his study in 2009, he found that some musicians might be very young in age but have acquired much professional experience and some musicians might be older in age but have little or no stage experience. Nonetheless, the prediction of MPA was due to two factors. First, experience and not age, and second the professional status. In one of his studies Thomas (2009) reported that students and amateur musicians experienced more MPA than professional musicians.

Therefore, in fact, it is not the age of the performer but rather the experience or professional status that predicts MPA. Sandgren (2003) stated that the development of technical ability and musical ability is important in reducing MPA. According to her, the more training the

musician has received, the less likely MPA will be experienced during the performance. Larsen (2005) also found that professional musicians experienced levels of MPA significantly lower than those experienced by students. This is because professional musicians have the chance of frequent performance opportunities through which they learn to manage anxiety.

Other factors that decrease MPA are expertise in music, knowledge and mastery of musical techniques and professional experience (Sandgren, 2003). Larsen (2005) also found that students reported higher levels of MPA during admission to music school and lower levels upon graduation because of repeated performance opportunities as part of their curriculum; also, her results showed that MPA is more common among students than professional musicians.

In line with all this, Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) reported that professional musicians experienced lower MPA levels because of two very important factors. First, their musical experience, since professional musicians have had more experience in the musical field due to the chance of performing over and over again in front of different audiences. The second factor is their level of training. According to Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003), professional musicians have finished their studies and mastered musical and technical skills.

Therefore, most empirical studies have found out that females experience more MPA than males. On the other hand, some have claimed to have found no difference between males and females. In the present study, both males and females were surveyed and it was predicted that females would experience more MPA than males.

Prevalence of Music Performance Anxiety

Numerous studies have reported different findings as to the percentage of performers who experience MPA, complain about it, and whose performance is affected because of it. The

literature seems to be mixed with different percentages reported by different researchers; however, all of them agree that MPA is a problem that is experienced, though by different levels, by musicians of different ages, genders, and experience.

Gorges et al. (2007) stated that 16-40% of all musicians go through the experience of MPA, whereas Bonastre and Nuevo (2006) reported that 15-25% of all musicians suffer from it. Kenny (2004) reported that 25% of musicians suffered from stage fright and 59% of musicians in symphony orchestras complained of MPA. She also reported a study by James in 1997 where 70% of the musicians reported experiencing MPA that interrupted their performance and 16% experienced MPA more than once a week (James, 1997, as cited by Kenny, 2004).

Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) found that 65% of the participants in their study reported MPA that prevented them from performing at their best. On the other hand, only 7% of their participants reported that anxiety actually helped them perform better. Thomas (2009) reported that 24% of musicians thought that MPA is a serious problem, while 16.5% pointed out that MPA marred their performance. This percentage was higher in students aged 15-19 where 33% reported that MPA significantly worsened their performance (Thomas, 2009). Larsen (2005) surveyed university students and found of that 66% claim MPA to be a serious problem. She also found that upon admission, 54.1% of students reported MPA, but upon graduation, that percentage dropped to 48.5%. Her results also showed that twice as many students claimed that MPA was reduced over the years than those who claimed MPA stayed the same (Larsen, 2005).

As far as components of MPA are concerned, Kenny and Osborne (2006) performed a factor analysis which showed that three factors that together account for 53% of the variance on MPA in adolescents. The first was somatic and cognitive factors (43%). These factors included physical expressions of MPA as well as worry and fear of making mistakes. The second was the

performance context (6%) which differentiated between solo singing and signing in a group. The third (3%) was the performance evaluation both by the performer and the audience. Ashbaugh et al. (2005), on the other hand, gave great importance to self-ratings and self-evaluation. In their study, they divided their participants into two groups: high social anxious (HSA) participants and low social anxious (LSA) participants. Results showed that HSA participants rated themselves and their performance significantly lower than LSA participants, the mean being $M = 6.63$ for HAS participants and $M = 8.92$ for LSA participants. In addition to this, the self-ratings of anxiety of HSA participants were higher compared to the LSA participants, the mean being $M = 29.42$ for HSA participants and $M = 18.04$ for LSA participants.

Lundh et al. (2002) investigated social anxiety and its effects of evaluating your own voice. Participants ($N = 17$) were administered the Social Phobia Scale (SPS) and the Voice Evaluation Questionnaire (VEQ). Higher scores on the VEQ indicate negative evaluation of one's own voice. Results showed a moderately high correlation ($r = 0.50$) between the SPS and the VEQ. The VEQ was also filled by independent observers, and the results showed that there was a negative correlation of $r = -.15$ between the SPS and the VEQ that was filled by the observers. Lundh et al. (2002) subtracted the scores of VEQ by the self and VEQ by the observers to obtain a discrepancy score. When correlated with SPS, the discrepancy score showed a positive correlation ($r = 0.57$). This suggest that socially anxious individuals rate themselves, their voice and hence their performance negatively as compared to independent observers. Papageorgi (2007) reported similar results upon correlating the concept "positive self-concept in music" and MPA she found a negative correlation ($r = -0.32$). In contrast, she found a positive correlation between "low self-efficacy in music" and MPA ($r = 0.35$).

Worry about negative evaluation and disapproval is another important component of MPA that has received much attention in the literature. Sandgren (2009) found that worry about disapproval showed the highest correlated with performance anxiety (r = .51 - .80) as compared to depression (r = .38 - .65), doubt about one's ability (r = .43 - .67), worry about vocal indisposition (r = .32 - .51), and somatic (muscular and skeletal) problems (r = .38). Similar positive correlations were reported by Papageorgi (2007) as seen in the results of her study. Concern about others' responses to playing (performing music) was significantly correlated to MPA ($r = 0.24, p < 0.05$), whereas perception of receiving positive feedback from teacher was negatively correlated to MPA ($r = -0.31, p < 0.05$). The highest significant correlation in her study was between "experience of heightened anxiety in the presence of an audience" and MPA ($r = 0.64, p < 0.05$). These findings of Papageorgi (2007) show the important contribution of the concern about the evaluation of others to MPA. The importance of whether the audience likes the performance or not was also highlighted in the results of Gorges et al. (2007) where they found that the factor "belief that the audience likes the performance" was negatively correlated with MPA (r = -0.21). In line with these findings, Bonastre and Nuevo (2006) found a positive and significant correlation between worry and MPA. She administered the Penn State Worry Questionnaire - Abbreviated (PSWQ-A) to 60 students of advanced piano class. Her results show that worry and MPA are positively and significantly correlated ($r = .377, p < .001$).

In short, MPA is a prevalent concern that affects musicians. Its cognitive aspect (fear of evaluation and worry about one's performance) weakens the quality of the performance, in addition to somatic symptoms. In the present study, the influence of fear of criticism from the audience and physiological distress on MPA was investigated.

Gender Differences in MPA

The differences in gender were reported by Kenny and Osborne (2006) as her results showed that females scored higher than males on the MPAI-A [t (296) = -3.59, $p < .001$], and there was a curvilinear relationship between age and MPA where MPA scores in girls peaked at around age 16 and then declined. Kenny and Osborne (2006) also reported that those with more negative cognitions scored higher on the MPAI-A. Similar results were documented by Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) where the means of anxiety scores of males were compared to that of females before performance. Yondem (2007) found that gender was one of the most important factors that affected MPA. His results showed that females experienced MPA significantly more than males [F (1, 54) = 8.67, p = .005].

De Menezes et al. (2008) discuss the effects of gender on social anxiety and social phobia. Their results showed that men experienced significantly more severe symptoms of social anxiety than women. They also found a significant gender difference between social anxiety and alcohol addiction or abuse, where males tended to resort to alcohol more than females.

Other factors that predict MPA were also given attention by researchers and authors. For instance, Gorges et al. (2007) investigated the difference between music students and professionals with regards to MPA. Their results showed that music students displayed higher MPA than professional musicians.

In brief, music performance anxiety is a phenomenon that affects all musicians who are required to perform. It is debilitating and worsens the quality of the performance (Kenny, 2004). MPA has many components. First, there is the fear of negative evaluation by the audience, observers or significant others (Brugués, 2009). This fear is largely due to negative and distorted cognitions and faulty beliefs held by the performers. These negative cognitions result in a

negative evaluation of oneself and one's performance resulting in more anxiety (Yondem, 2007). Finally, there are somatic and physiological symptoms that increase MPA and affect the quality of the performance (Brugués, 2009).

MPA is strongly related to social anxiety. Though some think of MPA as a form of social anxiety, others view it as a separate construct (Gorges et al., 2007). MPA and social phobia also share common characteristics and DSM-IV-TR diagnostic criteria (Brugués, 2009).

Though age itself isn't a predictor of MPA, the experience of the performer and the professional status as a musician are both predicting factors (Papageorgi, 2007). Additionally, gender is a strong predictor of MPA and research reveals that in general females experience MPA more than males (Kenny and Osborne, 2006).

In light of the literature reviewed above, this thesis will investigate the relationship between social phobia and music performance anxiety. The following hypotheses will be tested:

1. There will be a positive relation between social phobia and music performance anxiety.
2. Scores of the subscale "fear of embarrassing situations and criticism" will positively predict music performance anxiety.
3. Female participants will score higher on the Music Performance Anxiety scale than male participants.
4. There will be a negative relation between the number of years of choral experience and music performance anxiety.
5. There will be a negative relation between the number of years of musical training and music performance anxiety.

CHAPTER 3

Method

Most musicians suffer from performance anxiety, and it often affects their performance. Young musicians (high school and university students) who have to perform regularly in front of public experience this anxiety as well; thus, they end up with a performance of lower quality. If young musicians (high school and university students) know the factors that go into this anxiety, they can deal with them one by one to ease up their performance anxiety and end up performing better. Additionally, music teachers and choir conductors can work on techniques to diminish performance anxiety among their singers to get a better performance.

This study investigated the relationship between music performance anxiety and social phobia. It was performed by having participants fill in questionnaires and provide demographic and music-related information. Participants were selected from the list of students who were enrolled in the choir course at university or choir class in school. The questionnaires were distributed, collected and scored by the researcher. Data were collected and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Setting

This study took place in the auditoriums or music rooms of the schools and universities from which students were selected. Participants were given time before choir rehearsal to fill in the questionnaires. In all three schools the choir conductors were present during the administration of the questionnaires; however, the conductor was present only in one of the two universities. In the other university, participants were given the questionnaires during their free times.

Participants

The sampling procedure used by the researcher was convenience sampling. The participants were restricted to those who were enrolled in the choir course or class during the time of the study.

The total number of participants was 100. The age range was between 14 and 23 (M = 18), where 51 of them were school students from three different schools: the American Community School in Lebanon (ACS), the International College (IC) and the Christian Teaching Institute (CTI), and 49 were university undergraduate students from two universities: the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Antonine University. The gender distribution was 36 males and 64 females. Most of the participants were Lebanese, although there were Americans, Europeans and Asians. Participants came from diverse Religious and Political background.

Materials

Participants were handed a booklet which included the demographic and music-related information sheet and the two questionnaires.

On the demographic and music-related information sheet participants were asked to indicate their age, gender, languages spoken, number of years in the school/university choir, whether they take/have taken extracurricular music classes and for how many years, and whether their parents have taken music classes.

Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN)

The Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) was used to measure social phobia. SPIN has 17 items each of which is rated on a scale of 0 to 4: not at all, a little bit, somewhat, very much, and extremely; with higher scores corresponding to greater distress. The full-scale score thus ranges from 0 to 68. SPIN has three subscales: fear (of people in authority, of parties and social events, of being criticized, of talking to strangers, of doing things when people are watching, and of being embarrassed, 6 items), avoidance (of taking to strangers, of speaking to people for fear of embarrassment, of going to parties, of being the center of attention, of making speeches, of being criticized, of speaking to authority, 5 items), and physiological discomfort (blushing, sweating, palpitations, or shaking and trembling in front of other people, 6 items) (Connor, Davidson, Churchill, Sherwood, Foa & Weisler, 2000).

Reliability and Validity

Connor et al. (2000) tested the psychometric properties of SPIN. Test-retest reliability was measured using Spearman correlation. The results were significant, $r = 0.89$, $p \leq 0.0001$. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's α which ranged from 0.87 to 0.94

The convergent validity of SPIN was assessed by comparing its total and subscale scores with the Brief Social Phobia Scale (BSPS). The comparison of the full-scale score yielded a highly significant correlation ($r = 0.57$) ($n = 67$).

Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI)

The Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI) was used to measure music performance anxiety. The K-MPAI addresses the evocation of anxious propositions (e.g. uncontrollability, unpredictability, negative affect, situational cues); attentional shift (e.g. task or

self-evaluative focus, fear of negative evaluation); physiological arousal and memory bias. There are 26 items which are answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "-3: Strongly disagree" to "+3: Strongly agree". The maximum score is 156, with higher scores indicating greater anxiety and psychological distress.

Reliability and Validity

Professional choristers and members of the national opera were used to test the psychometric properties of the K-MPAI. Scores for the K-MPAI scale were significantly positively correlated with both sub-scales of the *State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)*, the standard research measure used to assess state and trait anxiety, and the Cox and Kenardy Music Performance Anxiety (CK-MPA). The internal reliability of the K-MPAI was measured using Cronbach's alpha. K-MPAI demonstrated excellent internal reliability ($\alpha = 0.94$) (Kenny & Osborne, 2006).

Procedure

The researcher went to the schools or universities during their choir rehearsal hours. The researcher first explained about the study and then asked the choir members to fill in the questionnaires. In total, 102 questionnaires were handed out, but 2 of them were disregarded because of missing information leaving 100 questionnaires. After the participants had completed the questionnaires, the researcher scored them and fed the data into the computer.

This study examined the independent variables social phobia (fear of embarrassing situations and criticism, physiological and avoidance), gender, age, previous experience and musical training and the dependent variable music performance anxiety.

CHAPTER 4

Results

This study used two scales: the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) and the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (KMPAI). The internal reliability of each subscale of the SPIN as well as the total scales of SPIN and KMPAI were determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha for each scale and subscale. Results showed that the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the "fear of embarrassing situations and criticism" scale of the SPIN was .777; for the "physiological distress" the coefficient was .711; for the "avoidance" scale the coefficient was .735; for the total SPIN scale, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .885; and for the total KMPAI scale the coefficient was .778.

Table 1

Cronbach's alpha for the subscales and total scale of SPIN and KMPAI

Scale	Previous Cronbach's alpha	Current Cronbach's alpha
Fear of embarrassing situations and criticism	.87 - .94	.777
Physiological distress	.87 - .94	.711
Avoidance	.87 - .94	.735
SPIN	.87 - .94	.885
KMPAI	.94	.778

Hypothesis 1: There will be a positive relation between social phobia and music performance anxiety.

To test the relationship between social phobia and music performance anxiety a correlation was computed. The result of the correlation between the scores on the total scale of SPIN and KMPAI, $r\ (100) = .599, p < .01$, supported this observation.

Thus, hypothesis 1 was confirmed

Hypothesis 2: Scores of the subscale "fear of embarrassing situations and criticism" will positively predict music performance anxiety.

To measure the contribution of the three subscales of SPIN on the scores of KMPAI, a regression analysis was computed. The results showed that the subscale of "physiological distress" positively and significantly predicted MPA (see Table 2), as compared to the subscales of "fear of embarrassing situations and criticism" and "avoidance".

Table 2

Regression analysis between the subscales of SPIN and KMPAI

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	56.401	3.135		17.989	.000
	Fear	.636	.515	.177	1.235	.220
	Somatic	1.770	.510	.329	3.467	.001
	Avoidance	.768	.511	.215	1.504	.136

a. Dependent Variable: KMPAI

Therefore, hypothesis 2 was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 3: Female participants will score higher on the Music Performance Anxiety scale than male participants.

To test the differences between males and females on MPA, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. Results showed no significant difference in scores for males ($M = 77.36$, $SD = 20.27$) and females [$M = 77.17$, $SD = 19.02$, $t\ (98) = .047$, $p = .96$].

Thus, hypothesis 3 was not confirmed.

Hypothesis 4: There will be a negative relation between the number of years of choral experience and music performance anxiety.

To test the relationship between number of years of choral experience and MPA a correlation was computed. The result of the correlation between the number of years of previous choral experience and the score of KMPAI, $r\ (100) = -.107$, was not significant.

Thus, hypothesis 4 was not confirmed

Hypothesis 5: There will be a negative relation between the number of years of musical training and music performance anxiety.

To test the relationship between number of years of musical training and MPA a correlation was computed. The result of the correlation between the number of years of musical training and the score of KMPAI, $r\ (100) = -.057$, was not significant.

Thus, hypothesis 5 was not confirmed

To measure the contribution of age, previous choral experience and musical training on MPA a regression analysis was run. The results showed that age positively and significantly predicted MPA (see Table 3) as opposed to previous choral experience and musical training.

Table 3

Regression analysis between the subscales of SPIN and KMPAI

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	35.769	14.594		2.451	.016
	Age1	2.349	.764	.313	3.074	.003
	Previous1	.011	.786	.002	.014	.989
	Training1	-.396	.542	-.078	-.731	.466

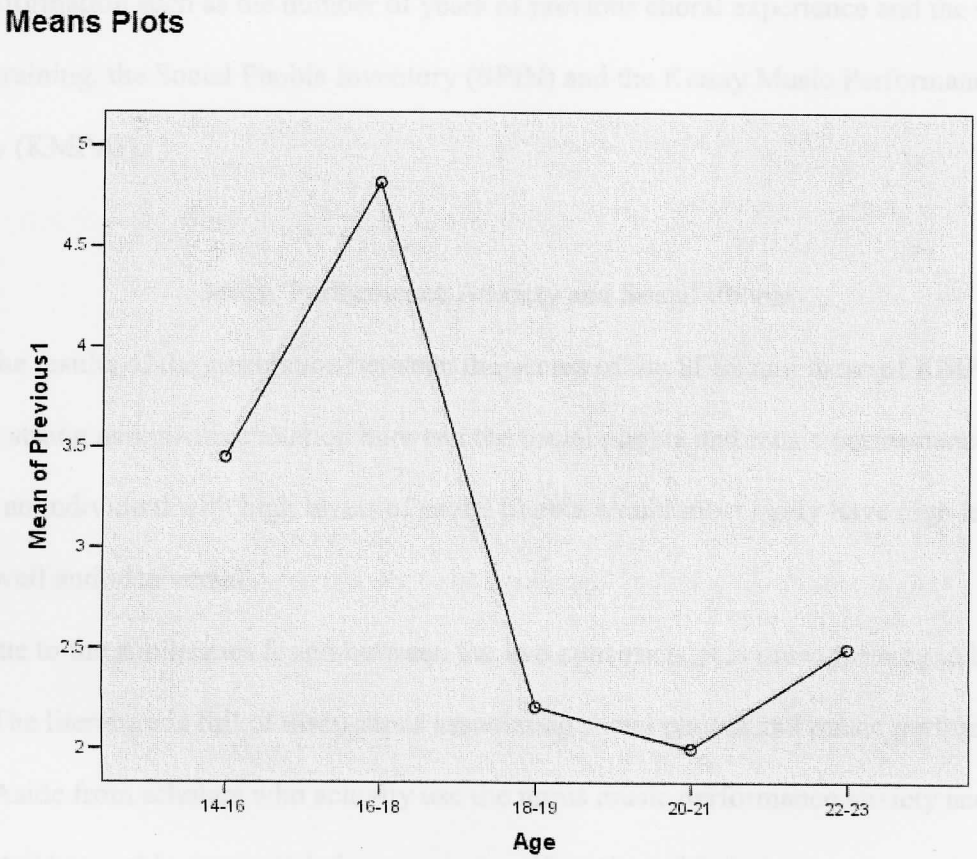
a. Dependent Variable: KMPAI

The results showed that age was the variable that positively predicted MPA.

To test the relation between the variables age, previous experience and training, a correlation was computed. There was one significant result, a negative correlation between age and previous experience, $r = -.254$, $p < .05$. Therefore, the younger the age of the participant, the more experience he/she has. Participants were divided to four groups based on their ages. Group 1: 14-16; Group 2: 16-18; Group 3: 18-20; Group 4: 20-23. A calculation of ANOVA between different age groups and number of years of practice showed that the age group 16-18 has the most experience (figure 1).

Figure 1

ANOVA between age and previous experience



CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between social phobia and music performance anxiety among choir singers in high school and university. For that reason, students who are enrolled in the choir class or course from three schools and two universities filled in demographic information such as their age and gender, in addition to music-related information such as the number of years of previous choral experience and the number of years of training, the Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN) and the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (KMPAI).

Music Performance Anxiety and Social Phobia

The results of the correlation between the scores of the SPIN and those of KMPAI showed a strong and positive relation between the social phobia and music performance anxiety; such that an individual with high levels of social phobia would most likely have high levels of MPA as well and vice versa.

Due to the similarities found between the two constructs, it is not surprising to have such a result. The literature is full of discussions associating social phobia and music performance anxiety. Aside from scholars who actually use the terms music performance anxiety and social phobia interchangeably or as one being a mere manifestation of the other, many researchers note similarities between the two constructs while arguing for their uniqueness. Thurber (2009) explicitly states that "MPA meets criteria for social phobia when it is marked with significant distress, anxiety, and/or avoidance" (Thurber, 2009, p.4).

Other studies report similar claim as well. For instance, Sandgren (2003), upon investigating the similarities between MPA and social phobia, found that there are some common characteristics between the two such as fear of embarrassment, exposure and weakness, occurrence of anxiety before and during the event, and worry about negative reactions from others. Many studies have documented that MPA, at its worst, resembles social phobia. As Kenny and Osborne (2006) attest, under its most severe expressions MPA resembles social phobia. Furthermore, Ashbaugh et al. (2005) draw a similarity between performance anxious individuals and social phobic individuals in that both set very high, almost unreasonable standards for themselves to the extent that, no matter how positively the audience reacts, they still feel a discrepancy to what they expected and what they received as feedback.

Fear, Physiological Distress, and Avoidance

The SPIN has three subscales: a) fear of embarrassing situations and criticism, b) physiological distress and c) avoidance. One hypothesis of the study is that fear of embarrassing situations and criticism will predict MPA. This prediction is supported by the available literature. Performing musicians fear the evaluation of the audience and dread negative feedback. According to Sandgren (2003, 2009), most opera singers worry that their performance will not be successful regardless of their practice and efforts; they also fear the negative evaluation of their audience. They are concerned about how well they sound and whether the audience likes what it hears or not (Sandgren, 2009). Thomas (2009) also states that musicians often think of the audience as judges who are there to point out all the mistakes and faults. Besides the audience, performers are also concerned of the opinion of important people in their lives such as their spouses, parents, children and friends (Sandgren, 2009).

Another factor that encouraged the choice of fear of embarrassing situations and criticism as a leading factor in predicting MPA was the cognitive aspect. According to Kenny and Osborne (2006), negative cognitions and dysfunctional thoughts are the most crucial in causing disturbances in the performance. Similarly, Yondem (2007) puts negative cognitions and irrational beliefs at the top of the list of the leading characteristics of performers who experience anxiety, along with fear of negative evaluation and criticism from the audience or important people in their lives. In other words, music performance anxiety is maintained largely by dysfunctional cognitions that give rise to fear from the audience and its negative evaluation.

However, the results of the study showed that physiological distress strongly predicts the MPA of the participants. Although Kenny and Osborne (2006) and Brugués (2009) argue that negative cognitions contribute to MPA more than somatic and health issues, one cannot deny the presence of physiological symptoms as an important component of MPA. Physiological distress is manifested by "exhaustion, stomachaches, headaches…sleep disturbances" (Kenny, 2004, p.9), sweating, dry mouth, accelerated heart beat, shaking (Thomas, 2009), nausea and shortness of breath (Brugués, 2009).

These physiological symptoms negatively affect the performance in many ways thus explaining the results of this study which render physiological distress as the leading predictor of MPA. For example, some symptoms such as sweating and trembling are visible to the audience (Brugués, 2009) while others have a destructive effect of the overall performance (Yoshie et al., 2009). More dangerously, these symptoms could actually render the performance impossible. For instance, shaking interferes with the steady voice of the singer and worsens the quality of the singing (Sandgren, 2009), while trembling may hamper the movement of the pianist's fingers,

intervene in the smooth passage from one string to the other on the violin and make it impossible for the drummer to keep a steady beat (Thomas, 2009).

Gender and Music Performance Anxiety

One of the salient findings of most studies in the literature pertaining to performance anxiety is the effect of gender on MPA. Research and empirical studies almost unanimously claim that females experience MPA more than males. For instance, Brugués (2009) asserts that women experience MPA more than men; she argues that this can be based on the fact that women are generally more anxious than men. Thurber reports similar findings, "women are more likely to experience MPA" (Thurber, 2009, p.7). Likewise, Thomas (2009) found that females experience performance anxiety much more than their male counterparts. Kenny and Osborne (2006) reported that females were two to three times more anxious than males when it comes to performance. In accord with Kenny and Osborne's results, Yondem (2007) also found that females were significantly more anxious than males when required to perform, and hence concluded that gender is of paramount importance in predicting MPA.

In line with the aforementioned findings, the researcher predicted that females will report higher levels of MPA than males. Contrary to the hypothesis, there was no significant difference between males and females with regards to MPA. The lack of significant results can be explained by two factors.

First, despite the virtually undisputed claim that females are more anxious than males when it comes to performance, there is some relevant research that has found no difference between males and females when it comes to performance anxiety. For instance, Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) found no difference between males in females in regards to performance

anxiety, and hence they asserted that "it cannot be concluded that the female singers are more … anxious compared to the male singers" (Kokotsaki & Davidson, 2003, p.52); however, they explained that males displayed more physiological anxiety while females experienced subjective anxiety (Kokotsaki & Davidson, 2003). In total contrast to this, Kenny and Osborne (2006) found that girls experienced accelerated heart rate while boys displayed more anxious behavior right before the performance.

Therefore, the results of this study were in line with some of the literature that has stated that there are no differences of MPA between females and males.

Secondly, the insignificant results of the difference of MPA between males and females may be explained by the number of males and females in the current study. The sample of this study was a sample of convenience because subjects were chosen only if they were enrolled in the choir class or course during the time of the study. And it is usually seen that the number of females is more than that of males in choirs. Quite representative to a real choir, the number of females in this study was almost double that of males, as there were 64 female and 36 male participants. The difference between the number of males and females could have affected the calculation of the results and hence could have contributed to the insignificant results, although an increase in the MPA scores of females would be expected.

Thus, it might be that in the present sample there was no difference between males and females when it came to MPA which is in line with some of the relevant literature.

Age, Choral Experience and Musical Training

The participants of this study provided the number of years they have been singing in a choir and the number of years of musical training they have received, if any. There were two

predictions made: first, there will be a negative relation between number of years of previous choral experience and MPA. Second, there will be a negative relation between number of years of musical training and MPA. There were no predictions made with regards to age because there was no support from the literature.

The literature is quite clear when it comes to age. Almost all researchers state that age is not an important factor in the prediction of MPA (Papageorgi, 2007). For instance, Gorges et al. (2007) found age to be unrelated to MPA. According to them, it was the professional experience of the performer that was crucial in prediction of MPA. Thurber (2009) found no correlation between age and MPA as well. On the contrary, he claimed that the prediction of MPA was due to two other factors. First, experience and not age, and second the professional status.

The findings mentioned above consider age not to be related to MPA; rather it is the experience of the performer in the musical field and the professional status. Along the lines of these findings, Sandgren (2003) stated that the development of technical ability and musical ability is important in reducing MPA. Larsen (2005) also found that professional musicians experienced levels of MPA significantly lower than those experienced by students. This is because professional musicians have the chance of frequent performance opportunities through which they learn to manage anxiety. Here also the two ideas of experience and professional status are considered to have an effect on MPA.

Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) combined previous experience and training together when they reported that professional musicians experience lower MPA levels because of two very important factors. The first factor is their musical experience. Since professional musicians have had more experience in the musical field due to the chance of performing frequently in front of different audiences. The second factor is their level of training.

The results of this study showed no significant relation between years of choral experience and MPA or between musical training and MPA. Note that, since there were no professional musicians among the participants, the researcher studied the number of years of musical training. On the other hand, there was a significant correlation between age and MPA, and in the regression analysis, age was the factor that significantly predicted MPA.

This is contrary to the predictions made in the present study. The results of the present study showed that age predicts MPA, while previous experience and musical training didn't give significant results.

Upon further analysis of the variables of age and choral experience, results showed that there is a significant negative correlation between age of participant and previous choral experience. In other words, the older participants of this study had less musical experience than the younger students. The results obtained between different age groups and previous experience revealed that the age group of 16-18 significantly differs with regards to previous experience. In other words, those who had the most previous experience were the high school students. This could be explained by the two types of participants in this study: school students and university students. Those who are school students attend either the American Community School of Beirut (ACS), International College (IC) or Christian Teaching Institute (CTI) which have all had junior and senior choirs for, at least, the past three years. Therefore, in line with the results, the participants who were in the high school classes of these schools (ages 16-18) had the most choral experience versus the university students either from the American University of Beirut (AUB) or the Antonine University. The university students might have attended schools where there were no junior or senior choirs, and hence, they had little or no prior choral musical

experience. Therefore, although age seems to be the variable that predicts MPA, in fact, it is the performance experience of these students that is affecting MPA.

Further analysis of the results showed that there is a significant positive correlation between years of choral experience and years of training. Computations of the ANOVA between these two variables also yield significant results. Therefore, chances are that the high school senior students (16-18) who had the most number of years of choral experience also have the most training. Once again, this particular age group has both more choral experience and musical training than the other age groups and hence they have less MPA. This could explain the results of this study where it seems age is the strongest predicting variable when, in fact, it is the previous choral experience and musical training that are affecting MPA.

Conclusion

The present study investigated the relationship between social phobia and music performance anxiety taking into consideration demographic variables such as age and gender, and music-related variables such as years of choral experience and musical training. Previous studies have investigated the factors that affect MPA on a sample of professional musicians or music majors. The present study examined the relationship of social phobia and MPA on a sample of non-music major high school and university students who were enrolled in the choir class or course during the time of the study.

The findings in the literature are mixed between those who claim that MPA and social phobia are the same construct (Yondem, 2007) versus those who emphasize the uniqueness of each (Kenny, 2004). Different studies argue for (Kenny & Osborne, 2006) and against the effects

of gender on MPA (Kokotsaki & Davidson, 2003), the influence of years of experience (Larsen, 2005) and professional status (Sandgren, 2003).

The results of this study showed that social phobia and MPA are significantly related with physiological distress being the strongest predictor of MPA. Gender didn't show a significant effect on MPA as opposed to age. Age, in its turn, was explained by the vast choral experience and musical training of the high school students (16-18) versus the university students who might have come from schools that didn't have choir classes.

There were some delimitations to this study. First, the number of female participants was almost double that of males ($N = 64$ for females, $N = 36$ for males) probably because that's how choir members are usually distributed by gender. Another delimitation was the time during which the study was conducted. The participants filled the questionnaire in a time interval between one or two weeks before their Christmas concert which might have affected the performance anxiety levels of the participants. They might have been more anxious because of their upcoming concert.

The major findings of this study bear two very important suggestions for music teachers and choir conductors dealing with high school and university students. First, since physiological distress has a great effect on MPA, choir conductors and music teachers could employ some relaxation exercises such as proper warm-ups, breathing exercises and stretching techniques. Having said this, it is advisable not to disregard fear because in the Lebanese culture people tend to overreport somatic complaints and underreport emotional and cognitive complaints. Second, it is advisable for music teachers and choir conductors to offer their students numerous chances for public performances in familiar settings before they are asked to perform in an unfamiliar setting or in a setting where there is direct evaluation of their performance, such as a competition

between different choirs. Some university and school choirs have a performance called a "dress rehearsal" where the entire repertoire is performed in front of the school students, faculty and staff prior to the actual performance. Opportunities like this would diminish MPA and produce a performance of better quality, as the results of this study indicate.

For future studies, the researcher suggests an equal number of males and females in order to truly see the contribution of gender to MPA. It would also be interesting to have participants fill in the questionnaires before their concert and at a random time during the year and compare the results. This can be used to test the changes in MPA during regular times and before a concert. Other variables such as audience size, setting, language of the songs, and whether the performance is graded or not may be investigated in future studies to see their effect on MPA.

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APPENDIX A

Demographic Information

Please provide the following information about yourself:

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Languages spoken: _____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Music-Related Information

Number of years you have been singing in a school or university choir: _____

Do you take (or have you taken) extracurricular music lessons? YES NO

If yes, for how many years have you been taking extracurricular music lessons?

_____

Have your parents taken any music lessons? YES NO

APPENDIX B

Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN)

Please read each statement and select a number 0,1,2,3 or 4 which indicates how much the statement applied to you over the past week. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one statement.

0 = not at all 1 = a little bit 2 = somewhat 3 = very much 4 = extremely

1 I am afraid of people in authority	0	1	2	3	4
2 I am bothered by blushing in front of people	0	1	2	3	4
3 Parties and social events scare me	0	1	2	3	4
4 I avoid talking to people I don't know	0	1	2	3	4
5 Being criticized scares me a lot	0	1	2	3	4
6 I avoid doing things or speaking to people for fear of embarrassment	0	1	2	3	4
7 Sweating in front of people causes me distress	0	1	2	3	4
8 I avoid going to parties	0	1	2	3	4
9 I avoid activities in which I am the center of attention	0	1	2	3	4
10 Talking to strangers scares me	0	1	2	3	4
11 I avoid having to give speeches	0	1	2	3	4
12 I would do anything to avoid being criticized	0	1	2	3	4
13 Heart palpitations bother me when I am around people	0	1	2	3	4
14 I am afraid of doing things when people might be watching	0	1	2	3	4
15 Being embarrassed or looking stupid are among my worst fears	0	1	2	3	4
16 I avoid speaking to anyone in authority	0	1	2	3	4
17 Trembling or shaking in front of others is distressing to me	0	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX C

Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI)

Below are some statements about how you feel generally and before or during a performance. Circle one number to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

-3 = strongly disagree ←→ 3 = strongly agree

1 Sometimes I feel depressed without knowing why	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
2 I find it easy to trust others	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
3 I rarely feel in control of my life	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
4 I often find it difficult to work up the energy to do things	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
5 Excessive worrying is a characteristic of my family	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
6 I often feel that life has not much to offer me	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
7 The harder I work in preparation for a concert, the more likely I am to make a serious mistake	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
8 I find it difficult to depend on others	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
9 My parents were mostly responsive to my needs	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
10 I never know before a concert whether I will perform well	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
11 I often feel that I am not worth much as a person	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
12 During a performance I find myself thinking about whether I'll even get through it	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
13 Thinking about the evaluation I may get interferes with my performance	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
14 Even in the most stressful performance situations, I am confident that I will perform well	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
15 I am often concerned about a negative reaction from the audience	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
16 Sometimes I feel anxious for no particular reason	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
17 From the beginning of my music studies, I remember being anxious about performing	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
18 I worry that one bad performance will ruin my career	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
19 My parents almost always listened to me	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
20 I give up worthwhile performance opportunities due to anxiety	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
21 As a child, I often felt sad	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
22 I often prepare for a concert with a sense of dread and impending disaster	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
23 I often feel that I have nothing to look forward to	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
24 My parents encouraged me to try new things	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
25 I worry so much before a performance, I cannot sleep	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3
26 My memory is usually very reliable	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3