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COMMUNITY'S PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS LEARNING MUSIC IN SCHOOLS

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Chapter 1

Background study

1.1 Introduction

Music is broadly-known in Malaysia community. As the community becomes more interested in music, music has been taught in schools. Nowadays, learning music seems to be not important in schools. This can be seen through the music education learning period in schools that have been shortened from sixty minutes per period to thirty minutes per period (Feride, 2014). It can be that learning music is not that important to be taught in schools or parents of the children also agree that music period should be shorter than the other subject period at schools.

This matter has related to how community thinks about music education. Previous research has researched on how public perceptions of music (Austin, 2011). Issues that related to music education might affect the perceptions towards learning music in schools. The problems that might affect the perception toward learning music is music that been taught by the non – music specialist (Holden and button (Ed) 2006). Meanwhile, Wright (Ed) 2001) stated that the gender is an issue in learning music. The achievement in music education between boys and girls were different and Wright (Ed) 2001) has found that the boys were faster learner than the girls.

All the studies above have looked into the problems occur in learning music. However, they were conducted in foreign settings and did not involve the community's perceptions in learning music. The present research will explore the community's perceptions towards learning music in schools. As learning music in school faces problems, it is important to know what the community's perceptions about learning music in schools are. Therefore, this present research will look into the community's perceptions on learning music in schools.

1.2 Problem Statement

The perception of the community towards learning music in schools may impact the future of music. Learning music seems not to be important to be taught at schools because of some issues that community perceive. Music is considered a waste of time, needs a big budget and does not have a promising career are the issues that might be thought by the community and affect the community's perceptions towards the important of learning music in schools.

According to Garnett, "having people learn music does not offer any value back to society or, maybe it is that they consider learning music to be essentially a leisure activity, and they are worried that they are paying for people's hobbies" (Garnett, 2011). Besides the community perceptions that music is a waste of time, they also think that music needs a lot of budget. "There has been an increase in requests for arts and music, Lajoie says. There's also a history of repeat requests – schools that ask for fund each year for ongoing projects- for example, McCornack Elementary School seeks an annual grant for its musical" (Bridgman, 2011).

The issue of music is a waste of time (Garnett, 2011), and learning music needs a lot of budget (Bridgman, 2011), has been done but the community's perceptions on learning music is relatively unknown. There is a need to do research about the community's perceptions towards learning music to improve the understanding of why music education needs to be in schools.

The other research has been done by Zaharul (2011). According to him music subject in schools may be removed if the importance of learning music in schools has been neglected. Based on the problems above, it shows that the music subject is nearly neglected at schools. In order to prevent it from happen, this study aim to investigate about the community's perceptions towards learning music in schools. Do the problems that stated above give impact to the community's perceptions?

1.3 Research Objective

1. To investigate the community's perceptions towards the importance of learning music in schools.
2. To examine whether people in different age groups perceive the importance of learning music in schools differently.
3. To examine whether people from different ethnic groups perceive the importance of learning music in schools differently.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the community's perceptions about learning music in schools?
2. How do people from different age groups think about the importance of learning music in schools?
3. How do people from different ethnic groups think about the importance of learning music schools?

1.5 Significant of Study

The purpose of this study is to know the community's perceptions towards learning music in schools, it is vital to know so that it will be taken into consideration. As we know, the community's perceptions have effects towards learning music in schools and this research being conducted to help the community deliver their opinions towards this matter. Besides that, this research is being conducted to identify the issues that hinder the process of learning music in schools. This study will not only benefit the ministry of education but also the students as it will provide a better understanding about the importance of learning music and also the issues that should be resolved from restricting the process of learning music in schools. Furthermore, this will serve as a theoretical model for future studies of the same problem if this problem exists again. Future researchers will benefit from this study, and it will provide them the facts needed to compare their study during their respective time and usability.