

UNIVERSITY TEKNOLOGI MARA

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EFFECTIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES USED BY MUSIC TEACHERS IN THE
MALAYSIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary literature suggests that there is a growing body of research in music education, however, research on the teaching processes and effective teaching strategies of primary teachers in teaching music is highly limited and highlights the need for qualitative research in the pedagogy of music. Thus, with reference to music as one of the foundation subjects of the Malaysian primary curriculum, this study aims to investigate primary teachers' teaching strategies in Malaysian primary classrooms. In the study, the 'qualitative' research approach was adopted in order to fulfill the aims and objectives of the study. A total of eight primary school teachers with different educational backgrounds participated in the study. As one of the research instruments, a semi-structured interview schedule was prepared and participant teachers were interviewed regarding their perceptions about music education and experiences in the classrooms. The analysis of the qualitative data suggests that there are several factors influencing teacher's music teaching activities negatively. Negative factors influencing the classroom were found to come from the students, curriculum, and lack of teacher competencies. The findings suggest that in the field of music education teachers need more support in improving their pedagogical skills in teaching music as well as their technical skills in the subject. It is suggested that due to the lack of confidence and competence of primary teachers, music specialist teachers should be assigned to the task of delivering music curriculum. In addition, it is recommended that education faculties should take a more active role in training teachers, and more in-service training activities should be provided for teacher development in music education.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Background of the Study

In Malaysia, research in formal music as an official subject in primary school curriculum have already been started since the year 1972 but limited to a few chosen schools. A group of music teachers has obtained their specialist musical certificate from Specialist Teacher Training Institute (STTI) at Cheras in the year 1971 started teaching in various primary and secondary schools that is mostly located in big cities.

STTI would then be known as 'Maktab Perguruan Ilmu Khas' (MPIK) and later be called 'Institut Perguruan Ilmu Khas' (IPIK) in the 1980s onwards. Teachers from STTI are the first music teachers that taught formal music education in schools in Malaysia. Before, individuals who are capable of playing the piano are the only teachers that are able to train choirs outside of the curriculum and even so, these individuals are not formally known as music teachers. It is not until the year 1983 that music has become a compulsory part of the primary school curriculum when the 'Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah' (KBSR) was introduced in Malaysia.

The music education system in the 1970s has a lot of similarities with the education system that has been adopted by the British during the colonial period. According to formal education history in Malaysia, the British started Penang Free School in the year 1816 which is the first English School in Malaysia. Activity that has musical backgrounds like choir and marching brass bands has been a prevalent activity in this school back then.