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MUSIC TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS MUSIC IN
SCHOOL CURRICULUM

EDU 650
ACADEMIC PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate music teachers' perceptions toward music in the school curriculum, music teachers' perceptions toward the content of the school music curriculum and music teachers' opinion on the importance of learning music in the school. Five teachers from Selangor and Kuala Lumpur were interviewed for this study. Results showed that most teachers perceived that the music curriculum in the school should be implemented in schools. Even the status of music curriculum in the school as supplementary subject and not important, but music curriculum in the school had their importance.

Background of the Study

According to the bilingual dictionary, the term "curriculum" is can be defined as school education area. According to the historical perspective, the term "curriculum" comes from the Latin word "curriculum" which means the space where learning process occurs.

According to the National Education Philosophy (NEP), the education provided should develop the potential individuals in the holistic and integrated approach as well as to have an individual with intellectual, spiritual and physical dimensions. The participation in the music background among students would protect the dimensions of feeling, creativity, aesthetic value, mental alertness, psychomotor and socialization among them. As to achieve the NEP objectives, music education has become the compulsory subject to be taken by primary school students in 1983 until today as well as in the secondary schools in Malaysia.

In 1989, as the continuation of the KBSR program, the Integrated Curriculum for Secondary Schools (KBSM) was implemented in all secondary schools in Malaysia. However, the music subject was not being included in the compulsory curriculum due to the insufficient number of instructors. Yet, in 1996, the importance of the music education has emerged the awareness of having the curriculum among students and a number of selected schools have been chosen to be the pilot schools to offer the music subject in the KBSM module.

The goals of KBSM Music education are stated as below:

- (a) to produce students who are knowledgeable, skilled and experiences in music
- (b) to allow students to have the discipline in producing music; and
- (c) to allow students to perform and have enjoyment in learning music.

The goals stated above will help the establishment of developing a balanced individual in emotions, creativity, innovative and inventive.

According to Johami (1997), the quality of teaching music in Malaysia is in unsatisfactory level since most of the teachers were lack of training in teaching particular subject. The instruments provided by the Ministry of Education in 1983 were outdated and infrequently being replaced by the respective persons. Hence, the situation occurred have affect the teaching process in schools.

The development of music programs in secondary schools was strayed far enough from the actual planning in its expansion strategy of learning. Consequently, the students opportunity to learn music better and as to polish their talent is uncertain since not all schools in Malaysia offers the music education. (Prof. Madya Zaharul Lailiddin bin Saidon)

The changes that being highlighted are in line with the government's effort of encouraging the citizens to make transformation in the education system at all levels in

Malaysia. The transformation therefore requires changes in thinking, attitudes and the actions. In addition, what need to be done was actually restructuring the process of thinking to the new way of thinking which are more effective, efficient and responsive (Hammer & Champy, 1993).

The quality of teaching in schools is directly related with the quality of education provided by the pre-service and in-service teachers. This matter has become more important in the context of music education due to its unique challenges that normally being faced by teachers in schools. Therefore, any efforts done to empower the music education in Malaysia schools are necessary to take into account as to improve the music teacher education programs that being offered.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers and curriculum are important components in a system of education. If teachers are good role coupled with a good curriculum, will know the education system. With the visible success or failure of a system of education depends on teachers and curricula that factor alone. With the various measures undertaken to improve the education system by teachers themselves as well as aspects of the curriculum itself.

Teachers bring a major influence on students. Teachers also need to provide rational reasons why a reasonable and convincing musical subjects should be held in the school curriculum. Guided by *The School Music Program: Descriptions and Standards* (Reston, Virginia: MENC, 2nd edition, 1986) there are reasons why the subject of music to be held in the formal curriculum in schools. Among them is is it fair that individuals learn music without any particular reason (music purely for music). Music is an area so rich with various types of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking are very different from age to age and from place to place. The ability to play music, sing, or

appreciate the music if only to entertain themselves or to develop the intellect of a person that is very fair for everyone.

Thus, we can see the importance of music education in schools. This is in strong support when Henry Fogel states in his article "A child's education is not complete unless it includes the arts. In fact, the No Child Left Behind Act lists the Arts Among the core academic subjects, requiring schools to enable all students to Achieve in the arts, and to Reap the full benefits of a Comprehensive arts education. In spite of this federal direction, access to arts education in our schools is eroding.

A report from the Center for Education Policy conclude that, since the enactment of No Child Left Behind, 22% of school districts surveyed have reduced instructional time for art and music....A comprehensive strategy for a complete education includes rigorous, sequential arts instruction in the classroom, as well as participation and learning in available community-based arts programs. Public schools have the responsibility for providing a complete education for all children, meeting the commitment put forth in No Child Left Behind. The federal commitment to arts education must be strengthened so that the arts are implemented as a part of the core curriculum of our nation's schools and are an integral part of every child's development."

However, music in the curriculum in secondary school without a good trainer he would not run smoothly. With the perception of the teachers emphasized the need to improve the music in the school curriculum. This is because the teachers closer to students and teachers to identify problems that occur at school. With this study is to determine teachers' perception of music in the school curriculum.