

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS
THEIR PRIVATE MUSIC LESSONS**

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1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In 1983, formal music education became a compulsory subject in all elementary schools in Malaysia (Nor, 2011). However, “personal instruction at the piano and other European musical instruments has been available outside the public schools since the beginning of this century” (Abdullah, 1990, p. 47). During the colonial times, the British brought trained musicians from India and Philippines to Malaysia to assist the forming and needed for military marching bands. Abdullah (1990) emphasized that these imported musicians were believed to be the ones who initiated the tradition of providing private instructions of European classical music in Malaysia. Private music lesson is a class involving music teaching of instruments such as piano, violin, guitar and voice. Private music lessons can be conducted in groups or individually. According to Abdullah (1990), piano private lesson is the most popular music lesson in Malaysia. This is because the piano is a tuned musical instrument that is able to provide simultaneous elements of melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic and able to give satisfaction in musical experience (Choi, 2011). The students who take private music lessons are mostly assessed by sitting for external examinations such as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), Trinity College London, Australian Guild Exam, and Rock School. Abdullah (2010) states that there are between 5,000 to 10,000 students who sit for piano ABRSM external examinations each year.