



**MEE 2.0: ICLT2022**  
International Virtual Colloquium on Multi-Disciplinary Research Impact (3rd Series)  
**International Conference of Logistics and Transportation**  
Best Western i-City Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, 05-06 Oct2022



## Perceptions toward Music Education

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### Abstract

Music education in Malaysia has been through various stages of development that finally got its recognition in formal education in public schools in Malaysia. The purpose of this study is to identify the perceptions of the community towards music education. Over the years, the curriculum in Malaysia has changed where music is a component in arts education and takes only 30 minutes from the one-hour slots in the primary schools. This circumstance has impacted the teaching and learning of music in schools and further impacted the intake of students and music education at the tertiary level. In addition to this circumstance, it will also affect the community. Therefore, this study has been conducted by reviewing three videos of people's perceptions of music education. On the ground of this, this study focused on a qualitative research method by collecting data and reviewing the data from the videos chosen.

Keywords: music education; music learning; qualitative; music pedagogy

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21834/ebpj.v7iS19.3946>

### 1.0 Introduction

Many people underestimate music education in the schools nowadays, as well as the teachers who trained in music (Bautista et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2022). However, music education is vital, and the teachers teach the music subject themselves. In college, the music education subject is one of the densest programs. Teachers must learn the general education materials, psychology, and technique to teach music. They must learn to play every instrument, music history, music theory, composition, music pedagogy, conducting, and much more. It is found that music is vital, especially in math and science (Guhn et al., 2020). Students learn how to count, keep a steady rhythm, and how to multiply and divide. Students also use science in music education to help them discover what sounds good together. As they learn, they use prior knowledge to figure out what else might say good together, which can lead to composing.

There is a preconceived notion that music to be treated as a form of entertainment instead of using it as a tool to achieve an effective teaching and learning environment (Ojukwu et al., 2020). Therefore, this study hopes to explore in-depth the people's perceptions concerning the ability of music education and its effect in public schools in Malaysia. The objectives of this study include:

1. To identify perceptions towards music education.
2. To evaluate the awareness of music education.
3. To determine satisfaction level towards music education.

### 2.0 Philosophical Perspectives in Music Education

Before the 1990s, the most influential philosophy in music education was Music Education as Aesthetic Education (Elliot, 2021). The most famous proponents of this approach were Abraham Schwadron and Bennett Reimer. Both proponents aim to establish a firm philosophy

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to emphasize and advocate music education in the school curriculum. According to Reimer (2021), the most effective concept in the history of music education is the element of aesthetic education. Reimer's (2021) philosophy of music education is based on the premise that the essential nature and value of music education are determined by the nature and characteristics of the art. His philosophy of music education is based on absolute expressionism, which means that the emotions and the artistic meaning and value of the artwork are internal. Absolute expressionists believe that "expressive emotional means arise in response to music". These relate to the extramusical world of concepts, actions, and human emotional states. To put it simply, if one is to have an artistic experience, he must know and understand the meaning and the value of people's artwork.

Previous studies revealed that most of the community's parents seem to have similar attitudes, believing that effort can overcome the lack of giftedness (Armstrong et al., 2019; Yusof et al., 2022). This belief is often linked with their children's musical learning. Hence, people's perceptions of music education seem to give them negative ideas about it. Even though there are negative perceptions of music education, some people still think that music is worth knowing and learning. Music seems to provide a way to express one self-expression and also helps in developing creative activity (Howe, 2022). The piece is essential in human life, but the acceptance of music education in the community still lacks favourable for seeing the music education as a crucial subject in school.

### 3.0 Methodology

We employ a qualitative approach in this study. In qualitative research, non-numerical data (such as texts, videos, and audio) are used to gain a deeper understanding of concepts and perspectives (McLeod, 2017). It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research. Video analysis was conducted to collect data for the present study. By doing video analysis method, the data collected were analyzed by doing script transcriptions and stored in a computer drive as records and evidence to ease the researcher in conducting the screening process. This process can also help avoid any statistical error, missing data, and data manipulation.

#### 3.1 Material

A total of three (3) videos from YouTube have been selected through a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling. It is a type of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the surveys. The details of the videos are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Details of materials

No.	Title	Date	Publisher	Link
1.	Richard Gill – The Value of Music Education	June 16, 2011	TEDx Talks	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeRus3NVbwE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeRus3NVbwE</a>
2.	The Role of Music in Culture and Education	Jan 28, 2017	New Media UFM English	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hh_EIEB-H5k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hh_EIEB-H5k</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeRus3NVbwE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeRus3NVbwE</a>
3.	Anita Collins – What if Every Child Had Access to Music Education from Birth?	Oct 28, 2014	TEDx Talks	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueqgenARzIE&amp;t=230s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueqgenARzIE&amp;t=230s</a>

### 4.0 Findings

The findings of this research are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Findings

Verbatim	Theme Code
<i>We then saw a film that had been put together showing how TEDx was set up, and music actually made that film work. Without music, that film would have been a very different film. 00:40 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i>	Creative
<i>We then saw the rabbit, that had music. A tragic end for the rabbit, but nonetheless, music. 00:54 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i>	
<i>This is the process that starts with an idea that comes from the imagination, the musical imagination. 01:32 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i>	
<i>We have the most extraordinary power to change lives with music and to involve people in music. 01:49 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i>	
<i>making music yourself with your family was your source of release. 04:49 (2<sup>nd</sup> Video)</i>	
<i>It's really interesting when I see young people who love a particular piece of music and come to discover that "Oh, that was written by Beethoven 200 years ago!" And they can't believe that the "What? This is a pop song!" 06:44 (2<sup>nd</sup> Video)</i>	
<i>It's when you have studied with maybe two or three different people and then you take the best of each and then that is part of who you become and then you have something more to share with other people. 08:12 (2<sup>nd</sup> Video)</i>	
<i>musicians were able to solve puzzles and problems far more effectively and creatively. 05:19 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i>	Value
<i>All of that improvisation, all of that creativity you saw on the stage today is the right of every child. 02:14 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i>	
<i>Every child, I believe, should have access to properly taught music. In the hands of a properly taught teacher. 02:30 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i>	

<p><i>That sort of music, any music, will evoke a different response. 06:11 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>It is worth teaching because it is good. 12:34 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>It is worth teaching because it is unique. 12:37 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>those that had undertaken music education before the age of seven had around about 7.5 IQ points higher than those that had not. 07:58 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>music education impacts everybody who undertakes it. 09:32 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>music education has been found to help us acquire and understand language and to solve complex problems, many of which involve numbers. 10:51 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>Music is a beautiful and wonderful art form that almost every human being on the planet enjoys in so many different ways every single day. 14:48 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p>	
<p><i>And when I talk about music, I define it as "sound, organized in some way, passing through time." 02:54 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>The idea that repetition and putting it in the circumstance of offering ideas is vital. 04:54 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>It is abstract, it doesn't mean anything outside itself. 05:09 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>Those sounds are abstract. They mean nothing other than themselves. 05:39 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>That very child, given normal circumstances has the capacity to sing. 07:57 (1<sup>st</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>Well, I think the role of music and culture is extremely important. And actually the role of music in education is even more important. 02:00 (2<sup>nd</sup> video)</i></p> <p><i>And this gets me thinking even more about the fact that music education could be the glue that could bring together so many things that we are dealing with in our educational systems and our societies today. 10:00 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>What if we invested now in my daughter's generation before the age of seven in ways that now the science has shown us, we can absolutely predict the benefits, and in so many ways, we absolutely cannot predict the benefits. 13:19 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>Why can't we take deliberate steps to raise the cognitive capacity through music education of the next generation so that they can build a better world for themselves? 17:12 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p>	<p>Perceptions</p>
<p><i>There have been many studies showings that in all of the arts specifically music is one that there is a physiological connection in the brain taking place between the left and the right hemisphere that helps students in their learning process. 02:08 (2<sup>nd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>But I do believe that it's wise for the student to seek more than one mentor because there are different views on how to interpret music or this could be an area of education in life. 07:38 (2<sup>nd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>If we think about it, it's like a full-brain workout; it's like our legs, our arms, and our torso doing an exercise at the same time. Music education is an exercise for the brain. 04:44 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>music education helps us be comfortable with discomfort. 06:15 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>It helps us to feel comfortable with learning. 06:33 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>music education actually makes those two sides of the brain work together really well. 10:26 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p> <p><i>music education actually makes the three areas of the brain work together incredibly well. 10:41 (3<sup>rd</sup> Video)</i></p>	<p>Benefits</p>

## 5.0 Discussion

These findings show and prove that music is vital in our lives. Thus, an improvement should be made to our music education system in school for a better future. The communities' perceptions in the video had a positive reaction, where the communities followed the instructions from the speaker where he asked them to clap and sing together. The speaker also did mention that music education should be taught or started with very young children. Richard Gill believed that every child should have access to adequately taught music. He's been at the forefront of promoting music education in his country and other countries. He started mentorship programs and believed every child should have access to music education with a properly taught teacher. According to Richard Gill in his talk, music is an art that acts in a way that differs from other artists, such as drama, dance, and drawing. The skills function in different ways.

Children benefit from music education in various ways and on numerous fronts. The favourable effects of music on children's development, including academic achievement, social skills, and creative expression, are advantageous to their health (Gomez et al., 2021). The most effective method for ensuring that a child's educational experience is as fruitful and satisfying as possible is to make music instruction a priority. In addition to encouraging self-reflection in their pupils, teachers should maintain regular communication with their student's families. This enables parents to monitor their children's activities and provide guidance and help when necessary. Teachers

must explain the advantages of providing more positive feedback for parents to have a stronger belief in music education. This will eventually help spread awareness of the significance of music education for the development of youngsters.

On top of that, music can develop self-discipline and responsibility too. The child who allots time for practising each day is known to produce similar habits in conjunction with other subjects. According to Ismail et al. (2022), music education taught in school was often considered non-compulsory and had not been taken seriously as a subject in school. Therefore, some assume that music education is not essential in the school curriculum. Organizational skills increase, and the child learns what it takes to be doing well at something they had learned. The music ensemble experience also helps the children to build their teamwork. Band members or choristers understand the importance of being a reliable members and are educated to be team players and not necessarily soloists. They also learn how to trust and rely upon each other in the ensemble. Music teaches students self-discipline, whether being involved in a music group or playing an instrument alone. Each day a striving musician must carve out a certain period to practice his skills. By creating a schedule to follow, they learn how to be self-disciplined. The saying "practice makes perfect" is one of the most factual statements. Children who are required to set their schedules can learn how to become self-sufficient and budget their time more wisely. They tend to be more focused on their study because while practicing the music repertoire, they are required to learn on the focusing the right rhythm, notes, and pitch.

Music education is also crucial for building teamwork and self-esteem in a child's life as proved by Howe (2022). Children who are encouraged to participate in a music group must learn how to cooperate and work with others to attain a common goal. This is an important skill to have in any area of life. Whether it's at a job, at home, or at school, one must learn how to work with others and learn how to communicate effectively. These music activities not only encourage teamwork but also create lifelong friendships and allow for working with many different kinds of people. Self-esteem is also built through this process by creating a support system of others who want to see success from each member of the group. This support system will allow students to feel as if they are a part of something greater. Students will also get more experience in performing in front of others and gain confidence through the process.

Music education helps children build higher thinking skills and also helps in certain academic areas, such as math and foreign languages (Guhn et al., 2020). Children are required to think about how their personal section of a song blends with the other parts or instruments. They have to think about dynamics, good tone quality, and blending with others. Music also helps with other subject areas that might surprise many. Math is one of these subjects that music can help with. When reading music, a musician has to use fractions and addition/subtraction to determine each note value. Foreign languages are also used throughout music. Dynamics and tempo markings are written in different languages that require children to develop higher thinking skills. Without music, students would not benefit from the many different aspects of knowledge that are required to create music.

The next part will discuss music education and its impact on student learning. As we know, music education really helps to improve and develops language skills in children (Ismail et al., 2022). Music can stimulate the brain, and with its varied sounds and lyrics, students are exposed to a large amount of vocabulary in a short amount of time, especially when they start to listen to foreign language songs. In the same manner, music also provides exposure to other languages, which creates a foundation for the student's ability to understand and communicate in a different language with the lyrics in the song and the terms that they had learned. Music is a vehicle for excellent memory skills. Through catchy melodies and a variety of sounds, music has a way of "sticking" with us and is a powerful tool for learning when used appropriately.

Given the third video transcription, it really does have an impact when the speaker said this directed to parents about their children, "if they ask to give up, don't let them". Most of the kids began to learn the guitar at a very young age, and they suffered a lot and often asked their parents constantly that they did not want to go to class; and it is great for the parents that keep pushing their kids to not giving up on the music class. Because most of them later will be doing better in school and will be thankful to their parents.

The final benefit of music education may be one of the most important benefits. Music transcends the limits of language. Music has no language barrier. It is something that brings people together regardless of ethnicity or background. Music transcends academic barriers as well. All learners can be successful in music. Sometimes, students who are not very inept academically soar in the arts! Students who cannot remember basic math skills can remember and employ the use of various rhythmic patterns effortlessly. Music literally becomes their best subject, and they shine in it! Through this, a student's sense of self and his/her confidence is dramatically boosted. All children desire to be good at something and develop a sense of achievement for a job well done, and music education produces an outlet that is perfect for that.

## 6.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study will help in changing the perceptions and raise the awareness of the community toward music education. This study also can help in providing the guidelines for the school and the authorities in preparing any events in the future to strengthen and improve the community's perceptions of music education in the future. Therefore, with the guidelines given, it is hoped the negative perceptions and the issues faced while dignifying music education can be resolved to form a positive perception of music education in the community in the future. Lastly, music enriches a person for life. By bringing music to the classrooms, schools are doing an important job by encouraging students to sing or play an instrument, thereby giving them a gift that will last for a lifetime. Therefore, recommendations

on further study for the importance of music education and how music education affects our lives shall be carried out to find out more benefits of music education for our community in the future.

## Acknowledgment

The authors would like to thank the College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, Malaysia, for the support and ReNeU UiTM, for the publication incentive provided through Program MEE 2.0.

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