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An Exploration of Interest in *Kompang Formasi* among Secondary Students in Kota Tinggi Johor

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Abstract

The study is about An Exploration of Interest in *Kompang Formasi* among Secondary School Students in Kota Tinggi, Johor, Malaysia. This is a qualitative study that used Google Form to collect data through organized interviews. The interviews were conducted on six (6) secondary school teachers; three (3) from urban area and three (3) from rural area from different secondary schools in Kota Tinggi, Johor. This study will focus on identify the secondary school student's interest in *Kompang Formasi*. Second, to explore the importance of knowing *Kompang Formasi* music ensemble. Lastly, to explore the challenges of teaching and learning *Kompang Formasi*.

Keywords: *Kompang Formasi*; *Kompang*; Qualitative; Malay Traditional Music

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1.0 Introduction

Kompang is one of the Malaysian Traditional music instruments. Regardless of race, all people can play *kompang*, making it one of the essential platforms for building inter-racial interactions in Malaysia. In Malaysia, big ceremonies or events like weddings and inaugurations always have *kompang* performances. There are also *kompang* performing groups that need the players to play the *kompang* in various formations and choreography, *Kompang Formasi*. Playing *kompang* is one of the strategies for communicating and educating people. Playing *kompang* is a way of appreciating and instilling religious, moral, cultural, aesthetic, and beauty values in individuals. Many values can be applied in this *kompang* playing because *kompang* playing requires all the members to cooperate and interact with each other to ensure the ensemble's sound is well-rounded.

Malaysia's school music education must teach the students about Malaysia's traditional music instruments and the traditional music performing group of Malaysia, specifically the *Kompang Formasi* ensemble. It is the performing group that the student and teachers can play in every kind of school event. *Kompang Formasi* is a contemporary music ensemble for *kompang Kompang Formasi* also must be played in the form of a group and need all 7 participants to work together as a team. In this way, students may learn the value of teamwork and how to work in a group. This study's findings provide information about the *kompang*, a Malay traditional musical instrument that must be preserved in the present period. Results show that the functions of the *kompang* are as a welcoming instrument, entertainment, vocal accompaniment, communication, aesthetic arts, education, and unity agent. The children's achievement using *kompang* showed a significant improvement from the pre-test to the post-test scores. Because *kompang* is well-suited to be a tool in music education, it

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provides all music educators with a fresh viewpoint on incorporating *kompang* as an effective teaching aid. Furthermore, it is a traditional musical instrument that the entire community should value and preserve. (Md Jais, Loo, Azu Farhana, & Rorlinda, 2020).

However, the teacher also faces some problems in teaching this instrument. First, students are not interested in joining the *Kompang Formasi* activity and hard to establish a *Kompang Formasi* group in school. The teacher only gives encouragement and guidance to the students to make sure the students know the basics and the knowledge. According to Ramio (2009), who researched to analyze the interest in learning music among non-music students in secondary school, non-music students' desire to learn music is influenced by several things. These elements include the music activities, instructor, parent, and peer groups. Above all, the first factor influencing students in learning music is themselves. Because of that, students need to be interested in learning certain things like music, specifically *Kompang Formasi*.

Nonetheless, playing this instrument has been decreasing year by year among the community of the younger generations, such as secondary school students, due to their lack of knowledge of Malaysia's traditional music instruments and the traditional music itself. Teachers face difficulties in finding *kompang* students to join the activity. The problem is that only the passionate and interested groups of the young generations, such as music institutions, cultural society groups, and arts agencies, are still struggling to uphold the beauty of this traditional heritage. Cultivating the arts of this culture from a young age is necessary to sustain them. (MD Jais, Loo, Azu Farhana & Rorlinda, 2020).

In Malaysia's secondary school, music is not the course that all students take and learn as compulsory. Compared to other nations, our country has a relatively modest number of public secondary schools that offer music classes to students. Schools that provide and aggressively enforce this course are typically located and concentrated in urban regions or schools that have attracted music teachers. Meanwhile, the schools that offer music courses only offer 30 minutes of the learning period. The time for the music course in our public school is minimal, and it is not enough for students to learn well.

Moreover, the schools in Malaysia usually do not have enough facilities like a music room for students to practice; instead, they allocate those spaces for more critical spaces such as the science labs because they are considered more important. In addition, the budget for music facilities is very high. The shortage of funds to meet the music needs has resulted in many schools opting out of offering the subject of music in public schools. Ramio (2009) researched the interest in learning music among non-music students in secondary school; the findings revealed that students at the secondary school level were not allowed to learn music formally.

Most Malaysian students nowadays are not interested in learning traditional music; they prefer to listen to and learn the popular music that they often hear at the current time. For example, they listen to pop music and music from other cultures and regions. As a result, teaching traditional Malaysian music is difficult for Malaysian music teachers since they must start from the beginning and go over each piece of music in greater depth. According to Shahanum (2006), who examined popular music in Malaysia, because popular music is more accessible than music programs in schools, most young people grow up knowing just the sorts of music to which they are regularly exposed. As a result, teaching Malaysians how to play musical instruments and traditional music is a difficult task to do.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Music Education in Malaysian Formal Curriculum

Malaysian students must learn how to appreciate music more. Learning music in school can be one way for students to appreciate music. According to Ghaziah (2005), teachers worldwide have long been curious about how to excite their students in the classroom. Music teachers face difficulty maintaining student enthusiasm for learning music to provide a higher-quality learning environment. Without a doubt, all students, regardless of age, would be unable to devote their time and patience to sitting down and engaging in the process of learning a skill if they did not have a strong desire to learn, especially if they did not hold it in high respect. The purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons why some students have a more positive attitude toward music learning than others. Students who play music are well trained to have good self-discipline. It is because pupils who participate in music lessons are well-trained in self-discipline. Based on modern learning theories that have been applied in much research on the learning of music, the study explores motivational difficulties associated with music learning. Learning theories, including the theory of self-efficacy, the theory of self-regulation, the theory of attribution, and the theory of expectation value, might assist explain and interpreting why primary and secondary school students have different attitudes about learning music. Previous studies conducted on youngsters in Western countries provide a fuller picture of how the theories aid us in understanding the motivational factors at the action.

Malaysian children do not have to take music as a compulsory course in school. In the 1970s, the growing middle class in Malaysia and the general well-being of the population prompted the inclusion of music as a necessary topic in the school curriculum. Music became an elective course for the Lower Certificate of Education and the Malaysian Certificate of Education, major public examinations that all Malaysian students must take during their schooling. Many educators and parents spoke against the old school curriculum, which was then condemned as overly rigid in the early 1970s. The New Primary Schools Curriculum was tested in several Malaysian schools and introduced across the country after some positive changes in the system and various suggestions from the Cabinet Committee on Education. After all the modifications, the new elementary school curriculum featured music as an introductory course. The inclusion of music as a regular course in the New Primary School Curriculum may be considered a significant advancement in Malaysian music education because every school-aged Malaysian child, regardless of socioeconomic status, now has the chance to learn music as a matter of right rather than of privilege (Johami, 1990).

2.2 Perspective on the State of Music in Secondary Schools

Abril & Gault (2008) stated that music could be a healthy course for students because it enhances their intelligence and psychological growth. Based on school socioeconomic level profiles, there were considerable disparities in the diversity of course offerings. Every learner must learn by their abilities and talents.

Music courses can help students with their mental health and social development. It is critical if music is made compulsory courses in school and that students be able to learn music properly. Ghaziah & McPherson (2009) polled Malaysian youngsters to understand the differences in their motivation to study music in school and to learn a musical instrument as a daily habit or hobby. Following the theory's process, questions were asked regarding how meaningful, valuable, intriguing, joyful, and challenging music is to them. The findings reveal only minor differences between the five ethnic groups studied, including Malay Muslims, Chinese Buddhists, Chinese Christians, Indian Hindus, and Indian Christians, and the children's past musical experiences and gender. On average, Chinese Christian and Indian Christian students are more motivated to study music than the other ethnicities, and girls are more motivated than boys.

2.3 *Kompang* among Malaysian Students

Every person around the world has their own favourite instrumental following their surroundings, culture or nowadays trend. There is no exception with the Malaysian students. In addition, Lee (2004) investigated the elements that influence a student's choice of their favourite instrumental group. The findings also demonstrated that the teacher's factor has a substantial impact on students' preference for *gamelan*, *kompang*, and *caklempong* ensembles as the most desired instrumental ensembles. The *Kompang Formasi* ensemble seems less interactive to most students nowadays. According to Ramio (2009), non-music students' desire to learn music is influenced by several things, such as teachers, parents, and classmates. In conclusion, most non- music pupils are more enthusiastic about learning and playing musical instrument. Such concerns must be treated carefully so that the *Kompang Formasi* is not lost to time. The school needs to take efficient steps to ensure that the *Kompang Formasi* ensemble may be passed down to future generations.

3.0 Methodology

The method used for this research is a qualitative method which is a case study. The case study allows for investigating a real issue within a specific setting, utilizing various data sources. This method is very suitable for the research because this research requires researchers to collect data that need to be analyzed. The research will be conducted through a research instrument which is an interview using the Google form platform. The participants in this study are secondary school music teachers who teach music and have experience teaching *kompang* to students around both urban and rural areas of Kota Tinggi, Johor. The participant will be given the interview questions, and the response will be coded using line coding. The study will focus on the secondary school students' interest in the *Kompang Formasi* ensemble. This method will provide an in-depth understanding of the music teachers' views who responded in the interview.

4.0 Findings

After the interview session with all six (6) teachers has been completed, the data is transcribed and analyzed using line-by-line coding. From the assigned codes, the emerging themes from the interview are used for the analysis in the narrative to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions.

Table 1. The Importance of *Kompang Formasi*

Verbatim	Code
<p><i>Kompang Formasi</i> educates students about commitment and discipline in doing things. P1</p> <p>Students can learn to be more disciplined as well as enthusiastic about winning a competition. P4</p> <p>From teacher experience, <i>Kompang Formasi</i> can train students to be more disciplined and active. P2</p>	Discipline
<p>The value found when learning <i>Kompang Formasi</i> is to strengthen the relationship between teachers and students. P1</p> <p>Practising in groups with a face-to-face lesson is best. P2</p> <p><i>Kompang Formasi</i> requires students to learn together in groups so that they can learn from each other and can foster a spirit of cooperation between them. P6</p> <p>Students can work in groups and learn traditional Malaysian music. P2</p>	Co-operation
<p>It helps them build their ethnic identity and Malaysian identity. P3</p> <p>The teacher was satisfied when allowed to teach this <i>Kompang Formasi</i>. P4</p> <p>The teacher was also proud to have it as their identity and culture. For the students, knowing a traditional instrument and learning music is excellent. P5</p> <p>Students are familiar with traditional Malay musical instruments. P6</p>	Loving Own Culture

Potentially become the people who will revive <i>Kompang Formasi</i> among the Malaysians, specifically the Malays. P3	
Students will better understand the value of traditional music and understand the authenticity of the musical instrument. P1	

Table 2. Challenges towards Teaching and Learning *Kompang Formasi*

Verbatim	Code
Teachers need to focus on attracting students, so they do not lose interest in learning <i>Kompang Formasi</i> . P1	Lost Interest
Teachers need to give complete guidance regularly; otherwise, students will be less interested. P2	
Not many students are interested. All students joining <i>Kompang Formasi</i> are male, and in a small number because they prefer to join sports or other activities. P3	
Indeed, some students begin to lose interest in learning, but the probability of finding that interest is there. P4	
Students show less interest in this musical instrument. This is due to the lack of facilities in schools and training venues for rehearsals. P6	
<i>Kompang also needs good care as well as proper storage. P1</i>	Lack of Facilities
<i>Difficult to get allocation for kompang instruments. P2</i>	
<i>There is not enough support and resources to teach. We do not have our special space to teach and practice Kompang Formasi and usually use the dewan instead. Sometimes when bigger events are conducted there, we cannot practice at all. P3</i>	
<i>Students show less interest in this musical instrument. This is due to the lack of facilities in schools and training venues for rehearsals. P6</i>	
It is not easy to teach <i>kompang</i> online or using PowerPoint slides. Experience is the best teacher for the students, in my opinion. P5	Online Learning

Table 3. Knowledge about *Kompang Formasi*

Verbatim	Code
<i>Kompang Formasi</i> is an activity that requires students to play kompang in groups and play with organized body movements like a band. P1	Movements
<i>Kompang Formasi</i> is a ensemble that play kompang in a certain movement. P2	
<i>Kompang Formasi</i> is a kompang performance which includes unique choreographic movements. P3	
<i>Kompang Formasi</i> requires students to play kompang while applying beautiful and structured movements. P4	
<i>Kompang itself is the traditional music instrument in Malaysia, often played during special occasions P5.</i>	Traditional Instrument
The <i>kompang</i> musical instrument itself is a musical instrument that is played in groups and has many types of beats. P6	Group Performance
The <i>Kompang Formasi</i> is one way to play the <i>kompang</i> in groups. The difference is the way it plays with a particular choreography. P4	

5.0 Discussion

Based on the findings, the researcher found that the advantages of interest in *Kompang Formasi* are the discipline among students, cooperation, and knowing one's own culture. Asral, Nursyirwan, and Minawati (2017) explain that the art of *kompang* influences the aesthetics of Islam and the Malay world. *Kompang* is always in Malay cultural activities. Therefore, students need to learn the *Kompang Formasi* to inherit the culture and customs of the Malay community by preserving the knowledge about this traditional music instrument. According to Md Jais (2020), this activity can nurture students to be creative, innovative, and disciplined. *Kompang Formasi* has been proven to increase the level of discipline in students, and it happens because this formation requires students to give total commitment and high focus so that the activities can be carried out perfectly.

The challenges of teaching and learning *Kompang Formasi* are students losing interest, lack of facilities and online learning. Therefore, teachers or instructors need to find solutions to solve today's problems and challenges. Lee (2004) shows that many students are interested in the gamelan ensemble, followed by the keyboard, kompang, caklempong, and recorder ensemble. According to Ghaziah (2005), teachers worldwide have always been interested and concerned about how to motivate their students in class. Music teachers have a challenging job of ensuring student interest in learning music is maintained to acquire a more quality learning environment. Here, the students are less interested in this *kompang* ensemble, let alone the *Kompang Formasi*. Therefore, it is crucial to find a solution to this

problem. Among the solutions is that teachers need to attract students' interest by showing the true meaning of the *Kompang Formasi* itself, which is the fun that will be obtained when playing together in groups. Siti (2016) explained that it does not only serve as entertainment but is also a source of income. Some challenges must be faced nowadays that make the learning process difficult. At present, learning is made online due to the covid-19 pandemic that hit the world. It has a significant impact on the *Kompang Formasi* because most of the teachers and instructors teach *Kompang Formasi* by face-to-face learning. After all, it is easier and more efficient.

6.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion, secondary school students are less interested in learning *Kompang Formasi*, as evidenced by this study. According to the findings, teachers must work hard to entice students to master *Kompang Formasi*. When effectively grabbing students' attention, the teacher must guarantee that students' interest in the *Kompang Formasi* does not wane. In addition, students are less interested in formation due to the lack of facilities in the school and the lack of experienced teachers to teach this ensemble. Data show that the lack of facilities is a significant factor that makes *Kompang Formasi* challenging to organize in schools.

Kompang Formasi is something that needs to be highlighted by schools in Malaysia. Based on research, many have proven that playing *kompang* can foster the value of discipline, cooperation, and a sense of love for Malaysian culture. At the same time, the challenges and obstacles that exist today can be reduced and make *Kompang Formasi* a co-curricular activity that must be held in schools in Malaysia. Culture and customs must be taken care of so they do not disappear with time. Although playing *kompang* is not a must, it is a culturally competent way of equipping oneself with religious values, morals, customs, beauty, and gracefulness. It is hoped that this study may render the grace of *kompang* to locals and become an effective tool to assist music education in school. Md Jais (2020). The researcher hopes that *Kompang Formasi* can be highlighted so that it can be a platform for students to learn something and be active in co-curricular activities.

The researcher thinks that by doing this study, students and teachers would be more aware of the necessity of this *Kompang Formasi*. As a result, students' interest in *Kompang Formasi* must be fostered for this collection of many benefits to be passed down to future generations, as well as for culture to be preserved so that they do not go away with time.

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