

DEVELOP HUMAN CAPITAL THROUGH MUSIC EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Music and art are two distinctive subjects which contribute towards the development of human interest in creating and upgrading human capital development. For us Malaysian, this subject is often considered as an optional. Vision 2020 sees towards the development of human capabilities among Malaysian and music education is seen one of the way to prove to the public that music has the mean to strengthen and develop human creativity and cognitive. The increase of crimes committed in our society and individualistic altitude of our people today, show that something must be done to change the mentality of the people so as to be more loving and caring towards man, nature and of course the universe. From the research done it has been proved that music education is able to develop the potentiality of the student and is equally important as other core subjects. To all music educators it is time to change public's perception that music is important towards the development of human capital, integrity and good value. This paper will discuss the retrospectives of music educators, administrators, and community in this present world setting.

Keywords: distinctive, human capital, vision 2020, integrity, good value

INTRODUCTION

Quiet often parents are not very happy when their children get involved with musical activities in school as they are afraid this will affect their children overall performance in the other important subjects such like Malaya language, English, Math and Science. In Malaysia the teacher of music in Primary or secondary schools do quiet often face with the problem and such teacher should be able to explain to the parents the important of music in children's development so as to make it more appreciative and acceptable to them. Many researches done by educators from the west show music is related to develop student's potential and also increase their performance in core subjects than students who don't take music as a subject. Konrad (2000) found higher achievement grades in history, and also significant increased in positive social behavior, including helping and sharing, increases in empathy for others, and beneficial attitudes including reduce prejudice and racism.

Malaysian Music Curriculum for primary school has been implemented since 1983 and for secondary school in 1988. Many issues cropped up when this subject was first introduced to the primary school. Discussions on these issues are still on and hopeful teaching a music is still in primary school curriculum among many other subject that have been introduced. In Secondary school music subject should be a continuation primary school including Malaysians traditional music which has been considered as our own heritage. A sample from one school which implemented music education showed that students who take music as a elective subject had shown good performance in the national exam conducted by Malaysian Ministry of Education in year 2004. In this paper I will discuss about the importance of music to develop student's potential and bring our society to be more critical and understands its importance in development of human capital.

Balkwill, L.L and Thompso, W.F. (1999) found music is highly powerful in communicating emotion and setting moods. They found the listeners were highly sensitive to emotional message, despite the fact that they are completely unfamiliar with the type of music. The findings suggest that music's power to communicate specific emotion is not merely cultural but reflect more basic human processes. **Bygrave, P.L. (1995-1996) found** music will improve children in learning new words. The findings suggest that music may be an effective learning medium for aspects of language development especially for student with reading problems.

Isreal Eady, Janell D. Wilson (2004) found music students able to develop self esteem, creativity and also show good result in other subject.

The scenario of Malaysian Music Education Primary and Secondary.

Malaysia's music curriculum in primary school is known as New Curriculum for Primary School and has been implemented since 1983 and in secondary school as Curriculum for Secondary School has been implemented since 1988. There is a reason to making music as a subject and for Malaysian this is the foundation to develop the philosophy of National Education in developing human intellectual, emotion, and physical.

The content of the music curriculums in primary school include the aspect of esthetic perception, musical experience, creative expression, and appreciation artistic. Secondary music curriculums content added with traditional music, playing instruments and wide experience for student to develop their skill in music. These are divided into two, lower levels for form one to three and upper level are form four and five.

In Primary school music is in the school time table and there are not many problems to face because music subject is available for student to learn from standard one until standard six. Where as, learning music in secondary school is elective and students have to make a choice. When the students finished their national examination in Penilaian Menengah Rendah, they will face with common problem of registry music as a subject for their examination because the package in Malaysian open examination does not include music. There are other problems faced by music subject such as:

Administration – lack of supervision of the implementation and management of music

in the schools, music classes held outside of school hours, time allocated for music classes being used for other subjects, lack of support for music, needed acknowledgement recognition for music teachers who often have to work above and beyond the call of duty, allocated funds for music spent elsewhere, in effective selection of students into the music program in secondary schools, problematic practices in placing Music teachers in schools, administrators who neither understand not know the nature Of music, and teachers who have been trained to teach music are assigned to teach other subjects and not music.

Society's perception of music – music is not considered to be important because it is not an examination subject, less convinced with music's goodness, music learning does not require music education, parents do not encourage their children to attend music classes or rehearsals, does not understand music, considers music to be only for entertainment purposes, and lack of supervision of music teachers' teaching.

Music teachers – questionable criteria for selecting music teacher candidates, unskilled and inexperienced music teachers, who are neither committed nor skilled in teaching music, need to include more subjects to improve their musical skills, and need to showcase their abilities

School music curriculum – should not exist to just produce musicians or focus on the playing of an instrument, should include Malaysian music, poor foundation in the primary schools for the secondary school music curriculum, and problems with the SPM music format and lack of resources.

But this is the common issues that has been discuss all over the country. What about the benefits in music education.

The benefits of music education

There are lots of benefits thru learning music which enable a person to achieve success in his or her life time.

Four categories benefits such as: a) Success in society, b) Success in school, c) Success in developing intelligence, and d) Success in life

Success in Society

Perhaps the basic reason that every child must have an education in music is that music is a fabric of our society. U.S. Department of Education (1997) list the arts including music subject contribute significantly to children's intellect development.

Grant Venerable (1989) the very best engineers and technical designer in the Silicon Valley industry are nearly wide exception, practicing musicians. Secondary student who participated in band or orchestra reported the lower set lifetime and all substances (alcohol, tobacco, and drug). Texas Commission on Drug and Alcohol act January 1998. Michael Greene(2000) music is a magical gift we must nourish and cultivate in our children, especially now as science proves that and education in the arts make better math and science students, enhance spatial in newborns and lets not forget that the art are a compelling solution to teen violence, drug and other.

When students became one of the community they will apply what they have been learned in school period. In this critical time they have to survived in their own life otherwise they will troubled the community. Music education as we know developed student to emulate good value, and positive character to succeed in community and hence benefit the nation.

Success in School

Success in society of course is predicated on success in school. Skills learned through the discipline of music, communication skills, and cognitive skills useful in every part of music curriculum. Through participation helps student learn to work effectively in school environment without resorting to violent behavior. Graziano, Amy, Matthew Peterson, Shaw (1999), a study of 237 second grade children used piano keyboard training and newly designed mathematics demonstrate improvement in math skills. The group scored 27 % higher proportional math test than children that used only math software. Catterall, JamesS, Richard Chapleau, and John Iwan(1999) in an analysis on more than 25000 secondary school (NELS:88, National Education Longitudinal Survey) found that students who reach high levels of involvement in instrumental music over the middle and high school years show high level mathematics proficiency. Student with experience in music performance and music appreciation scored higher points in verbal and math than did the students with no arts participation. Phi Delta Kappan(1994), Physician and biologist Lewis Thomas studied and 66% of music student who applied to medical school gain admission.

This means music student are always brilliant and I hope school managements of will give greater attention to music student in future and to make sure that the selected student must be bright intelligent and with right aptitude to be place in music class.

Success in Developing Intelligence

Success in school and in society depends on array of abilities. This burgeoning range of data long established base of anecdotal knowledge to the effect that music education makes kid smart new and especially compelling, however is a combination of tightly controlled behavioral studies groundbreaking neurological research that show how music actively contribute to brain.

Shaw, Rauscher, Levine, Wright, Dennis (1997) in their research exploring the link between music and intelligence reported that music trainers superior to computer instruction and enhancing children in learning math and science. Gadner, Fox Jeffrey and Knowles(1996) students in two school showed improvement in reading and math skill after given an enriched with music program opposite the student the control group. Weinberger, Norm (2000) pianist and non –musicians of the same age are required to perform complex sequence of finger movements. Their brains were scanned by “ f MRI” (functional magnetic resource imaging) which detects the activity levels of brain non–musician were able to make the movement as correctly as the pianists but less active at making skill movement. These findings show that musical training can enhance brain. Costa-Giomi E (1999) found that pattern recognition and mental representation scores significantly for students given piano instruction over three year period.

From all these research we can't deny the fact that music could develop the student's cognitive and for those who are still doubtful with this subject, this is the time to stand up and give full support .

Success in Life

Each of us wants our children to achieve success in employment and success in social structure. Participation in music during the formative school years bring benefits to student may be in their spiritual, physical or psychological development. Frederick Tims (1999) music makes the elderly healthier. From the finding results music develop hormones in the immune system and decrease stress. Another individual that love music in his schooling is former President of United States, Bill Clinton who said music is about communication, creativity, and cooperation and by studying music in school the opportunity to build on these skills, enrich their lives, and experience the world from perspective. The United States top business executives agree that music and art education can help American education and prepare workers for the 21's century. Studying music and art elevates children's education, expands student and teaches to appreciate the wonder of life.

For us as music educators we have to defend our subject than denying its importance. Ramona (2005) in her paper mentioned that there is still space for music subject to survive in Malaysia school Curriculums. Several suggestions have been made to regarding this subject and as music educators we should support it.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestion to Policy Makers

There are several suggestions and add value to policy maker, with this suggestion they (music educators) hope a bright cloud will appear.

1. The role of the Malaysian Association for Music Education (MAME) organizing more frequent conferences, creating active chapters of MAME in each state, appointment of an influential patron, inclusion of professional musicians as members, religious scholars and academician members, creating a bill of rights for music education in Malaysia, cooperation with the mass media, student teacher exchange, ensuring information gets passed on to all music educators, and

creating a networking community. As we all know Malaysia have been organized World Music Education Conference in July 2006 and motivate our music educators.

2. Administration should have a blueprint for music education, consistent and periodical monitoring and supervision of music in schools, coordination between the various divisions and institutions involved in music education such as the Curriculum Development Center, Education Administration, teacher training colleges, institutions of higher learning which offer music education programs, the need to have a designated music officer of sufficient authority and rank at the Ministry of Education, to uplift traditional music by sending would-be music lecturers to study in Eastern Asian countries, introductory and music appreciation courses for administrators to enable them to understand and better administer music, reducing bureaucracy, implementation of a policy for music teachers to teach only music, the placement of teachers to be conducted by the state music supervisors and not the School Division, a mini orchestra in each school, making formal music education available to artistes, Ministry of Education's uplifting of music's status, explaining the career opportunities in music, providing parents with knowledge of music in order to gain their support, and no more floating classes.
3. Curriculum implementing music as an examinable and core subject in schools, music across the curriculum, inclusion of Islamic arts and music civilization elements, music included in the vocational stream, expansion of the scope in music learning and teaching, systematic implementation of the music curriculum, balanced curriculum in terms of Western and Eastern elements, industry and corporate input, less examination oriented, curriculum scope needs to be reduced and more focused, curriculum review to meet current needs and developments, multimedia usage in all schools, implementation of music in all secondary schools, providing opportunities for students to achieve their musical potential, and music in schools to be taught in English if the teacher think it's necessary.
4. Music teachers enforcing more stringent entry requirements into music education programs at institutions of higher learning, appointing an expert music teacher in each state, producing music teachers with areas of specializations, introduction of a professional body for music teaching/profession, professionalism courses for music teachers, increasing intake into music teacher training programs, emphasis on methodology in music teacher training programs, comprehensive usage of technology, all music teachers to have higher degrees, and creating incentives/special allowances and a special award for music educators.
5. Resources and facilities make available more music texts, teaching materials, and local arrangements, documentation of music materials and composition, creating a fund for music, scholarships to music students, monitored distribution of monies, lower fees for private music instruction, abolishing taxes on music instruments purchased for educational purposes, cheaper music books as well as offering subsidies to publishers of music books, and obtaining copyright ownership of overseas publications.
6. Mass Media a music education slot on television radio, and mass media's role in promoting folk/Malaysian traditional music. These suggestions need tremendous effort to implement and there is a reason for all music educators be involved and do continuously fight for its glory if these suggestion are to reach the policy maker's door.

Suggestion for Music Educators

As educator we should have a strong spirit and act independent to make our subject relevant in Malaysia prime curriculum. What ever problem arise we should face and never give up. With determination and support we may be able to form our music educator community; educators involved in this subject should put their hand together to become one voice. Thus in globalization, has consistently been referred to the cross border internationalization towards producing, marketing and

exchanging of goods and service in the context of world wide economic system. Economic are dominated and the role of the information and communication technologies, developing human capital not such easy than before. Like a tidal wave this impact for human activity not only knowledge, disciplines, human behavior, culture and civilization but all spheres of human endeavor. Music education also has to parallel with this situation otherwise will be left behind while competitive subject will be introduced in Malaysian school curriculum. Hence attitude and mind of music educators should be changed, towards positive thinking; self esteem and get ready to take a challenge in millennium years. Furthermore, when music teachers are posted to the rural area with poor infrastructures and facilities, they still have to teach music to the rural student's. The teachers might use their creativity to develop music in the school, using local materials, such as their cultural music or whatever music that can be used as teaching and learning process. There are many of challenges which the teachers or educators have to face. Use the 'tool' from knowledge, experience, creativity, motivation and all the capability of the teacher to overcome the situation at the place working.

Community Perception and their suggestion

Image and reality have powerful implications for music education. Image and reality have a reciprocal relationship, each influencing the other in a somewhat circular way. The image is interpreted by the public about music education. Ramona (2005) in her presenting research paper among the music educators' perception and the most responses were recorded on the three areas of the status of music education the need for awareness of the importance of music education, and music teacher issues. In the first area, the comments most often made was that music is perceived by Malaysian society in general to be an unimportant, "second class", and a non-academic subject. In the second area, delegates stated that there was a lack of awareness on the value of music and in the third, that there is a shortage of able, experienced, and suitable music teachers in Malaysian schools.

It is important that the public receives the image that is intended. Suggestion for this issue is that music educators must developing skill in public relation and effective image to attract public attention. The image must be designed to accentuate the positive value and conceal significant negative. Music educators must reflect reality and the reality to be worthy of the public support. This means that we have to control both of the reality and of the image making process.

Although there are no reliable data what current images of music education are, we live in a time in which image reigns supreme. The public may begin to believe the image makers, in the best instance, music education will survived and the image projected will accurately reflect those capabilities.

CONCLUSION

Music Education is facing many critical issues and is still strong to compete with other subjects in Malaysia Curriculum. The music curriculum is the frame and guide line to teach music, but the most important reason is how music educators play their role to make music subject a reliable subject to be taught in every school in Malaysia. The challenge for educators are to make up their mind towards the reality when they are teaching in urban or rural school. Music educators must be responsible to teach music as a subject in school. If a qualified music educators refuses to teach when places in respective school, this subject will face difficulty to survive in Malaysia Curriculum. To the music educators who are struggling and fighting for the implementation of music in Malaysia curriculum, we should salute them for their hard works and undaunted spirit to develop subject through teaching and instructing where ever they may be in our country.

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