

The impact of the UK curriculum on the musicality of Indonesian students

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to discuss the implementation and impact of the national music curriculum of the United Kingdom (UK), a curriculum that has been designed specifically to stimulate the development of students' musicality in the elementary school of Luqman Al Hakim, Kota Gede, Yogyakarta Territorial Special Regency, Indonesia. The national curriculum emphasises cross-curricular themes, skills and intra-personal learning. In this study, we discuss how the implementation of the UK curriculum in music subjects improves students' musical abilities, particularly the ability of students to apply melody, harmony and rhythm to a song. Through the approach and experimental method, data were obtained by a post-test only control group design. The results showed that through the application of the UK curriculum, students' musicality improved in the areas of applying the right melody, rhythm and harmony to a song.

1 INTRODUCTION

In the outline of the Indonesian elementary school music curriculum, knowledge of traditional music, archipelago music and foreign music is indicated as necessary materials for inclusion in study. The 2013 curriculum has been carried forward into the 2018/19 school-year learning activities, outlining several themes that are to be converted into learning activities that involve all subject areas, including music, dance and theatre arts.

Sekolah Dasar Islam Terpadu International Luqman Al Hakim (SDIT LHI) was founded in 2008 as an extension of the Luqman Al Hakim International Islamic Elementary School. Beauchamp (2010) revealed that before the national curriculum was implemented in England there were no regulations that stipulated music learning requirements for elementary school students. The learning model in SDIT LHI is developed so that all teachers teach their own classes except for a few subjects. According to Biasutti et al. (2015), studying with specialist teachers like this is ideal learning.

SDIT LHI believes that every child has different potential. This school aspires to develop the potential of every child. As stated by Hirzi (2007), the teaching of music is not just the distribution of hobbies and interests of children, it is also an effort to shape the personality of the child. As a medium to realise this, the school adopted curricula from the United Kingdom (UK) (referred to here as the national curriculum) and Project Holistic Integral (PHI), as well as the curriculum from the Indonesian government. These three curricula are combined into one unit of the LHI curriculum.

A connection can be found in the principles of learning and actualising the 2013 Indonesia curriculum, the UK national curriculum and the PHI curriculum. The concept of carrying a theme, for example, means that students are invited to learn to explore a theme that appears in all subjects. Students are thus able to feel the connection of one subject to another. Such a broad learning design allows students to explore a subject in depth. The love of learning is instilled, and learning is not just about obtaining as much information as possible. These three curricula also hone the character of children, developing their curiosity, observation skills, analytical skills and collaboration skills.

Some obstacles were encountered when trying to implement the UK music curriculum. Students in the UK are grouped according to student attainment, while in Indonesia students are grouped according to year of entry. It is certainly easier to teach students with relatively equal abilities rather than a class of students with varying abilities. The next obstacle was the relatively little availability of music materials from the Indonesian government, particularly for one module that required material on music, art, dance and theatre. There was an imbalance when exploring the basic musical capabilities of students in accordance with the national curriculum compared with "local wisdom" teaching. Also, differences in the basic culture of making some material and song references must be adjusted.

The UK curriculum guide lists the target skills students need to achieve at each level: ability and sensitivity in responding rhythmically, melodically and harmoniously, as well as beginning to hone skills to improvise. However, there are difficulties in adjusting to the teaching materials of the UK curriculum. In Western countries, children are used to listening to classical music early on, such as the compositions of Mozart, Beethoven and others, and many children's songs are rooted in classical music, but in Indonesia this is not the case. This provides a challenge when applying materials from the national curriculum because reference songs from this curriculum sound familiar to children. However, some children's songs in Indonesia are structurally dissimilar to reference songs from the UK curriculum.

Schools always try to improve the music curriculum. Some of the steps taken are to adopt several reference songs from abroad and teach them in the classroom or producing teacher's songs to be recorded and documented. One of them is the song 'Hemat Energi', which is the theme song in the learning theme 'Sumber Energi'. Improvements are carried out continually, and more in-depth research is required to realise more ideal learning according to the objectives of SDIT LHI.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the effectiveness of the implementation of the UK curriculum in improving the musicality of students at SDIT LHI. This is so that it can become a reference in the preparation of the music learning curriculum in Indonesia in the future.

2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

2.1 *Implementation*

In this study, the UK national curriculum for key stages 1 and 2 was implemented, and its effect on the musicality of the music students of SDIT LHI was measured. Adjustments were made to the curriculum to accommodate the cultural differences between Indonesian children and children from the UK. More local Indonesian songs were included to adhere to one of the aims of art music learning to promote national cultural identity. Thus, local Indonesian songs such as archipelago, regional and national songs were included. Other than that, the framework and targets of the UK curriculum were maintained.

2.2 *Curriculum*

There are two definitions of curriculum. The first is a number of content plans containing a number of learning stages designed for students, with instructions from educational institutions whose contents are static and which must contain dynamic processes and competencies. The second encompasses all experiences under the guidance and direction of educational institutions that provide learning conditions (Ruhimat, 2011).

Important aspects of the music curriculum are the ways in which it contributes to children's personal, social, mental and physical development. Mind and body are coordinated in the act of singing, playing instruments, collaborating and reading all the signs in the notation (O'Callaghan, 2003). In each curriculum issued every certain period, generally the main points emphasised are the activities of students (Ridwan, 2017).

An activity or a project will run well and have clearer direction if it has been designed beforehand. The programme will run more effectively and efficiently. The time needed is shorter and costs are less, but the results are maximal.

Ahid (2006) revealed three concepts about the theory and practice of applying a curriculum:

- 1) The concept of curriculum as substance: A curriculum is seen as a plan of learning activities for students at school, or as a set of goals to be achieved. It can also refer to a document that contains the formulation, objectives, teaching materials, teaching and learning activities, and evaluation.
- 2) The concept of curriculum as a system: A curriculum is part of the school system, education system and even the community system. A curriculum system includes a personnel structure and work procedures on how to compile, implement, evaluate and accomplish a curriculum.
- 3) The concept of curriculum as a field of study: Here, field of study refers to that of curricula experts and education and teaching experts. The aim of this concept is to develop knowledge about curriculum and curriculum systems.

On the basis of these definitions, it can be concluded that broadly speaking the curriculum is a learning design, which includes the structure of subjects that form the substance and education system.

2.3 *Learning*

According to Ruhimat (2011), learning is an intentional activity carried out by individuals so that there is a change in ability by learning among children who were previously unable to do something, or children who were not skilled at something. Ruhimat (2011) also states that learning is an effort made by a teacher or educator to teach students who are learning. In formal education (school), learning is a task that is borne by the teacher, because it is prepared by professional staff. Learning in schools is increasingly developing from traditional teaching methods to modern learning systems. In'am (2011) suggests there are eight measures of the effectiveness of learning among students:

- 1) Listen and pay attention to the teacher's explanation.
- 2) Find strategies to understand problems.
- 3) Find strategies to solve problems.
- 4) Convey questions and ideas or ask for explanations from friends or teachers.
- 5) Respond to the teacher or provide assistance to friends.
- 6) Improve work results or write something new from the results of the discussion.
- 7) Summarise how to understand problems or how to solve problems.
- 8) Engage in activities outside the learning process (i.e. activities not related to learning, such as playing, disturbing friends, etc.).

Learning is a process of interaction between various components of the teaching system. These components are students, teaching materials, media, tools, procedures and learning processes.

2.4 *National curriculum (UK)*

Hawley (2018) revealed that the UK national curriculum was introduced by the Thatcher government after the issuance of the 1988 Education Reform Act. A comprehensive record of its initial history can be found in the 2009 Committee, School and Family Reports, National Curriculum.

In 1987, the UK Ministry of Education and Science, led by Kenneth Baker MP, issued a consultation document that established the rationale for the national curriculum. It identified four broad principles and basic intentions: establishing rights on the basis of a broad and balanced curriculum, increasing school accountability, increasing curricular coherence and

aiding 'public understanding' of a school. Furthermore, in 1989 the national curriculum was introduced in elementary schools, with implementation continuing into the mid-1990s. Meanwhile, in 1993, Sir Ron Dearing reviewed the national curriculum response to teachers' observations that the curriculum was "too hard". A revised national curriculum was introduced in 1995, with less prescribed content and new changes to test settings.

In 1996, two pilot support projects in counting and literacy were introduced. This was brought forward as the 'National Literacy and National Calculation Strategy' by the forthcoming Labour government. Moreover, in 1999, a major review of the curriculum supervised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority resulted in further slimming of the determined content and introduction to the statement of purpose.

Review of the secondary curriculum occurred in 2005, again with the aim of reducing the content specified and generating more emphasis on cross-curricular themes, personalised skills and learning. Finally, in 2007, a review of "roots and branches" of the main national curriculum was announced by the government, which was then carried out from 2008 by Sir Jim Rose, and findings were published in April 2009.

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at SDIT LHI, Yogyakarta. The subjects of this study were all students of Grade IV odd semester 2018/19, with a total of 51 students distributed across two classes. The approach in this study uses the post-test only control group design experiment. Class IVa received learning treatment with the UK curriculum, while Class IVb was a control group with conventional learning methods. This study aims to look at the influence of art music learning on student musicality when the local/original curriculum is combined with the UK curriculum. Data were obtained from the post-test assessment carried out at the end of the learning period.

The section of the national curriculum used was Unit 9 of the 1999 UK curriculum music learning guide, themed "Animal Magic", for third- or fourth-year students. In this unit, students and teachers continue to develop the abilities honed in the previous unit, including singing, listening and responding to music; learning to recognise rhythm patterns by moving, stepping or jumping; and experience combining sounds (tones). In this unit, children can use words and phrases related to duration, tempo and notation.

The learning aims for this unit are for students to understand how musical elements can be used together and recognise some descriptive elements such as lyrics based on animal sounds. The song chosen in this study was 'Burung kakaktua'. This song has a relatively simple melody according to the level of students' abilities. Structurally and thematically, it also represents the design of the government curriculum and the UK curriculum.

In the control group, the material was taught conventionally using the lecture method and the imitation method. In the experimental group, the approach used was to implement the guidelines of the UK national curriculum. This included feeling the rhythm pattern with steps or jumping, expressing the lyrics with hand movements and responding spontaneously to the chosen tone (improvisation).

The results of the pretest were obtained after students received learning materials using conventional methods. After learning took place on three occasions, students were given a test with the review component, testing their melodic abilities, rhythmic abilities and harmonious abilities. The performance test (practice) involved singing the song 'Burung kakaktua' in groups. The practice test instruments have indicators that state students' musical ability. These indicators are the accuracy of melody, rhythm and harmonisation between sound part 1 and sound part 2.

Data were analysed from the results of the post-test score using two average similarity tests. First, the pre-condition test was carried out, that is, the normality test and homogeneity test. Table 1 shows the results of the normality test.

The results of the normality of the musical data test students in Table 1 showed that the post-test data were not normal, whereas in the control group the results were normal. It can

Table 1. Results of the normality of post-test data.

	X _{2test}	X _{2table}
Experiment (IVa)	8.13	7.81
Control (IVb)	5.78	7.81

be concluded that the data were obtained from populations that are not normally distributed, so testing the homogeneity of variants (negligible) is not required. The next step is testing the hypothesis. For data originating from populations that are abnormally distributed, non-parametric tests, such as the U-test or Mann-Whitney test, were used.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There were 25 students in the experimental group and 26 in the control group. Testing with different *t*-tests was conducted to see whether there were differences in the results of the singing practice test between the control group and the experimental group. The singing practice test score of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group. Thus, it can be concluded that the UK curriculum can improve the musical abilities of students of SDIT LHI.

The results of the *t*-test using SPSS statistical software showed a value of 1.876. For the real limit of 5% and *df* = 28, the critical point in the *t*-distribution is obtained at 1.657. Because the data point *t* is greater than the critical point, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis (*H*₀) is rejected and the musicality test score of the experimental group is higher than that of the control group.

In the experimental group, given learning treatment using the UK method and curriculum, it was found that 22 students received good physical scores. This was proven by the fact that they could sing the song 'Burung kakaktua' with the right melody and rhythm and could divide the group into two voices according to the teacher's direction. This shows that the UK curriculum is able to improve students' musical abilities. To establish the correlation of musicality and scores obtained by students, it is necessary to do an *eta* correlation test. This is because the data on musicality are nominal. Testing is done with musical encoding: good musical number 2, less good musical number 1, and medium musical number 0.

The *eta* correlation test produced a score of $\mu+0.7439$ compared with the standard association between two different scale variables. This number is included in the data group with strong or high associations. This means that there is a strong relationship or association between the musicality of the students and the score.

The significance value of the data tested was *F* = 4.0328. If this significance value is compared with the value in the testing using α = 0.05 with *df* for (N-k) of 22, then a value of 3.93 will be obtained. The value in the table is smaller than the calculation value for the data. It can be concluded that *H*₀ is rejected and there is a significant relationship between student musicality and musical practice test scores.

The results of processing the data above show that there is a difference between the musical ability score of the control group and the experimental group. Based on the SPSS calculation of these differences, it was found that *H*₀ was rejected, which means that the musicality score in the experimental group was significantly higher than the musicality score in the control group.

Table 2. Test results for student musicality.

	Musicality			Total
	Medium	Less Good	Good	
Number of students	4	3	18	25

5 CONCLUSION

This study shows that there is positive effect in applying the UK curriculum in music teaching on students' musical ability. The score of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group, but the results were not that significant. This is because musical ability is not an aspect that can be greatly improved in a short period of time, and the treatment must be applied several times for any dramatic results to emerge. This research shows that there is a need for this method to be applied regularly and continuously. Therefore, this research is expected to be a contribution to the study of how to improve the musical abilities of students in learning music.

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