

# ***Piano Learning Of Blind Children In Extracurricular Program At SLB-A Karya Murni Medan***

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## **Abstract**

*The research aims to know about learning piano of blind children in the extracurricular program at Karya Murni Medan. This research located in Jalan Karya Wisata, Medan Johor. This research was using collective data technique with a qualitative descriptive method to describe piano learning of blind children in SLB-A Karya Murni Medan. The time of the study was conducted from February 2019 – June 2019. Based on this research, it was found that in the learning piano for blind children was very different and difficult besides the learning piano for normal children, that's why the teacher must be more patient in giving the learning.*

**Keywords:** *Extracurricular, Piano, Blind Children*

## **INTRODUCTION**

To play the piano there is its ease and difficulty and it is different for each individual, it takes seriousness, discipline, and patience to go through the piano learning processes. Learning piano should begin at an early age of about 5 years because at the age of 5 children are very easy to spice up and it's good for children who learn piano to be able to read and write letters and numbers. "There is no exact age that is determined whether a child is ready to learn a musical instrument. It all depends on the development, interests, and talents of the child. It is feared that learning instruments too early will make children break up or stop playing instruments halfway through because they start formal lessons too early at the age of two and three. Generally, children will have difficulty capturing the material given, because the material is too difficult to understand for young children." (Black and White Piano Jelia M Heru (2016: 12).

At present, children grow and develop so rapidly that parents feel the need to provide some basic education

that is still flexible for children who are still relatively early age. When the times have begun to develop, also many parents compete to give the choice of education and tend to free their children to choose according to their wishes. So it is not uncommon for parents to take actions which, according to them, will positively impact their children's growth and development abilities by providing them with additional education such as music lessons, one of which is piano lessons. It is also not uncommon for parents to see perfect results in piano teaching and hope that their child will quickly become proficient in playing the piano. "Learning the piano is like an ice figure-skating, synchronized swimming, and ballerina athlete who combines elements of technique and art of beauty (artistic value)." (Black and White Piano Jelia M Heru (2016: 21).

In the piano learning process, there are of course the interaction activities between the teacher and students, or it is called learning. Learning is a process of interaction of students with educators and learning resources in a learning environment.

Learning is also an aid given by educators to enable the process of acquisition of knowledge and knowledge, mastery of skills and character, and the formation of attitudes and beliefs in students. In the context of education, the teacher teaches that students can learn and master the contents of the lesson to achieve something determined objectives (cognitive aspects), can also affect changes in attitude (affective aspects), and skills (psychomotor aspects) of a student. Quality learning is very dependent on student motivation and teacher creativity. Learners who have high motivation are supported by teachers who can facilitate the motivation will lead to the success of achieving learning targets. Good learning design, supported by adequate facilities, coupled with teacher creativity will make students more easily reach learning targets.

Learning activities can also be carried out through extracurricular learning. Extracurricular activities are carried out outside of study hours. Generally carried out after school hours have finished. Extracurricular has many benefits for students, such as being able to develop student talent and student interest in personal coaching towards positive coaching. Extracurricular activities are generally carried out in schools in the development of students' interests and talents including sports, dances, music, vocals, and so forth. The piano extracurricular at SLB-A Karya Murni Medan is by my observations. I have enthusiasts who are very enthusiastic in learning piano. For the learning method as far as I observed, that is, the teacher gives individual training where the teacher keeps an eye on the room. There were several obstacles that I observed during the initial observation, that this school only had one piano unit so that it had to

alternate with other students during the learning activities carried out. Piano extracurricular students are trained to attend or display their skills at special shows or concerts. From various activities held by the school, one of them is piano extracurricular held at SLB-A Karya Murni Medan school which has the aim to develop students' talents, and to develop students' self-confidence and increase students' insights about piano instruments which later are expected to be able to support students who have potential in that field.

In essence, all humans can learn to play musical instruments, including children who have physical or mental disabilities such as children with special needs (ABK). Children with special needs are the term to replace the word extraordinary child in the sense of having a special difference. Based on this understanding, children who are included in the category of aspects of physical disorders include children who are unable to see, unable to hear and unable to speak. One of the interesting things for me is a child with special needs, that is blind. We should not look down on one eye with ABK because they have a special advantage that is to have a sharp sense of hearing and feeling. "The sensitivity of the ear in listening to music can develop over time, but some people are born with musical ears only by 'feel it'." (Jelia M Heru: Black and White Piano: 98) It's just that their weakness is not able to read music scores included in reading music notation. At this time there has been special learning of music notation for special needs called braille notation. Piano learning for blind people now uses braille notation.

"With practice, blind musicians can sing melodies at sight and participate fully in classes on sight-singing. If the student is proficient in literary braille reading there is no

reason why he or she cannot learn to read braille music. A braille score provides not only the pitches and rhythms to be performed but also all of the dynamics marks, articulations and directions from the composer. "(According to Sharon Nichols 2010: 5 [http://www.tsbvi.edu/hand\\_outs\\_/feb10/MusicBrailleHandout.pdf](http://www.tsbvi.edu/hand_outs_/feb10/MusicBrailleHandout.pdf)).

In general, music teaching teachers have normal physical conditions, but it is different from the piano teacher at SLB-A Karya Murni Medan, where piano teachers also have abnormalities in vision or are called blind. But apart from these shortcomings, learning methods for children with special needs are based on the competencies possessed by each student. And of course, have different learning with normal children in general. Because basically in teaching ABK that must be the main foundation by the instructor that is positive and optimistic values. "Stay positive and optimistic, the condition of students who have limitations should not be achieved and become a reason to give up so easily. Precisely as teachers, we must explore, discover potential, and look for alternative ways of learning that are multi-channel ". (Pianolicus Jelia M Heru (2016: 144).

The learning process of the extracurricular piano at SLB-A Karya Murni I observed that when the teacher was carrying out the learning process of the piano, the teacher first directed both of the students' hands against the teacher while the teacher played the piano. This is done by the teacher until the student understands the melody in the song. This learning process according to my initial observations is good enough for improvisation skills.

From the explanation above, the researcher is interested to know how piano extracurricular learning is guided by blind teachers to students with

special needs (visually impaired) in extracurricular piano activities. And this is an inspiration for writers to research the title **"PIANO LEARNING OF BLIND CHILDREN IN EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAM AT SLB-A KARYA MURNI MEDAN "**.

### **1. Definition Of Learning**

According to Oemar Hamalik (2016: 27) said that: Learning is a modification or reinforces behavior through experience (learning is defined as the modification or strengthening of behavior through experiencing). According to this understanding, learning is a process, an activity and not an outcome or objective. Learning is not just remembering, but it is broader than that, namely experiencing. Learning outcomes are not a mastery of the results of the exercise but a change of behavior.

William Burton in Oemar Hamalik (2016: 29) says that:

"Experiencing means living through the actual situation and reacting vigorously to various aspects of those situations for apparent to the learner. Experiencing includes whatever one does and undergoes which results in changed behavior, changed values, meanings, attitude, or skills."

The description above means that experience is life through the actual situation and by improving various aspects of the situation for the purpose that is clear to students. Experience includes whatever is done and experienced which results in behavior that changes, in values, meanings, attitudes, or skills.

From some of the notions of learning, it can be concluded that learning is a conscious effort of the teacher to make students learn, that is a change in behavior in the students who learn, where the change is to obtain new

abilities that apply in a relatively long time and because of the effort.

## **2. Definition Of Piano**

The piano is the most popular instrument. According to Sandra L Benhard (2007: 53): "Piano can produce complete music, namely melody, and accompaniment". The word piano comes from pianoforte, which comes from Italian. The piano was made by Bartolomeo Cristofori in the 1720s. Broadly speaking, the piano belongs to the instrumental music group. Pianos produce sounds from soundboard vibrations. Pianos are often used as a solo performance in a concert or as a solo accompaniment in solo or group singing. Or it can be interpreted that the piano can stand alone without the help of other instruments because in the game the piano already has rhythm, melody, and chords. And in its development, the piano consists of several, namely Grand Piano, Upright Piano, Digital Piano, and Keyboard.

## **3. Definition Of Extracurricular**

The meaning of alternative learning is just looking for something else that has not been taught in class and extracurricular activities. Alternative learning is aimed at teenagers who want something more through extracurricular activities. In the journal Ahmad Syarif, Wahyu, and Sarbini (2017: 6): "Extracurricular activities are one of the activities aimed at facilitating students in developing their potential according to their interests and talents". Extracurricular activities aim to develop his personality, talents, and abilities in various fields outside the academic field. Extracurricular activities generally take the form of activities in the arts, sports, personality development and activities

that aim positively to help and develop students' talents and potential.

## **4. Definition Of Blind Childern**

The eye is one of the most important senses in our lives. Optimal dysfunction of the eye can inhibit patterns of social interaction and daily activities. For example, we take in educational activities, where most activities depend on the sense of sight. Get to know colors, pay attention to the face of the teacher or friend, read or write and others, are activities that use the sense of sight. We can imagine how difficult it is for people who experience abnormalities in their sense of sight, especially if this disorder can not be helped by tools such as glasses.

According to Cartwright and Cartwright in Frieda Mangunsong (2009: 53) put forward various limitations regarding this blind from various perspectives.

### **1. Personal Limits**

Most people feel sorry because blind people are seen as helpless people, feel afraid to get close to them because it might be contagious, feel uncomfortable to get along well with people who cannot see other people.

### **2. Sociological Limits**

The inability of blind people is a learned social role. Various attitudes and patterns of behavior that are characteristic of people with visual impairment are/are things that are not brought from birth, but rather because they are obtained through a learning process.

### **3. Legal/Administrative Limitation**

The limits used for legal and administrative purposes are used for rehabilitation services, tax exemptions

and social security payments for blind people in 1934 in the United States.

Someone who is visually impaired if after various efforts to improve their visual abilities, their visual acuity does not exceed 20/200 or after various efforts to improve their visual abilities, their vision does not exceed 20 degrees.

#### 4. Limits used for educational purposes

To provide the right instructional program for students who experience disabilities/disabilities in their vision, need to know about what they have. In connection with this it is explained that visual impairment means that there is damage to a vision where, even though improvements have been made, it still affects learning achievement optimally.

Based on the four points of view proposed by Catwright, the researcher limits the angle of the field by using the 4th, the boundary which is for educational purposes.

### 5. Definition Of SLB-A Karya Murni Medan

SLB-A Karya Murni Medan is an institution that engages in social and humanitarian fields with the motto Venerate Vitam (Respect Life) strives to uphold the principle, that life must be respected, regardless of physical origin or physical condition. God's children who are born as blind and deaf people who are in Karya Murni are educated, raised, empowered, and possible to be independent and find their true identity. Not because of mercy alone, but because they are the Image of God that is equal to others. They have the right to realize their identity through empowerment, and in that case, they must participate in the empowerment process. Karya Murni Foundation believes that only by respecting life can the empowerment

process be carried out correctly and be fruitful.

SLB-A Karya Murni Medan and its partners and educators are endlessly thinking and striving how to awaken, grow and develop the potential/talent in children who are blind and deaf. Therefore, they are equipped with various training with the intent and purpose so that they will be able to lead to a decent and independent future in the community.

The training covers the fields of:

1. Music (Piano, Organ, Flute, Guitar, Band, Keyboard)
2. Vocal Performance (Solo, Duet, Vocal Group and Choir)

### 6. Definiton Of Impact

The impact can simply be interpreted as an effect that brings both positive and negative consequences. In every decision taken by a boss usually has its impact, both positive and negative impacts. Impacts can also be a follow-up process of carrying out internal controls. A reliable leader should be able to predict the type of impact that will occur on a decision that will be taken.

From the explanation above, we can divide the impact into two senses, namely:

#### a. Positive impact

The positive impact is the desire to persuade, convince, influence or impress others, with the aim that they follow or support their good desires.

#### b. Negative impact

The negative impact is the desire to persuade, convince, influence or give an impression to others, with the aim that they follow or support their bad desires and cause certain consequences.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In SLB-A Karya Murni Medan has a different grade promotion system than general schools. If a formal school increases in a class by year, in this Extraordinary School students can go up to class in one year twice depending on whether the student concerned can complete or is deemed appropriate to advance. Vice versa, if students are felt unable to follow the learning process in one year, then the student can not move up the class to continue to a higher level. Not only formal education, but the Karya Murni Medan foundation also provides students with a variety of non-formal education to develop the talents and potential that these students have.

There are several classifications of visual impairment, which can be broadly divided into 2, namely: First, the time of disability ie when the child is blind. Since birth, during school, after adulthood or when old age.

Second, the division based on the ability to see, namely as follows:

- a. People with mild visual impairment (low vision), namely those who have abnormalities or lack of vision, such as patients with farsightedness, squint, mild myopia.
- b. Severely blind people (totally blind) that is, those who cannot see at all, or are called "blind" by the public

#### **A. Piano Learning Of Blind Childern In Extracurricular Program At SLB-A Karya Murni Medan**

Learning is a two-way communication process that is done by the teacher as an educator and students as students in the learning process, which is managed in such a way that there will be interactions between students and teachers who teach.

According to Amran that the learning process of a piano in blind children is much different from learning in other normal children. And this learning requires high patience from the instructor and is carried out slowly because of the limited vision by the students and the teacher who is also blind.

The stages in piano learning commonly taught by Amran are as follows:

##### **1. Stages of Piano Learning**

###### **a. Introducing Piano**

Before Mr. Amran, S.Sn explains how to play the piano and how the learning process is, the teacher must first introduce to the blind child the names of parts of the piano instruments in the SLB-A music class in Karya Murni Medan Johor. At this stage, the teacher introduces the division of piano keys, between neutral and chromatic keys by touching students' palms to the piano keys in front of them.

###### **b. How to Hold and Play the Piano**

First of all the teacher explains the position and how to hold the piano correctly, after feeling the students understand and can follow the directions of the piano playing position, the teacher teaches students to recognize neutral scales with the right fingers. After the student can play neutral scales correctly, the teacher teaches students to play the C chord and how to make rhythm on the piano. At this stage, the teacher guides students by placing students' hands-on the teacher's hands while the teacher plays the chords or melodies.

###### **c. Weekly assignments**

So at this stage, the teacher introduces the song to students and gives the assignment to be accounted for every week. In general, students are not directly able to play the song given the assignment by the teacher, therefore the teacher gives the assignment slowly. For example, the first-week students are taught to play the melody first, the second week to play the chord.

In the assignment phase, if students are not familiar with the song given by the teacher, the teacher usually plays the song that becomes the task by placing students' hands-on the teacher's hands while the teacher plays the song because the students who take extracurricular activities are not yet introduced braille notation.

### **B. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Piano Learning Process in SLB-A Murni Karya Medan**

The results of the writer's observation and interviews with the music teacher of SLB-A Karya Murni Medan Johor, namely Mr. Amran, S.Sn (Friday, April 5, 2019), then the obstacles faced during the direct learning process are:

#### **a. Supporting factors:**

1. The availability of adequate instruments in the music class, i.e. there is 1 acoustic piano and 3 keyboards. Of course in the learning process requires the availability of complete instruments for students who study. And in SLB-A Karya Murni Medan has the availability of complete instruments so students do not need to wait their turn to be taught by the teacher while training other students so that in this extracurricular students

who are not in their turn in training do not need to be silent and can practice independently.

2. Teachers who are patient and competent in their fields. Of course in teaching and learning activities require teacher expertise above from the ability of students so that the learning process is more efficient and the teacher can pour all the knowledge he has on students. But competent in the field of learning taught by the teacher does not guarantee that students will understand in every material taught by their teacher. Because many teachers are not able to share their knowledge even though he is an expert in his field because of the impatience of educators in giving lessons to students. But Mr. Amran has all the categories that are needed by the teacher that is competent in his field, patient, and able to be a friend to students, even though he has a deficiency in vision.

3. Comfortable classrooms. The state of the classroom becomes a major influence on the teaching and learning process. Where if a comfortable class will increase the concentration of students in following the lessons taught by the teacher. Music classrooms that are owned by SLB-A Karya Murni Medan are included in a comfortable classroom because the room is large enough to accommodate all musical instruments for extracurricular activities and also musical instruments are quite complete and well functioning.

4. The division of hours of regular music learning, so it does not collide with the learning of other instruments. All the activities and schedules of SLB-A Karya Murni Medan are difficult to organize regularly every week so that it has a positive impact on the activities carried out by this school that will not find any colliding activities.

5. Active principals in monitoring student activities. SLB-A Karya Murni Medan should be proud because it has an active school principal in monitoring every student's activity so that no student plays and wastes any extracurricular activities. Not infrequently the headmaster also provides nutritional enhancements for students as in vocal classes, principals often give students who take this class a cup of ginger tea to support their voice performance in singing.

b. Inhibiting factors:

1. Requires a long time in the process of learning piano, especially for those who are new to piano instruments. Certainly not an easy thing for blind people to learn new things. Because in this study they are more required to use their feelings, without knowing how the shape of the piano is.

2. The limited vision that students have often makes students confused in playing the piano. Playing the piano is not easy, considering that there are so many piano keys and the distances between the keys are very close, so it is not uncommon for students to press keys wrong when playing because they can only use their feelings to play this instrument.

3. For children who live in the orphanage, they are difficult in terms of practice because of the availability of piano instruments in institutions that do not exist. Of course in the process of learning music, to improve student skills, students are required to practice every day so it is not easy to forget the lessons given by the music teacher. However, because SLB-A Karya Murni Medan is dominated by students who live in the orphanage, this is an obstacle for them to practice every day because

there is no piano instrument available at the Panti.

4. Children with visual impairments are easily bored in the learning process so that learning becomes less efficient. Some blind children have a high level of saturation. So that the impact on the concentration of students who began to decline in their study hours.

5. Children with visual impairments find it difficult to know the location and parts of piano instruments. Children with visual impairments are not able to see the real shape of the piano instrument so that they can only imagine in their minds, by using their feelings, so that there are often small mistakes in playing the piano such as one pressing the tone and wrong stepping on the pedal located under the piano.

6. In one class there is 1 piano and 3 keyboards where when the teacher guides students on one piano, the other students practice independently in the back so as to make the concentration of children who are visually impaired easily interrupted by circumstances in a class that is quite noisy, in because students who practice piano enter and practice together in one class at a time while waiting for their turn to be trained.

7. The music teacher at SLB-A Karya Murni, Mr. Amran, also has the same physical deficiencies as his students, who are blind. In the learning process, of course, the teacher must have more knowledge to be poured into students. The music teacher at SLB-A Karya Murni is extremely skilled and has talent in playing instruments and teaching students. However, Mr. Amran as a music teacher at SLB-A Karya Murni also has the same deficiencies as the children he educates, namely the blind. Pak Amran



is a Totally Blind person who cannot see anything. This is where many become a big question mark, how a blind teacher is able to guide students who are also blind.

### **C. Impact of Piano Extracurricular Learning on Blind Children in SLB-A Karya Murni Medan Johor**

The impact is the effect caused by an object that is done both positive and negative. In conducting research, it will also have positive and negative impacts. Positive impacts are good effects while negative impacts are bad/adverse effects. The impact of piano learning that they have carried out so far has had an impact:

#### a. Positive impact:

1. Children with visual impairment feel more enthusiastic in their activities after learning, because the effects of learning music are very pleasing to the child's psyche because they're more susceptible to the environment.

2. Children with visual impairment feel more confident because they have expertise in the field of music especially with the field they are involved in, not infrequently they are also more confident to show their talents to new people they meet.

3. Children with visual impairments have media in channeling their feelings, such as making songs, singing while playing the piano, thus making them active in making their own musicals and exchanging ideas with other friends. For example, child A makes a song, then child A will ask his friends to help him sing.

4. Blind children become enthusiastic because they are often included in musical performances held by their schools and music activities outside of their schools such as art

performances that are often performed at school on Saturdays.

5. Children with visual impairment find it easier to have friends, especially friends in music because they can make groups in music (ensembles).

6. The schedule of each student is organized every day because it is set by the school schedule arranged from Monday to Saturday.

#### b. Negative impact :

1. Children with visual impairments are increasingly focused on developing their talents such as music extracurriculars, thus negatively impacting their academic subjects, where they are more eager to learn music than study subjects.

2. The amount of playtime the child takes. Of course, although the children of SLB-A Karya Murni have their disadvantages, of course, they need time to play with other good friends at the orphanage. This is one of the things that SLB children tell researchers.

3. Increasingly tight their schedules from Monday to Saturday. On another day they actively participated in activities held by the school. So they have a home hour that is always scheduled every day in the afternoon.

4. Children are not focused on the instruments they are involved in. In this extracurricular, every child is taught to several instruments so that children are not able to focus on one instrument that they choose so that it has a negative impact on their expertise in playing one instrument. In general, every human being is unable to have a divided focus especially in the field of music learning. If someone wants to be seen proficient in one instrument, then he must focus on that one instrument.

Because nests are rarely found in music players who are proficient and professional in all their fields.

5. Another negative impact occurs on the incorporation of students who are united in one class, so students sometimes like to tell other friends when the teacher is teaching students who are teachers training. And the lack of assertiveness of teachers who do not want to reprimand noisy students.

There are only 2 children out of a total of 6 children who take piano extracurricular who have piano instruments at home namely Chika and Feliz so that they are superior in playing the piano compared to their other friends who live in the orphanage, because in the orphanage there are no instruments available piano to practice their music every day so it affects the lack of ability to play piano students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research described, the conclusions are stated as follows:

1. Learning piano instruments for blind children at SLB Karya Murni Medan Johor include: introducing parts of piano instruments, correct the position while playing the piano, distinguishing black keys from white, playing C chords and neutral scales, then playing songs in sequence through melody, chord, and rhythm
2. Supporting factors during the learning process are the availability of tools that support the learning process, the patience of the teacher in teaching students.
3. Inhibiting factors that occur in the learning process that is due to physical

deficiencies that are owned by students and teachers, that is both blind.

4. The general impact experienced by students is that they become more confident in their lives, and they are able to have many friends through music groups, and then they are increasingly honed in their ability to play music because they are active in musical performances. organized by their school and outside their school.

## **ADVICE**

In line with the conclusions written by the researchers, some suggestions are put forward as follows:

1. For schools, in order to enlarge music classrooms so that more blind children who want to learn drum instruments, and music classrooms neatly arranged both from the arrangement of drum instruments and other instruments.
2. In addition to music extracurricular days after seeing how enthusiastic students are in participating in each learning season
3. The cleanliness of the music classroom should be noticed again because a clean and beautiful class will support a better learning process and improve students' mood in learning
4. For teachers must be able to explore the learning of piano instruments, so that learning piano instruments in SLB Karya Murni Medan Johor can be able to develop and progress more than now.
5. The holding of music learning using braille notation, so that the musical insight of blind children is broader.
6. For SLB-A Karya Murni Medan, to be active in participating in music contests, in order to know where students are

capable of and adding to musical experiences of students.

7. We recommend that the school gives freedom to children who live in the orphanage to be allowed to use musical instruments at any time, so as to improve their piano playing skills

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