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CREATING ECO-CONSCIOUS THROUGH MUSIC : A CASE STUDY ON  
YOUNG STUDENTS IN MELAKA

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## DECLARATION

“I hereby declare that this thesis entitle “Creating Eco-Consious through Music : A Case Study on Young Students in Melaka” is my own work except for the quotations summaries that have been duty acknowledged”

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicated this research to my parents and supervisor, who taught me to think, understand and express. Thank you for motivation, inspiration and guidance to pass through the process of this research.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Chew Boon Cheong, my friends and my mother for all the guidance and support given to me during the whole research process. Dr Chew Boon Cheong has never given up on me and constantly monitored my progress to keep me on the right track. My friends were willing to share all the information they had even when they were busy. Thanks to my mother had been giving valuable opinions on the research, I was able to complete a few tasks that were difficult. Special thanks to my supervisor once again for helping me out during the research. Because of his willingness to spend time with me despite his busy schedule, not only that I had gained a very deep understanding on music creating eco-consciousness but I too learned a lot about music and the process of doing a research.

## ABSTRACT

The environment is being polluted almost everywhere and is causing a large number of deaths worldwide. This research is concern with music in creating eco-consciousness which actually aims to save the environment. It explains on the impacts of music on humans, the criteria of music which is influential on eco-conscious creation and the strategies that can be used in widening eco-conscious with music. This research uses qualitative method in its data collection from the respondents. The analysis of the data uses qualitative method to obtain the results. The results or findings of this research will reveal on music creating eco-consciousness. The findings could be a potential environment saving reference to many people in the future.

## ABSTRAK

Alam sekitar dicemari di hampir seluruh pelusuk dunia dan mengakibatkan banyak kematian di seluruh dunia. Kajian ini berkait rapat dengan muzik dalam menanam eko-kesedaran dengan tujuan menyelamatkan alam sekitar. Kajian ini menerangkan tentang impak muzik ke atas manusia, kriteria muzik yang mempunyai pengaruh ke atas pembentukan eko-kesedaran dan strategi yang boleh digunakan dalam meluaskan eko-kesedaran melalui muzik. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kualitatif untuk pengumpulan data daripada responden. Analisis data menggunakan kaedah kualitatif bagi mendapatkan keputusan analisis. Keputusan analisis untuk kajian ini akan mendedahkan tentang muzik menanam eko-kesedaran. Keputusan analisis untuk kajian ini boleh menjadi potensi rujukan kepada masyarakat yang boleh menyelamatkan alam sekitar pada masa akan datang.



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Introduction/Background of the Study

The global climate change and environmental destruction have been raised to a level of major concern in recent years. There are numerous ways to create environmental awareness and music is a powerful medium to communicate environmental messages to billions of people worldwide – irrespective of race, religion, income, gender or age. This study aims to see how far music can actually bring an impact by creating environmental conscious or awareness among people.

Music can be in almost every aspect of our life, from a large scale advertising to small soft launch event or trailer. There have been previous attempt to create environmental awareness such as UNESCO organizing an International Forum on ‘Music as a Vector for Environmental Awareness’ in Geneva, in 2009. Singers such as Michael Jackson with his Heal The World song and Earth Song had communicated about the urgent need to refurbish the plundered earth by the human civilization. Furthermore, Paradise City song by Guns N' Roses band,

Green Green Grass of Home by Tom Jones, Big Yellow Taxi by Joni Mitchell, Pass It on Down by Alabama and the song Hijau by Zainal Abidin also has a similar purpose with this study that is to save the environment.

There are also some other talented people who has changed the lyrics of Viva la Diva by Coldplay into a global warming song. This study of creating eco-conscious has come across these kind of songs and is to find out how far can music create the urge in people towards eco-consciousness to protect the environment.

## **1.2 Problem Statement/Research Questions**

An estimated 12.6 million people died as a result of living or working in an unhealthy environment in 2012 – nearly 1 in 4 of total global deaths, according to the latest estimates from WHO. Environmental risk factors, such as air, water and soil pollution, chemical exposures, climate change, and ultraviolet radiation, contribute to more than 100 diseases and injuries (World Health Organization, 2016). The environment is in danger and so are life and its quality. Many species of animals and plants are already extinct and many more on the brink of it. There is a haze in the sky due to open burning, some dusty rubbish clogs a drain, trees are being chopped down, and there is constant noise pollution by cars. Oil spillage at the sea can be happening right now and sea birds can be seen yanking at a piece of discarded fishing line that's wrapped around its neck. Fortunately many events, activities and moves have been established to create eco-conscious including music. This research together with its research questions are to convey the message that music can create eco-consciousness especially on young students who is 10 to 15 years old. This is because the children at this age are like a blank canvas. As children this age expand their horizons, the living conditions of the neighborhood and community will give them experiences on which to build their linguistic, kinesthetic, artistic, spatial, and interpersonal skills. This is the time that

they will start to be exposed to musics which will determine the types of music that they like. Exposure to environmental musics at an early age will embed eco-consciousness in them.

The research question constructed as below:

- i. What are the criteria of music which is influential on eco-consciousness creation?
- ii. What are the strategies in using music to create eco-consciousness?
- iii. What the innovative suggestions in widening eco-consciousness through music?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

Thus, the objectives of this research are as the following:

- i. To identify the criteria of music which is influential on eco-consciousness creation.
- ii. To determine the strategies in creating eco-consciousness with music.
- iii. To propose innovative suggestions in widening eco-consciousness through music.

### **1.4 Scope, Limitation and Key Assumptions of the Study**

The scope of this research will only take into account young children such as those who are still in elementary school and only covers school children in

Melaka. One of the limitations involved in this research is that it will never be known of whether the children or respondents will give an honest answer or not. The key assumption is that the children will give an honest answer when answering the questionnaire. The respondents or the children should also be able to give a simple reply as to whether they could comprehend the meaning of the song. Although getting the permission of the guardians or the teachers may not be as easy as it sounds, but it is assumed that as long as a brief and clear explanation is provided, then this research will be able to gain access to the children.

### **1.5 Importance of the Research**

Every new study can be contributing something and for this research, it aims to inform people of the effects of music in creating eco-consciousness. Furthermore, the music industry can obtain more recognition when it comes to eco-consciousness through this research. The reason for this is that many people do not realise that music is an extremely important medium in conveying any message including messages on the environment. As other researchers or any other people go through this research, they will realise the importance of music in creating eco-consciousness. As time passes, music have been forgotten by some people that it has tremendous effect on the human brain and could spur humans to do things they least expect. This research hopes to remind people of the importance of music in creating eco-consciousness. On top of that, this research is essential in a way where it could eventually lead to bigger discoveries where music plays a very vital role in waking mankind up about the consequences of their actions towards the environment. Music can be widely diffused. Repetitive listening with good melody and lyrics will create eco-conscious.

## 1.6 Summary

This segment focuses on what the research is about by starting with the introduction of the research. The summary explains on the problem statement, research questions and research objectives. It also explains who the respondents are, the restrictions, assumptions of what will happen during the research, contributions and significance of the research. It is also to inform people that music can affect people to have a deeper perception on their surroundings. Eight year old children with just 8 weeks of musical training differed from controls in their cortical event related potentials (ERPs) (Moreno and Besson, 2006). Young musicians show shorter latency of the event-related potentials than other young non-musicians. An event-related potential (ERP) is the measured brain response the process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses. This shows that those who have immersed themselves in music can capture information around them quicker than those who have not.

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This section discusses about the literature review used in the research. Several sources such as books, journals, articles and the Internet are utilised. In section 2.2, theoretical concepts of impacts of music to humans are reviewed. Section 2.3 is about the application of theory of the criteria of music in creating eco-consciousness while section 2.4 is the assessment of theoretical concepts of strategies in creating eco-consciousness with music. Last of all is section 2.5 which reviews the theoretical framework.

#### **2.2 Impacts of Music to Humans**

Recent neuroscience and child development research has shed light on the value of music listening in a young child's life (Flohr, 2010). Recent advances in neuroscience have yielded a better view of the human brain and given preliminary support and specificity to the idea that music has a positive effect on brain function (Flohr & Hodges, 2006). People should be exposed on importance of the environment since young with music. Music can easily give positive effects on the child's brain. Environmental consciousness can be embedded in children with music that can spark their interest in protecting the environment. Music can have many kinds of impacts on human beings whether socially, emotionally or psychologically.

### **2.2.1 Music Shape Eco-Consciousness among the Young**

Daniel Levitin (2014) states that musical activity involves nearly every region of the brain that we know about, and nearly every neural subsystem. According to the diagram below, musically trained individuals will have a better attention and information processing, making them much more attentive to their surrounding and could comprehend situations which are alarming which involves information processing.



Figure 2.1: Brains of Musically Trained Individuals

Source : The Benefits of Music Education (2014)

According to Neville (2008), early childhood training in instrumental music improves these attention abilities, while continued music education throughout adolescence reinforces and strengthens them. Young children who have been involved in music would be able to notice that the environment is in need of attention. There will not even be a need to inform children of the environment's worsening situation since with the help of music, they can realize it themselves. Even if they do not realize it when they are still young, their attentive ability will be better once they grow up.

#### 2.2.1.1 Music can Affect Social Change

Social change refers to any significant alteration over time in behavior patterns and cultural values and norms. According to Kidjo (2010), Patron of the United Nations Music & Environment Initiative, the music industry can be