

# Kaleidoscope of Inclusion: Mapping Music Learning Methods through the Lens of Contemporary Early Childhood Education Literature

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## Abstrak

Penggunaan metode pembelajaran musik di sekolah inklusif dinilai sebagai cara yang inovatif untuk menciptakan lingkungan inklusif yang merangsang perkembangan holistik anak. Meski begitu, belum banyak yang menyadari urgensi musik sebagai alat untuk mencapai inklusi tersebut sehingga diperlukan kajian yang lebih mendalam. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peran metode pembelajaran musik dalam pendidikan anak usia dini (PAUD) inklusif di era kontemporer. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan Systematic Literature Review (SLR), penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengumpulkan, mengkaji dan menganalisis literatur terkait penggunaan metode pembelajaran musik di PAUD inklusif. Teknik pengumpulan data melibatkan melakukan pencarian terstruktur dan komprehensif pada database terpercaya. Proses analisis data melibatkan pemilihan literatur berdasarkan kriteria inklusi dan eksklusi, dengan mempertimbangkan relevansi artikel dan informasi yang diperlukan. Hasil analisis literatur menemukan bahwa metode pembelajaran musik berperan penting dalam menciptakan lingkungan inklusif yang merangsang partisipasi dan perkembangan anak usia dini. Musik dapat membuka pintu komunikasi, meningkatkan interaksi sosial, dan merangsang kreativitas anak inklusif.

**Kata kunci:** Inklusi, Metode Pembelajaran Musik, Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini

## Abstract

The use of music learning methods in inclusive schools is considered as an innovative way to create an inclusive environment that stimulates children's holistic development. Even so, not many are aware of the urgency of music as a tool to achieve this inclusion, so a more in-depth study is needed. This study aims to analyze the role of music learning methods in inclusive early childhood education (ECE) in the contemporary era. Using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, this research aims to collect, review and analyze literature related to the use of music learning methods in inclusive ECE. Data collection techniques involve conducting a structured and comprehensive search on trusted databases. The data analysis process involved selecting literature based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, considering the relevance of articles and the necessary information. The results of the literature analysis found that music learning methods play an important role in creating an inclusive environment that stimulates early childhood participation and development. Music can open doors of communication, increase social interaction, and stimulate the creativity of inclusive children.

**Keywords:** Inclusion, Music Learning Methods, Early Childhood Education

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students can actively develop their potential, including spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble morals, and the skills needed for themselves, society, nation and state (Aviandini et al., 2021; Widyaningrum, 2018). From education, individuals can gain useful knowledge in facing the era of globalization and as a forum for the development of science and technology. Every child has the right to grow, develop, play, rest, be creative and learn in an educational environment, making learning a child's right, not just an obligation. Parents and the government are required to provide educational facilities and infrastructure for children in order to support learning programs (Harfiani, 2021; Lazar, 2020). Despite this, a number of citizens still face obstacles in

obtaining a proper education, including due to physical and mental limitations, especially for individuals with special needs.

However, now inclusive schools have emerged, inclusive education at the ECE level becomes an inclusive place that builds a robust, fair, and just foundation. Early childhood inclusive education is an educational service system that includes children with special needs to learn together with their peers in the regular school (Heldanita, 2018; Putri, 2015; Safitri & Hijriyani, 2021). The inclusive education concept in ECE carries the idea that all children, including those with special needs, have the same right to receive quality education (Wulandari & Hendriani, 2021; Yusra et al., 2020). Fundamentally, the inclusive principle in ECE demands inclusive practitioners not to only eliminate physical limits but also social limits. It reflects that education is a basic human right that must be available for all children without discrimination. Therefore, each child can learn together, collaborate, and development following their potentials. Furthermore, educators and education practitioners in inclusive ECE plays a central role in creating an inclusive environment (Noviandari & Masrurroh, 2021; Putri, 2015). Inclusive practitioners are obliged to facilitate equitable development for each child.

Inclusive education in ECE appears as a response to the evolution of public views on the right to education for all children. Inclusive education in ECE roots in the humanity concept transformation that emphasizes human rights (Lazar, 2020; Putri, 2015). Over time, many countries adopt regulations and policies of inclusive education. For example, Individuals with Disability Education Act/IDEA is a vital step to promote inclusive education (Azizah et al., 2020; Heldanita, 2018). Excellent comprehension on child diversity and various special needs that might be possessed by children has brought inclusive education to the surface. Educators and education experts realize that each child is unique and requires different approaches in learning (Harfiani, 2021; Khosiah et al., 2022; Sumiati & Gumiandari, 2022). However, technology advances and learning methods have open the door to the use of assistive devices and/or learning strategies that can be adapted to the needs of inclusive children. This matter facilitates educators in achieving the objectives to facilitate and provide effective inclusive education.

In integrating inclusive education at the early childhood education level, there are several principles to be considered. First, the accessibility principle that emphasizes the importance of creating physical, social, and curriculum environments accessible by all children, including those with special needs (Harfiani, 2021; Setianingsih & Listyarini, 2019). This principle also includes the disability friendly facilities and infrastructure using learning methods adjustable to required situation and condition. Second, the participation principle that demands full participation of all children in education activities without limits or segregation (Astawa, 2021; Setianingsih & Listyarini, 2019). It indicates that inclusive children must be involved in all learning aspects, including interactions with their peers. Lastly, the equality principle that confirms that all children have the same value in the education context. There are no discriminations based on their genders, abilities, and backgrounds.

Regarding these principles, one of the aims of inclusive education in ECE is the desire to empower children. Through inclusive education, it is expected that children can develop self-confidence and their ability to participate in public (Heldanita, 2018; Putri, 2015; Yusra et al., 2020). Furthermore, another objective is to help children in understanding and appreciating diversity in public (Astawa, 2021; Heldanita, 2018). Therefore, it concludes that the general inclusive education objective is facilitating all children with their diversities to have better life quality in the future with skills and understanding they receive.

Inclusive education is inseparable from everchanging dynamics of times. In this contemporary era, inclusive education has a crucial role in facilitating child development

(Istiana & Widodo, 2023; Wulandari & Hendriani, 2021; Yuniarni & Amalia, 2022). The contemporary era brings a new challenge for inclusive education, where inclusive education does not only refer to the acceptance of children with special needs into the general class. Moreover, inclusive education in ECE has a deeper vision to create a learning environment that stimulates, supports, and embraces each child without considering their backgrounds, abilities, or personal characteristics (Putri, 2015; Wulandari & Hendriani, 2021). Hence, the contemporary era confirms the necessity of more responsive education towards various child development.

Children with special needs show differences and special characteristics compared to children in general. Questions arise about the possibility of them attending public schools where normal children live. Most people believe that because of the privileges they have, it is better for children with special needs to only go to special institutions, such as Special Schools, as there are no other generally known alternatives, where these children can study and play in general (Harfiani, 2021; Marlina, 2020). This view is a more difficult challenge than educating children with special needs itself if it is linked to a serious inclusion program. Some people still view children with special needs as a disaster, and even a frightening threat for some parents who have children with special needs. This society is not yet fully aware that these children actually have unlimited potential and are able to develop according to their abilities. However, feelings of worry and shame often haunt parents, hindering their intentions to integrate their children with other normal children. Not only that, negative perceptions and non-acceptance from some schools also become obstacles for children with special needs.

In the effort of integrating various child needs in a single learning room, it is vital to adopt a creative approach that reaches each individual (Aviandini et al., 2021; Harfiani, 2021; Pratama, 2023). The music learning method appears as an exciting alternative. This method is beyond a learning material. Rather, it is a window that opens the world for children with special needs (Aviandini et al., 2021; Sumartini et al., 2020). Music, as a universal language, plays a significant role in early childhood development. Music learning methods become a domain rich of potentials with a critical role in stimulating and facilitating holistic child development (Astuti et al., 2021; Pratama, 2023; Sumartini et al., 2020). The benefits of music learning for early childhood perceived by relevant parties in early childhood education can provide a unique opportunity to develop all development aspects and child reactivity. For example, using musical instruments, singing, and moving following the rhythm. Through these various activities, children have the opportunity to express and create freely (Aulia et al., 2022; Olii, 2019; Santosa, 2019). Such activities not only stimulate child musical ability development but also cultivate creativity in their mindset and actions. Music learning methods also have a significant impact on cognitive development of early childhood. This method invites children to identify patterns, rhythms, and tones in music (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019; Oktaviani, 2021; Sumartini et al., 2020). In practice, such activities contribute to mathematical ability and language comprehension development. It shows how music learning can align intellectual development of early childhood.

Moreover, music also plays a crucial role in stimulating emotional aspects of early childhood. Listening and participating in music learning activities help them in recognizing, understanding, and managing their emotions better (Damayanti et al., 2021; Josephine et al., 2023). It helps to create a strong fundamental emotional well-being of children in the future. It is valuable to admit that music learning in early childhood is not individual measures; rather, it is controlled by positive social interactions. Playing music with peers or teachers, children will learn about working together, sharing, and communicating. Thus, it helps to build social skills as a robust foundation in their relationships with others.

Music education also plays a role in introducing children to diverse musical cultures in Indonesia or worldwide (Andari & Wiguna, 2023; Santosa, 2019). Through this activity, children are invited to appreciate various kinds of music and culture which can augment early childhood understanding on diversity in global public. Moreover, as widely known, educators as facilitators also have a vital role in facilitating learning. They act as educators and mentors that guide children to create an enticing and valuable music learning process (Andari & Wiguna, 2023; Wijaya, 2021). Music learning in early childhood does not only speak about producing young musicians but will be an investment for children in developing characters, creativity, intelligence, emotional welfare, and social skills. Therefore, music learning can be a holistic and creative learning, and is a necessity in stimulating aspects of child development with full potential for their future success.

The music learning is considered having high flexibility, enabling each child to adapt according to individual needs (Sumartini et al., 2020; Wadu et al., 2021; Yuliana et al., 2020). Thus, it can be concluded that music learning methods are accessible and perceived for its benefits by each inclusive child. As explained by several researchers, music has a universal interest that goes beyond physical and mental limits, allowing children to interact, collaborate, and self-express. The music learning method is considered facilitating inclusive children by presenting a space to encourage equitable development and participation opportunities (Astuti et al., 2021; Wahyuni, 2022; Widyaningrum, 2018).

A lot of research has been carried out regarding music learning methods in early childhood, both in the form of literature and field studies. Previous research was carried out with focus on the form of implementing games using angklung media to introduce the concept of color and improve aspects of the cognitive development of autistic children in inclusive family planning (Wahyuni, 2022). The results of this research record children's progress in understanding the concept of color, although some children still need more time, most have mastered the concept. Next is research aims to evaluate the impact of classical music therapy on the cognitive development of children with mental retardation at the Pembina Mataram State Special School (Sumartini et al., 2020). The findings show that classical music therapy has a positive effect on increasing the cognitive development of children with mental retardation. Then research focuses more on the role of music education for children with special needs in elementary schools (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019). The results emphasize that the art of music has an important role for children with disabilities, music has an important role in providing entertainment, fun, opportunities for self-exploration, motor training, increasing concentration, building self-confidence, increasing feelings of gratitude and faith, as well as developing social attitudes in children with special needs.

The differences between the three previous studies indicate several aspects that need to be considered. These three studies did not have a background in ECE, while this research was at the ECE level. Previous study focus on the use of angklung media in recognizing color concepts for autistic children (Wahyuni, 2022), meanwhile other study focuses on classical music therapy for mentally retarded children in State Special Schools (Sumartini et al., 2020). These two studies highlight the effectiveness of music learning methods in improving cognitive aspects in groups of children with special needs. On the other hand, there is research discusses the role of music for children with special needs more generally, but for elementary school children (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019). Thus, this research will be able to specifically make a further contribution by exploring in more depth the use of music learning methods through a literary lens for children with special needs in an inclusive ECE. Focus on concrete results, methods used, their impact on inclusive ECE and the challenges and solutions that must be faced.

Through this creative approach, the music learning method not only becomes a learning tool, but also opens the door to the world for children with special needs. Music, as a universal language, has a significant role in stimulating the holistic development of early childhood, including the development of social skills, creativity and intelligence. By integrating the elements into music learning, this research discusses its positive impact on inclusive child engagement, understanding and development. In the context of inclusive education, where each child has diverse needs and potential, this method provides a flexible solution. From this explanation, this article presents a deep review regarding the exploration of music learning method urgency in inclusive education at the ECE level. The extensive reach through the lens of contemporary literature and contexts, this research aimed to explore how this creative approach has the potential to enrich the learning experiences of inclusive children.

## 2. METHODS

This research applies qualitative methods with a descriptive approach, which describes the data systematically. Qualitative research methods are methods that emphasize aspects of understanding in depth a problem or issue rather than looking at problems to generalize (Rusandi & Muhammad Rusli, 2021). Qualitative research aims to obtain a deep understanding of meaning, develop theory, and provide a comprehensive picture of social reality from the participant's perspective, with the focus of qualitative research methods more on understanding social phenomena, with an emphasis on detailed, interrelated descriptions, rather than generalizations (Mardawani, 2020). Meanwhile, the descriptive approach in research is an approach that aims to describe phenomena, both natural and man-made, with a focus on interpreting situations, conditions, relationships, opinions, consequences or effects that occur.

The subjects in this research were early childhood children at the inclusive ECE level. A literature search was carried out using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Metaanalysis) method. PRISMA method consists of two main components, namely systematic review and meta-analysis (Triandini et al., 2019; Widiasih et al., 2020). A systematic review provides an objective summary of a research topic, while meta-analysis involves the use of statistical techniques to combine the results of studies selected as literature in related research. This method aims to integrate existing literature in a transparent manner and includes three stages, namely literature search or literature review, selection of appropriate research, and data extraction and summary.

The analysis method used in this research uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to find out the results of previous research related to music learning methods through the lens of contemporary early childhood education literature. This method aims to identify, collect, evaluate and synthesize knowledge in scientific literature regarding the topic study (Suhartono, 2017; Triandini et al., 2019). The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) used in this research was designed to provide in-depth insight into the latest developments in music learning methods for children in inclusive ECE. This approach allows researchers to explore the literature thoroughly and gather a rich understanding of the various approaches applied in the context of inclusive education in the contemporary era.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Upon reviewing ten studies that fulfill the criteria, several vital findings were discovered regarding music learning methods for inclusive children at the ECE level. The



researchers then created a category to demonstrate crucial points related to music learning effectiveness in facilitating inclusive ECE. The categories in question include the strategies and methods of music learning, and the influence/impact of music learning methods. The following will present the presentation of the findings in detail.

**Table 1.** Data of Synthesis Process Findings

No.	Author (Year of Publication)	Learning Method/Stragegy	Impact
1	(Aviandini et al., 2021)	Movement and music	Makes children more concentrated, and improves attention.
2	(Widyaningrum, 2018)	Audio & audio visual media	Children are more focused on the learning material, can follow and understand the content of the subject matter easily and quickly.
3	(Sumiati & Gumiandari, 2022)	Neuroscience-based learning (music, art therapy, fun learning)	Facilitating slow learner students in learning
4	(Josephine et al., 2023)	Music therapy	Stimulating social interaction skills of children with autism
5	(Wadu et al., 2021)	Playing music	Reduce child anxiety
6	(Sumartini et al., 2020)	Playing classical music	Facilitating cognitive development of mentally retarded children
7	(Wahyuni, 2022)	Playing angklung	Improve cognitive development of children with autism
8	(Olii, 2019)	Playing music	Stimulate children's skills (gross motor, fine motor, speech, cognitive ability, creativity).
9	(Nasrah et al., 2022)	Creative art play therapy	Stimulates social development and self-control.
10	(Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019)	Music learning	A means of entertainment, provide pleasure to children, facilitate children to explore themselves, train motor skills, improve concentration, foster self-confidence, improve gratitude and faith, and foster social attitudes.

Based on the [Table 1](#), there are several strategies that can be used to implement music learning in inclusive ECE. E. Previous study stet that the movement and music method can handle learning problems of children with Disorders of Attention Concentration and Hyperactivity (GPPH) ([Aviandini et al., 2021](#)). The study results proved that children become more concentrated when learning with movement and music activities. Furthermore, children with GPPH were calmer while and after participating in these activities. Following this, previous study focuses on music as a variation of learning media in inclusive schools, pointed out that children focus more on learning material through music learning methods using audio and audio visual media. Thus, children can follow and understand the subject matter easily and quickly ([Widyaningrum, 2018](#)).

Another stduy was conducted sought to discover a neuroscience-based learning method to facilitate slow learner students in learning ([Sumiati & Gumiandari, 2022](#)). The

study results suggested several game types that can facilitate slow learner students in learning, including activities involving music learning. The activities are playing music, art therapy, and fun learning. Concerning playing music, several researchers have conducted similar studies which focused on four autistic children in inclusive ECE, stated that playing music can stimulate social interaction skills of autistic children (Josephine et al., 2023). Other study also mentioned that playing music can reduce children's anxiety in inclusive ECE (Wadu et al., 2021). Then there is study expressed her article findings regarding the use of playing music in inclusive ECE. N. Other study argued that playing music can stimulate various skills, such as gross motor, fine motor, speaking, cognitive, and creativity skills (Oli, 2019). This opinion aligns with a study which focused on games using classical music. It stated that these games can facilitate the cognitive development of children with mental retardation (Sumartini et al., 2020).

Furthermore, a study focused on the effectiveness of playing angklung music to stimulate autistic children development (Wahyuni, 2022). The study discovered that playing angklung music can facilitate the cognitive development of autistic children. Subsequently, there is study examined the creative art play therapy method to overcome basic problems in inclusive ECE (Nasrah et al., 2022). Creative art play therapy is a collection of several art games that include playing music. One of the study results asserted that music can be a communication tool for inclusive children. Playing music can help stimulate their social development and self-control. Another study was conducted focusing on the urgency of music in early childhood inclusive education (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019). The study results revealed that music can be a means of entertainment, facilitate children to explore themselves, provide pleasure to children, train motor skills, improve concentration, foster self-confidence, improve gratitude and faith, and foster children's social attitudes.

## **Discussion**

The literature review results regarding music learning methods in inclusive ECE demonstrated that music learning positively influenced children in inclusive schools. It is stated in Table 1, which is the result of the literature synthesis process analyzed into several categories. The categories are music learning strategies in early childhood inclusive education and music learning methods for children in inclusive ECE. However, besides these two categories, the challenges of integrating music learning methods in inclusive ECE will also be discussed.

### ***Music Learning Strategies in Early Childhood Inclusive Education***

The diversity of music learning methods found in the literature suggests that no single approach is suitable for all children in inclusive groups preschool level (Sumartini et al., 2020; Sumiati & Gumiandari, 2022; Wadu et al., 2021). This emphasizes the importance of flexibility in the approach to music learning, taking into account the child's individual needs, interests and abilities. These findings reinforce the importance of differentiation in music learning approaches. Every child has different needs and levels of abilities, especially regarding inclusion. Based on the results of research conducted emphasizes the importance of paying special attention to the severity of children on the autism spectrum (Josephine et al., 2023). The research suggests that assessing the level of severity, whether mild, moderate, or severe, is the key to determining the most appropriate type of music to apply to the child. In an effort to create a conducive environment, it is important to avoid tense situations by ensuring relaxed, pleasant and firm situations in order to achieve optimal results, thereby emphasizing the individual needs of children with autism, recognizing that the appropriate use of music can be an important element in creating positive interactions and support their development.

Teachers must adapt to learning methods and provide support according to each child's abilities. This requires a deep understanding of the child's individual needs and strong differentiation skills. Some approaches to learning music essentially involve the use of musical instruments, singing, rhythmic movements, and sound exploration. This is in line with research conducted state that a teacher's friendly, patient and humorous teaching style will stimulate the brain positively, by using various strategies such as apperception, alpha zone, music, and scene setting (Sumiati & Gumiandari, 2022). The relationship between optimizing the role of the brain and implementing learning strategies has an important impact on achieving educational goals. In research conducted it was also confirmed that regarding music learning for children with special needs, the results showed that playing music actively had a positive influence on children's mental and physiological development (Wijaya, 2021). This activity is also involved in forming connected neural pathways in the brain, triggering the formation of connections between brain cells.

The teacher's role is also very important in creating an inclusive and effective music learning environment. They not only act as teachers but also as mediators and supporters of children's growth and development (Aviandini et al., 2021; Nasrah et al., 2022; Widyaningrum, 2018). This is in line with research conducted shows that the school environment plays a crucial role in shaping children's development (Olii, 2019). Factors such as the learning process, play activities, and knowledge acquired by children have a significant impact. The learning process at school is able to shape children's understanding of the world around them and develop various abilities, such as gross motor skills, fine motor skills, speaking abilities, cognitive abilities and creativity. The importance of well-integrated learning methods and improving learning techniques is the key to improving children's holistic development.

### ***The Effect of Music Learning Methods for Children in Inclusive ECE***

Essentially, the findings in this context have highlighted the positive impact of music on child development in inclusive ECE. Several studies have shown that music can be a powerful tool in helping inclusive children overcome their developmental challenges. For example, children on the autism spectrum showed positive responses to music and improvements in verbal and non-verbal communication and social skills development (Josephine et al., 2023; Wahyuni, 2022). The creative approach manifested in music learning allows children to learn in a more fun and interesting way. They can express themselves through singing, playing musical instruments, or body movements that match the rhythm.

The results of this study highlight the potential of music as a tool tailored to the individual needs of children with special needs, in providing an alternative and engaging way for them to learn and develop. This is supported by research which emphasizes that listening to music, especially involving children's active participation in singing, is a very effective educational tool (Olii, 2019). Singing activities are key, especially for children with perfect hearing, because the purity of songs can have a positive impact on hearing development. This research shows that a liking for music can develop through practice and imitation, creating a strong foundation for the development of motor and moral skills, and facilitating learning to write and read music over three years.

This is also in line with research conducted highlighting the significance of musical arts education for children with special needs or people with disabilities, and assessing music as an entertainment tool that can provide enjoyable experiences, support the exploration of self-identity, train motor coordination, and strengthen focus, as well as form self-confidence, foster a sense of gratitude and faith, as well as developing social skills (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019). Other research conducted regarding the impact of classical music therapy on the cognitive development of children with mental retardation, it reflects that this therapy



can improve the respondents' knowledge, understanding and analytical abilities (Sumartini et al., 2020). Even though there were several participants who still maintained cognitive development in the poor category, this cannot be used as a reason to conclude that classical music therapy is not effective for the cognitive development of children with mental retardation. On the other hand, an increase in the quantity of cognitive development shows that this therapy has had a positive impact, although it is necessary to pay attention to the extent to which this increase also reflects an increase in the quality of cognitive development.

Two literature sources also highlight the positive influence of implementing music therapy on increasing the level of focus and concentration in children with special needs in inclusive schools. According to research the use of music as a learning medium has a positive impact on the ability of children with special needs in inclusive schools to focus more on learning material (Widyaningrum, 2018). Involving music and movement methods also helps improve their ability to understand lesson content more easily and quickly. Meanwhile, other study show that music and movement therapy provide an effective stimulus to increase children's concentration levels in inclusive schools (Aviandini et al., 2021). Music can also enrich the learning experience of children who have learning difficulties. Both findings confirm that music not only plays a role in improving focus, but also makes a valuable contribution in enriching the learning experience of children who face learning difficulties.

Based on these findings, it concludes that music has a significant role in increasing participation and interaction between inclusive children. When children participate in musical activities together, they have the opportunity to interact positively with each other (Josephine et al., 2023; Nasrah et al., 2022). Regarding inclusive schools, music learning methods are an essential aspect in helping children with different abilities and needs to feel accepted and engaged in an inclusive environment. Musical activities, e.g., playing in an ensemble, singing together, or moving to a rhythm, create opportunities where children can work together, share roles and support each other (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019; Josephine et al., 2023). Such activities can be a first step in building social skills and interpersonal interactions critical for the social development of inclusive children. Music can also develop children's positive emotions, create bonds between children, and help them feel more comfortable in an environment with various needs (Alhakiki & Desyandri, 2019; Wadu et al., 2021).

### ***Challenges in Integrating Music Learning Methods in Inclusive ECE***

Integrating music learning in inclusive Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a noble endeavor. However, it also involves several challenges to overcome. One of the main challenges is the limited resources available in the field of music-trained instructors, musical instruments, and appropriate spaces. Inclusive ECE centers may have a limited budget. Hence, it is difficult to provide musical instruments or hire music specialists. The diverse needs of inclusive children are also one of the challenges in implementing music learning methods in inclusive ECE centers (Harfiani, 2021; Syamsuardi et al., 2022). Children in inclusive ECE have various special needs. Some may have hearing or mobility challenges, which require different approaches to music learning. Thus, customizing learning for all children can be quite a challenge.

To overcome these problems, inclusive schools usually minimize them by providing individual learning programs (Azizah et al., 2020; Heldaanita, 2018). This is in line with research conducted which states that the individual learning programs is recognized as a strategy tailored to the needs of children with special needs. Individual learning programs is designed with a high level of flexibility, allowing children to learn according to their own way, ability and pace (Aviandini et al., 2021). The flexibility of individual learning programs provides opportunities for children and teachers to manage the learning process in accordance with the child's individual abilities. In addition, the implementation of individual learning

programs provides a clear direction in learning activities, making it easier for teachers to convey the information that students need. By focusing on specific information, individual learning programs help students focus their attention on the learning objectives that need to be achieved. Thus, individualized learning strategies have a positive impact on improving the effectiveness of the learning process for children with special needs.

In addition, there are special assistant teachers to assist children with various special needs (Safitri & Hijriyani, 2021; Wulandari & Hendriani, 2021). This is in line with research conducted that there is an expectation that teachers must be willing to make every effort necessary to ensure the learning progress of each student (Nasrah et al., 2022). The importance of adopting effective teaching practices implies the need for higher levels of teacher initiative and responsibility. This includes not only changes in teaching methods but also adjustments to the learning environment to meet the needs of diverse students in inclusive classrooms. Teachers can also differentiate in music teaching, adapting learning methods to meet the individual needs of each child. It means that teachers can use different musical instruments or customize musical activities according to children's abilities. In enriching the knowledge further, teachers can also work with music specialists in developing inclusive music learning materials accessible to all children, including those with special needs.

While the integration of music learning in inclusive ECE brings significant benefits to the development of inclusive children, the challenges of limited resources and children's diverse needs require more innovative and coordinated approaches. Individualized learning programs and the role of special assistant teachers can be a solution, but need in-depth evaluation of their effectiveness. In addition, teachers' professional development efforts and collaboration with music experts are key to overcoming these obstacles, along with full support from the school, community, parents and related communities. Successful inclusive music education not only creates a diversity-friendly learning environment but also ensures that every inclusive child has equal access and opportunity to develop their potential.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Music learning methods have a positive effect on children's development in inclusive ECE. Music learning strategies basically involve various approaches, such as the use of musical instruments, singing, movement, and the integration of music into the general curriculum. The role of music is seen in addressing a range of child development challenges in inclusive ECE. Research shows that music can improve children's cognitive, language, social and motor skills. The application of music also contributes positively to the learning experience of children with learning difficulties, through creative approaches that make learning more fun and engaging. Music learning methods is effective in improving cognitive development and bringing about positive changes in focus and concentration levels.

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