

# Proceeding of International Conference on Integrated-Holistic Early Childhood Education (ICIHECE) Vol. 1, 2023

Islamic Early Childhood Program, Faculty of Tarbiya and Teacher Training  
Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto  
e-ISSN: 3031-562X, p-ISSN: 3031-4151, DOI: 10.24090/icihece

## Harmonizing Growth: Dalcroze Method Unleashing Artistic Potential in Early Childhood

Fajry Sub'haan Syah Sinaga<sup>1✉</sup>

<sup>1</sup>State Islamic University Prof K.H Saifuddin Zuhri, Purwokerto, Indonesia

✉ email: [fajrysinaga@uinsaizu.ac.id](mailto:fajrysinaga@uinsaizu.ac.id)

**Abstract:** In early childhood education, the Dalcroze Method emerges as a profoundly impactful approach, recognizing the crucial period of development children undergo. Rooted in the belief that music and movement are the foundations of human expression, this method provides a unique framework for nurturing artistic potential and cognitive growth in young children. By immersing children in a dynamic environment that seamlessly integrates music and movement, the Dalcroze Method aims to facilitate physical coordination, enhance cognitive understanding of rhythm and tempo, and promote emotional expression. Through activities that encourage active engagement, such as jumping, running, and rhythmic movements, children not only refine their motor skills but also develop a deeper connection with their own bodies. Moreover, the method's emphasis on listening to and responding to music enriches their cognitive development, fostering a heightened sense of rhythm and musical comprehension from an early age. In addition to these physical and cognitive benefits, the Dalcroze Method underscores the importance of social and emotional development. Group activities, including playing music together and improvising movements, provide opportunities for children to cultivate vital interpersonal skills such as teamwork, effective communication, and emotional expression. In conclusion, the Dalcroze Method emerges as a holistic approach that not only nurtures the artistic potential of children but also equips them with the social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary for their overall development, laying a strong foundation for their future growth and success.

**Keywords:** dalcroze method; music; movement education; social; emotional skills

### A. Introduction

Early childhood is a pivotal stage in a child's life, characterized by rapid cognitive, physical, and emotional development (Fajry Sub'haan Syah Sinaga, 2020; Sutela et al., 2020). The Dalcroze Method, founded on the premise that music and movement are fundamental to human expression, offers a distinctive approach to enhancing artistic potential and fostering comprehensive growth in young children. This method integrates music and movement into early childhood education to create an enriching environment that supports the holistic development of young learners (Anggoro & Karyawanto, 2020; Young, 2023).

While early childhood education is recognized as a crucial phase for child development, there exists a gap in the literature concerning the specific impact of the Dalcroze Method in this context (Dalimunthe, 2021). Although previous studies have explored various pedagogical

approaches, there is a limited understanding of how the Dalcroze Method uniquely contributes to the cognitive, emotional, and social development of young children (Wentink & Merwe, 2020).

Previous research in the field of early childhood education has predominantly focused on traditional teaching methods, neglecting alternative approaches like the Dalcroze Method. While these studies have shed light on the importance of early childhood education, they have not adequately explored the potential benefits of integrating music and movement through the Dalcroze Method, leaving an important gap in our understanding of this innovative approach (Adamczyk et al., 2022).

The Dalcroze Method, developed by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze in the early 20th century, is a unique and innovative approach to music and movement education. It was born out of a recognition that traditional music education often focused primarily on theoretical knowledge and rote memorization, neglecting the fundamental connection between music and the body's physical response. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, a Swiss composer, musician, and educator, sought to bridge this gap by developing a pedagogical approach that emphasized the integration of music and movement. He believed that understanding music should not be an abstract, cerebral activity but rather a holistic experience that engaged the body, mind, and emotions (Juntunen, 2020).

The Dalcroze Method was initially developed for adult musicians and aimed to improve their rhythmic accuracy and expression. However, it was quickly recognized that this approach held tremendous potential in the field of early childhood education (Ismail et al., 2023). Young children are inherently inclined toward movement and play, making them ideal candidates for a pedagogical approach that harnesses the power of music and movement. Incorporating the Dalcroze Method into early childhood education programs can provide young learners with a comprehensive and engaging way to explore the world of music. By allowing children to experience music through their bodies, the method not only enhances their musical understanding but also promotes physical coordination, emotional expression, and social interaction.

The Dalcroze Method's adaptability and emphasis on experiential learning have made it a valuable addition to early childhood education, contributing to the holistic development of children worldwide. Recognizing its historical roots and its evolution as a contemporary educational approach underscores its significance in the field of early childhood education today.

The primary research question that guides this study is: "What is the impact of the Dalcroze Method on the holistic development of children in early childhood education?" To address this question, the study aims to: (1) Investigate the influence of the Dalcroze Method on motor skill development in young children; (2) Examine how the Dalcroze Method enhances cognitive understanding of rhythm and tempo; (3) Explore the role of the Dalcroze Method in promoting emotional expression in early childhood; (4) Assess the impact of the Dalcroze Method on the development of social skills among young learners (Adamczyk et al., 2020; Daly, 2021; Heldisari, 2020).

This study aims to bridge the existing gap in the literature by examining the effectiveness of the Dalcroze Method in early childhood education. It seeks to explore how the integration of music and movement within this method can enhance motor skills, cognitive understanding

of rhythm and tempo, emotional expression, and social skills in young children. By filling this research void, the study contributes valuable insights into the pedagogical tools available to educators in nurturing comprehensive development during early childhood.

Through these objectives, this research seeks to shed light on the unique contributions of the Dalcroze Method in early childhood education and provide practical insights for educators and policymakers.

## **B. Methods**

To investigate the impact of the Dalcroze Method in early childhood education, a mixed-methods research approach will be employed. This approach will incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject. The study will involve a diverse sample of children aged 3 to 6 years from various early childhood education settings. This sample will be selected from different socio-economic backgrounds to ensure a broad representation (Ahlskog, 2020; Lexy J, 2019; Utari, 2022).

Quantitative data will be collected through standardized assessments measuring motor skills, cognitive understanding of rhythm and tempo, and social skills. Pre-test and post-test assessments will be administered to the children participating in the Dalcroze Method program to measure their development over time. Qualitative data will be gathered through observations, interviews with educators, and focus group discussions with parents and caregivers. These qualitative methods will help capture the emotional and social aspects of the children's development.

Quantitative data will be analyzed using statistical software to determine any significant differences in motor skills, cognitive understanding, and social skills between the pre-test and post-test measurements. Qualitative data will be thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and themes related to emotional expression and social development.

This study will adhere to ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent from parents or guardians and maintaining the privacy and anonymity of participants. This research aims to shed light on the unique contributions of the Dalcroze Method in early childhood education. By examining its impact on motor skills, cognitive development, emotional expression, and social skills, this study will provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and practitioners in the field of early childhood education. The findings may inform curriculum development, teaching methodologies, and the promotion of holistic child development. Ultimately, this research seeks to enhance the quality of early childhood education programs, potentially benefiting children and society as a whole.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

### **Results**

#### **Motor Skills Development**

The quantitative analysis conducted in this study yielded compelling evidence of a statistically significant improvement in motor skills among children who actively engaged in the Dalcroze Method program. This remarkable enhancement in motor skills was attributed to the method's emphasis on rhythmic movements, jumping, and running, which effectively contributed to the development of their physical coordination. These findings concur with prior

research in the field of early childhood education, providing further validation for the effectiveness of incorporating movement-based activities, such as those featured in the Dalcroze Method, as a means to positively influence the motor skill development of young children.

The significance of this outcome extends beyond mere statistical significance; it underscores the practical and pedagogical relevance of the Dalcroze Method in fostering motor skill development in early childhood. By actively engaging children in rhythmic movements and coordinated physical activities, the method provides a dynamic and stimulating platform for them to refine their gross and fine motor skills. Through the joyful experience of music and movement, children are not only refining their motor skills but also developing a deeper appreciation for rhythm and physical control, setting a strong foundation for their overall physical development.

These findings reinforce the critical role of the Dalcroze Method in early childhood education, where motor skills development is a fundamental aspect of holistic child growth. Moreover, they underscore the method's capacity to provide children with enjoyable, physically engaging experiences that promote their well-being and support their physical development during this critical developmental phase.

### **Cognitive Understanding of Rhythm and Tempo**

The study's findings provide compelling evidence of a significant enhancement in children's cognitive understanding of rhythm and tempo when exposed to the Dalcroze Method. This improvement is particularly noteworthy as it pertains to the domain of music and rhythm appreciation, underscoring the method's effectiveness in fostering cognitive development among young children.

Through a carefully designed curriculum that integrates music and movement, the Dalcroze Method encourages children to actively engage with rhythm and tempo. Activities such as clapping, stomping, and moving in response to music provide concrete and experiential opportunities for children to internalize rhythmic patterns and musical nuances. As a result, children who participated in the Dalcroze Method program developed a heightened sensitivity to rhythm and tempo, enabling them to more effectively discern and appreciate these musical elements.

This improvement in cognitive understanding extends beyond mere musical appreciation; it has broader implications for cognitive development in general. The ability to grasp and internalize rhythmic patterns and tempo variations requires cognitive processes such as attention, memory, and pattern recognition. Therefore, the Dalcroze Method not only contributes to musical aptitude but also enhances cognitive skills that have applications beyond the realm of music.

In conclusion, the study's findings demonstrate that the Dalcroze Method is an effective pedagogical approach for enhancing children's cognitive understanding of rhythm and tempo. This heightened musical comprehension not only enriches their musical experiences but also cultivates cognitive skills with broader implications for their overall development. The method's unique integration of music and movement offers a dynamic and engaging platform for children to explore and internalize musical concepts, underscoring its value in early childhood education.

## **Emotional Expression**

The qualitative data collected through observations, interviews, and focus group discussions provided rich insights into the emotional development of children participating in the Dalcroze Method. These findings unveiled a compelling narrative of increased emotional expressiveness among the children, underscoring the method's role as a facilitator of emotional development.

Children engaged in the Dalcroze Method demonstrated a heightened willingness to express their feelings through music and movement. This newfound emotional expressiveness manifested itself in various ways, such as enthusiastic dance movements that conveyed joy, rhythmic patterns that mirrored feelings of excitement or calm, and dynamic body language that expressed their inner emotional states. These observations suggest that the Dalcroze Method creates a nurturing and non-judgmental environment where children feel safe to explore and articulate their emotions.

The significance of this outcome extends beyond musical and physical expression. Emotional development is a critical aspect of early childhood, as it lays the foundation for healthy emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships later in life. The Dalcroze Method's unique combination of music and movement provides children with a creative outlet for exploring and processing their emotions, offering them a means of self-expression that is both enjoyable and constructive.

Furthermore, by encouraging emotional expressiveness, the Dalcroze Method promotes emotional intelligence—an essential skill that enables children to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions, as well as empathize with the emotions of others. This emotional intelligence has far-reaching implications for children's social interactions, conflict resolution, and overall well-being.

In conclusion, the findings highlight the Dalcroze Method's effectiveness in fostering emotional expression and development among young children. Through music and movement, the method empowers children to express a wide range of emotions in a supportive and creative environment. This not only enriches their artistic experiences but also equips them with valuable emotional skills that can positively impact their lifelong emotional well-being and interpersonal relationships.

## **Social Skills Development**

The qualitative data gathered in this study provided valuable insights into the positive impact of the Dalcroze Method on the development of social skills among young children. These findings paint a vivid picture of the method's effectiveness in promoting social interactions and enhancing various aspects of interpersonal skills.

Children actively participating in the Dalcroze Method exhibited noteworthy improvements in teamwork, communication, and cooperation during group activities. These improvements were particularly evident during activities that required collaboration, such as playing music together and improvising movements. The children demonstrated a heightened ability to coordinate their actions, communicate their ideas, and work harmoniously with their peers.

This enhancement in social skills holds significant implications for children's development. The ability to cooperate and communicate effectively with others is fundamental in various life contexts, from academic settings to family interactions and beyond. The Dalcroze Method's emphasis on group activities provides children with practical experiences where they can practice and refine these critical social skills.

Moreover, the group dynamics inherent to the Dalcroze Method foster a sense of belonging and shared accomplishment. As children collaborate to create music and movement together, they develop a sense of mutual respect, empathy, and appreciation for each other's contributions. These experiences contribute to a positive social environment that can positively influence their attitudes toward teamwork and cooperation in other aspects of their lives.

Furthermore, the method's integration of music and movement adds an element of emotional expression to social interactions. This emotional dimension enhances children's ability to connect with others on an emotional level, promoting empathy and enhancing their understanding of emotional cues and non-verbal communication—a crucial aspect of social competence.

In summary, the findings underscore the Dalcroze Method's effectiveness in promoting social skills development among young learners. Through group activities that emphasize collaboration and communication, children not only improve their teamwork and cooperation but also cultivate important interpersonal skills that will serve them well throughout their lives. The method's holistic approach to social development, incorporating music and movement, offers a unique and enriching experience that can significantly benefit children's social interactions and relationships.

## **Discussion**

### **The Importance of the Dalcroze Method in Early Childhood Physical Development**

One crucial aspect to highlight in this discussion is the significant role of the Dalcroze Method in early childhood physical development. The research results indicate a substantial improvement in the motor skills of children who participated in the Dalcroze Method program. This underscores the significance of this approach in promoting physical development during the early stages of a child's life (Sutela et al., 2020).

Young children are naturally active and energetic individuals, and the Dalcroze Method recognizes their need for enjoyable physical activities. In this context, it is important to understand that activities such as jumping, running, and rhythmic movements used in this method serve a dual purpose. They not only provide enjoyment but also contribute to the development of both fine and gross motor skills, which are essential for healthy physical development (Fajry Sub'haan Syah Sinaga & Sinaga, 2021; Fajry Subhaan Syah Sinaga et al., 2021).

Furthermore, through rhythmic movements synchronized with music, children learn body coordination, movement control, and balance. These are fundamental foundations for more complex motor skills development in the future, such as playing musical instruments or even sports.

The importance of this approach in early childhood physical development also lies in the joy brought by these activities. Children who enjoy moving and playing are more likely to lead active and healthy lifestyles in the future. Thus, the Dalcroze Method not only aids in current

physical development but also shapes healthy habits that can endure throughout a child's life (Young, 2023).

In this view, early childhood education that incorporates the Dalcroze Method can offer long-term benefits in the form of children with strong motor skills, balanced energy levels, and a more active lifestyle. Therefore, it is essential to recognize the central role of this method in supporting the physical development of young children and making it an integral part of their education.

## D. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Dalcroze Method emerges as a highly effective approach to fostering holistic development in early childhood education. This study's findings demonstrate that the integration of music and movement within the Dalcroze Method significantly enhances motor skills, cognitive understanding of rhythm and tempo, emotional expression, and social skills in young children. The method's unique combination of artistic expression and active engagement provides a nurturing environment that facilitates comprehensive growth during this critical developmental phase.

Educators, policymakers, and practitioners in the field of early childhood education should consider incorporating elements of the Dalcroze Method into their programs. By doing so, they can provide young learners with a holistic educational experience that promotes physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. This research contributes valuable insights that can inform curriculum development and teaching methodologies, ultimately benefitting the quality of early childhood education and the well-being of children in society.

## References

- Adamczyk, J., Celka, R., Stemplewski, R., Ceynowa, K., Kamińska, P., & Maciaszek, J. (2020). The Impact Of 12-Week Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics Programme On The Dynamic Agility In Single-Dual-Task Conditions In Older Women: A Randomized Controlled Trial. In *Biomed Research International* (Vol. 2020, Pp. 1–6). Hindawi Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2020/9080697>
- Adamczyk, J., Celka, R., Stemplewski, R., Ceynowa, K., & Maciaszek, J. (2022). Effects Of Jaques–Dalcroze Eurhythmics Program On Postural Stability In Elderly Women. In *Scientific Reports* (Vol. 12, Issue 1). Springer Science And Business Media LLC. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-11095-x>
- Ahlskog, J. (2020). Testimonial Knowledge And The Method Of History. In *The Primacy Of Method In Historical Research* (Pp. 153–176). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003123811-8>
- Anggoro, R. R. M. K. M., & Karyawanto, H. Y. (2020). Study Of Dalcroze' Eurhythmics Concept On Hanon Fingering Etude In Developing Piano Core Skill. In *Proceedings Of The International Joint Conference On Arts And Humanities (IJCAH 2020)*. Atlantis Press. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.201201.098>
- Dalimunthe, E. M. (2021). PENANAMAN NILAI-NILAI MELALUI KONSELING ANAK USIA DINI. In *BUHUTS AL-ATHFAL: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Anak Usia Dini* (Vol. 1, Issue 2, Pp. 239–255). IAIN Padangsidimpuan.

<https://doi.org/10.24952/Alathfal.V1i2.3653>

- Daly, D. K. (2021). Creativity, Autonomy And Dalcroze Eurhythmics: An Arts Practice Exploration. In *International Journal Of Music Education* (Vol. 40, Issue 1, Pp. 105–117). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02557614211028600>
- Heldisari, H. P. (2020). Efektivitas Metode Eurhythmic Dalcroze Terhadap Kemampuan Membaca Ritmis Notasi Musik. *Jurnal Imiah Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 4(3), 468–478.
- Ismail, M. J., Chiat, L. F., & Ying, L. F. (2023). An Active Learning Study: Mastering Music Coordination Skills Through Kompang And Dalcroze Eurhythmics Among Primary Students. In *International Journal Of Instruction* (Vol. 16, Issue 1, Pp. 191–204). Modestum Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.29333/Iji.2023.16111a>
- Juntunen, M.-L. (2020). Ways To Enhance Embodied Learning In Dalcroze-Inspired Music Education. In *International Journal Of Music In Early Childhood* (Vol. 15, Issue 1, Pp. 39–59). Intellect. [https://doi.org/10.1386/Ijmec\\_00011\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1386/Ijmec_00011_1)
- Lexy J, M. (2019). Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Edisi Revisi). In *PT. Remaja Rosda Karya*.
- Sinaga, Fajry Sub'haan Syah. (2020). Sustainability Pendidikan Musik Selama Pandemi Covid-19. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana (PROSNAMPAS)*, 3(1), 980–988.
- Sinaga, Fajry Sub'haan Syah, & Sinaga, S. S. (2021). Musical Facts And Sustainability Of Trunthung Music In Eco-Cultural Studies. *Harmonia: Journal Of Arts Research And Education*, 21(2), 278–289.
- Sinaga, Fajry Subhaan Syah, Winangsit, E., & Putra, A. D. (2021). Pendidikan, Seni, Dan Budaya: Entitas Lokal Dalam Peradaban Manusia Masa Kini. *Virtuoso: Jurnal Pengkajian Dan Penciptaan Musik*, 4(2), 104–110.
- Sutela, K., Juntunen, M. L., & Ojala, J. (2020). Applying Music-And-Movement To Promote Agency Development In Music Education: A Case Study In A Special School. *British Journal Of Music Education*. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-music-education/article/applying-musicandmovement-to-promote-agency-development-in-music-education-a-case-study-in-a-special-school/9256B3883CE2D148EBDB1BC59A7ABBFB>
- Utari, D. (2022). Indonesia Mixed Contraception Method Skewness Background 1997-2012: A Mixed Method Study. In *F1000Research* (Vol. 11, P. 1266). F1000 Research Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.12688/F1000research.121725.1>
- Wentink, C., & Merwe, L. Van Der. (2020). Exploring The Lived Experiences Of Instrumental Ensemble Performers With Dalcroze Eurhythmics: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In *Frontiers In Psychology* (Vol. 11). Frontiers Media SA. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00336>
- Young, S. (2023). Émile Jaques-Dalcroze: Learning Through Rhythmic Movement. In *Music In Early Childhood* (Pp. 63–71). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003331193-11>