

Singing Training Through Choir for Students at Bahorok 1 Public High School

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Abstract: The low level of vocal technique and choral harmony skills among students at Bahorok 1 Public High School made this community service activity urgent. Students had difficulty dividing their voices into soprano, alto, tenor, and bass (SATB), maintaining pitch accuracy, and understanding intervals, resulting in a lack of harmony. This activity aims to improve vocal competence, understanding of harmonization, and build cooperation and confidence among students through choir training. The implementation methods include initial observation, determining voice groups based on vocal characteristics, basic vocal technique training, training for each voice group using the drill method, and gradually combining all voices with guidance and guitar accompaniment. The results of the activity showed an improvement in students' ability to maintain pitch accuracy, understand SATB voice divisions, and produce more harmonious harmonization. In addition, students showed greater enthusiasm and confidence after being able to perform songs together. The impact of this activity not only improved musical skills but also strengthened discipline, concentration, and cooperation among students. Thus, choir training is effective as an effort to strengthen music arts capacity in schools and is recommended to be implemented continuously in extracurricular programs.

Keywords: Choir; Vocal training; Harmonization; Community service; School extracurricular activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Vocal technique is the main foundation in various forms of singing, whether solo, duet, vocal group, or choir. Widyawan (2020) explains that vocal technique can be adopted in various singing styles, but requires systematic training to produce optimal sound quality. In the context of education, mastery of vocal technique is not only related to the ability to produce sound, but also involves breath control, intonation, articulation, resonance, and musical expression. Therefore, structured vocal learning is very important to build students' musical abilities gradually and continuously, especially in the form of group singing such as choirs that require coordination and balance between voices.

Previous research shows that structured training models contribute significantly to measurable improvements in vocal technique and ensemble cohesion. Saputra and Murbiantoro (2025) found that choir students who underwent systematic breathing and vocal exercises demonstrated significant improvement in pitch accuracy and group harmony compared to those receiving only theoretical instruction. Similarly, Corbalán *et al.* (2023) emphasize that learning interaction and consistent rehearsal structure are critical for student engagement and musical quality in choir settings. This body of research supports the need for participatory and practice-based vocal training in school choir programs.

A choir is a form of vocal ensemble that sings together with specific voice divisions, either homogeneous or heterogeneous. Simanungkalit (2008) states that vocal music originates from the human voice, which can be performed solo or together, and when sung in harmony with soprano, alto, tenor, and bass (SATB) voice divisions, this form is called a choir. Mirantyo (2012) adds that choirs can be classified into unison, two-part, three-part, and four-part mixed voices. In practice, choirs require not only individual ability, but also the ability to listen, adjust voice color, and maintain dynamic balance in a musical ensemble.

In arranging and coaching choirs, understanding harmony is a very important aspect. Prier (2009) explains that in mixed choir arrangements, it is necessary to pay attention to the structure of musical sentences, tempo unity, chord changes, and the balance of the roles of each voice, especially the tenor as the determinant of the tone color. In addition, attention to the prohibition of parallel octaves and fifths, as well as proper breathing techniques, are integral parts of creating good harmonization. Soewito (1996) also emphasizes that diaphragmatic breathing techniques, intonation control, and precise articulation are the basic elements that determine the success of vocal performances, both individually and in groups.

Pedagogically, choir activities have significant educational value in shaping students' character. Putri and Ardipal (2021) show that extracurricular choir activities can improve students' discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and self-confidence. Sitompul (1988) emphasizes that the success of a choir is not only determined by vocal quality, but also by leadership, structured practice management, and continuous coaching. Thus, choir can be viewed as an integrative learning medium because it combines cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in one collaborative musical activity.

Based on initial observations at Bahorok 1 Public High School, several major problems were found that hindered the development of the school choir. Students have a high interest in music, but have not received systematic vocal training. Most students do not understand SATB voice parts, have difficulty maintaining pitch accuracy according to intervals, and are unable to maintain intonation when singing in a group. In addition, the limited number of competent vocal coaches and the lack of supporting facilities are external factors that exacerbate these problems, preventing students from developing their musical potential to the fullest.

This problem shows that there's a gap between students' potential and the support available. In the context of community service, choir training is a strategic solution to improve vocal skills and build teamwork among students. This program is designed through a participatory and educational approach by combining basic vocal theory, hands-on practice, and continuous evaluation. With structured implementation, it is hoped that this activity will not only improve the quality of students' singing techniques, but also strengthen character, creativity, and the sustainability of music activities in the school environment.

METHOD

The implementation of this Community Service (PKM) activity uses a participatory and educational approach by combining basic vocal theory, hands-on practice, and ongoing training. This approach aims to improve students' vocal skills through a systematic and structured choir program. The activity was carried out at SMA Negeri 1 Bahorok, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra, with 30 students participating in the music arts extracurricular program, specifically those with an interest in vocals. Participants were selected based on recommendations from arts and culture teachers and initial observations of students' interests and vocal potential.

The implementation strategy was divided into two main stages, namely the preparation stage and the training implementation stage. In the preparation stage, the community service team coordinated with the school principal and arts and culture teachers to determine the schedule and technical aspects of the activity. Next, an initial survey of the participants' vocal abilities was conducted through interviews and basic vocal tests to identify their vocal range and readiness to participate in choir training. The team also compiled a training schedule and prepared training aids in the form of keyboards, guitars, portable speakers, and song scores that had been adapted to the SATB format. Research from Permatasari *et al.* (2022) and Septiyan (2025) suggests that dividing training into structured stages beginning with fundamental technique reinforcement followed by collaborative practice enhances both individual skill acquisition and overall ensemble performance in school choir contexts. These approaches align with the demonstrative, interactive, and collaborative methods applied in this PKM activity, demonstrating a pedagogically sound progression from individual skill building to group integration. The training implementation stage was carried out over two days with two meetings, each lasting 90 minutes per session, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Community Service Implementation Activity Schedule

Meeting	Material
1	Breathing Techniques and Warm-up Exercises Intonation, articulation, and resonance exercises Introduction to voices (SATB) and voice division
2	Harmonization and group singing exercises Song repertoire: introduction and learning songs in a choir Full singing exercises, strengthening expression and dynamics

The evaluation and performance stage was carried out as the final part of the training series. Evaluations were conducted formatively and summatively. Formative evaluations were conducted at each training session to monitor the development of vocal techniques, intonation accuracy, and the students' ability to maintain their voices according to the SATB division. Meanwhile, summative evaluations were conducted through a final performance in the form of a mini concert at the school as a manifestation of the training results. The assessment was carried out by a team of trainers together with arts and culture teachers using criteria that included vocal technique, harmonization, expression, and teamwork. This stage

aimed to measure learning outcomes while providing performance experience that could boost students' confidence.

The approaches used in this activity include demonstrative, interactive, collaborative, and evaluative approaches. The demonstrative approach is carried out by providing direct examples of correct vocal techniques, including breathing techniques, articulation, and voice dynamics. The interactive approach is applied through dialogue and discussion during the practice process so that students actively ask questions and understand the concepts being learned. The collaborative approach is realized through choir group exercises that emphasize cooperation and balance between voices. Meanwhile, the evaluative approach is carried out by providing direct feedback at each session to help students correct mistakes and gradually develop their vocal potential.

The participation of partners in the implementation of this program greatly contributed to the success of the activities. The school provided official permission for the program to be implemented and supported the entire process of the choir training activities. Partners also provided the necessary facilities and equipment, such as classrooms for practice and musical instruments available at the school. In addition, the school facilitates student involvement as active participants in this activity. Partners also provide feedback and evaluation of program implementation to improve the quality of activities and ensure the program's relevance to the school's needs.

Program implementation evaluation is also conducted to assess the effectiveness of activities and ensure program sustainability after the activity is completed. The evaluation of program quality is based on indicators of student progress, improvement in musical quality, participant participation rates, and the efficient use of resources, time, and costs. To ensure sustainability, a follow-up plan is developed in the form of strengthening regular choir extracurricular activities, forming a sustainability team at the school, and developing a simple monitoring and evaluation system to monitor student progress on a regular basis.

The roles and duties of the implementation team are divided according to the competencies of each member. The team leader is responsible for coordinating all activities and ensuring that the program runs according to plan. Team members are responsible for providing training materials, evaluating students' abilities, and providing feedback for improvement in vocal technique and harmony. The students involved support the training process by assisting with vocal technique demonstrations, mentoring vocal groups, and developing training materials as directed by the team. This division of tasks aims to create effective, structured, and results-oriented activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The implementation of singing training through choir at SMA Negeri 1 Bahorok resulted in an increase in students' vocal technique and harmonization skills in SATB format. The form of science and technology implemented was a participatory vocal training model based on breathing techniques, intonation control, articulation, resonance, and gradual harmonization exercises using the four-part arrangement of the song *Bangun Pemuda Pemuda*. The repertoire used in the training can be seen in Figure 1 as the main material that forms the basis of the students' harmonization exercises.

BANGUN PEMUDI PEMUDA

do = G, 4/4 Lagu & Syair : Alfred Simanjuntak
Arr. : Bayu Nerviadi C., C.

Tempo di Marcia (♩ = 85)

S.	5	3	4	5	1	2	3	1	1	7	2	2	6	5	-	0	5	3	4	5	1	2
A.	3	3	2	5	6	7	1	6	6	7	6	4	5	5	-	0	3	3	2	5	6	7
T.	1	1	7	1	3	4	5	3	4	4	2	3	2	3	-	0	1	1	7	1	3	4
B.	1	5	4	3	6	3	1	5	6	4	4	5	5	1	-	0	1	5	4	3	6	5

1. Bangun pemu-di pe-mu-da In-do-ne-si-a. Tangan ba-ju-mu sing-
2. Sa-di tetap ber-u-sa-ha ju-jur dan i-khlas. Tak u-sah banyak bi-

S.	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
A.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
T.	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
B.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22

sing-kan un-tuk ne-ga-ra. Ma-sa yang sa-kan da-tang
ca-ra 'rus kerja ke-ras. Ha-ti teguh dan lu-rus.

S.	3	3	2	1	3	2	0	5	1	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	1	2	3	4	5	6
A.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
T.	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
B.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22

ke-wa-jiban mu-lah. Menja-di tanggung-an mu ter-ha-dap mu-
pi-kir tetap jer-mih. Berting-kah la-ku ha-lus, hai pu-tra ne-

S.	3	0	5	1	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A.	7	0	5	6	7	1	5	4	1	1	2	1	7	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
T.	6	0	3	3	4	5	3	2	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B.	3	0	1	1	7	8	9	6	8	8	8	5	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

g'ri. Berting-kah la-ku ha-lus, hai pu-tra ne-g'ri.

Figure 1. Sheet music for the song “Bangun Pemuda Pemuda” in SATB arrangement.

Source: <https://id.scribd.com/document/573131562/BANGUN-PEMUDI-PEMUDA>

In the early stages, students' average ability to maintain pitch and understand intervals is still low. Therefore, the first session focuses on diaphragmatic breathing exercises and gradual vocal warm-ups to build voice stability. The basic exercise pattern used in this activity is shown in Figure 2, which illustrates the warm-up stages before moving on to the harmonization material.



Figure 2. Breathing exercises and vocal warm-up patterns. Source: pkm team documentation.

After strengthening their basic techniques, students are divided into voice groups according to their vocal characteristics, namely soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The process of directing and dividing voice groups is done directly so that each student understands their role in the harmonization structure. Documentation of the voice division process is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The SATB voice division process during the initial rehearsal session. Source: PKM team documentation.

During group practice sessions, students practice separately with the guitar as a guide for chords to maintain pitch stability. The use of the guitar helps students understand harmonic relationships and reduces the tendency to sing out of tune due to loss of reference pitch. The practice process with instrumental accompaniment can be seen in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Group vocal practice accompanied by guitar. Source: PKM team documentation.

After each voice group demonstrated better tonal stability, all voices were combined into a single harmonized unit. At this stage, the main challenge was to maintain each voice part without being influenced by the dominance of other voices. The SATB blending process is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Combining soprano, alto, tenor, and bass voices in a joint rehearsal. Source: PKM team documentation.

The final results showed that students were able to perform songs in their entirety in a four-part choir format. In addition to technical improvements, there were also changes in attitude, such as increased confidence and team cohesion. The final documentation of the activity as an output of the training is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Final documentation of activities with the team and training participants. Source: PKM team documentation.

Discussion

The results of the activity show that students' intonation and pitch stability improved after being given systematic breathing technique reinforcement and vocal warm-up exercises. These findings are in line with Soewito's (1996) opinion, which emphasizes that diaphragmatic breathing techniques and resonance control are the main foundations for producing a stable voice that is not easily off-key. At the initial stage of the activity, most students had difficulty maintaining pitch intervals and sustaining their voices according to the SATB division. However, after gradual repetition-based drills, their abilities showed significant improvement. This reinforces the idea that structured vocal training is more effective than a purely theoretical approach to learning. To further contextualize this development, Zhang (2024) demonstrated that primary and secondary school students who received structured vocal coaching exhibited not only better pitch control but also improved social competencies such as cooperation and group responsibility. These findings corroborate the observed outcomes in this PKM activity, suggesting that vocal training benefits extend beyond technical ability into broader interpersonal competence.

Improved harmonization skills also demonstrate the relevance of practicing each voice part separately before combining them fully. Prier (2009) explains that in mixed choir arrangements, the balance of harmony and the function of each voice especially the role of the tenor as the determinant of resonance are important elements in creating musical unity. In this activity, the precise division of voices based on the vocal characteristics of the students proved to help build a more stable foundation for harmony. The students' initial difficulty in maintaining their melody lines when combined showed that their inner hearing skills, namely the ability to hear and maintain their own voices within the harmonic structure, were still weak. However, through intensive training and reinforcement of chord progressions with guitar accompaniment, the students began to show improvement in voice control. Beyond technical skill development, children's experiences in choir singing have shown intrinsic emotional and social benefits. Research on children's choral experiences Krüger Bridge (2025) indicates that collective singing strengthens group identity and student engagement findings that resonate with observed increases in confidence and teamwork among Bahorok 1 students. This highlights how choir training supports socio-emotional development alongside musical proficiency.

When compared to Putri and Ardipal's (2021) research on the implementation of choir extracurricular activities at Adabiah High School in Padang, the results of this activity show a similar pattern, namely that regular and structured coaching can improve not only vocal technique, but also teamwork and student discipline. In this activity, students who initially lacked confidence began to show courage in singing and performing with the group. This shows that choir has a broader educational function than just a musical activity, as it involves coordination, communication, and collective responsibility.

In addition, these findings also support Sitompul's (1988) view that the success of a choir is greatly influenced by consistent leadership in practice and a consistent training system. In this PKM activity, the presence of instructors who provided direct demonstrations and immediate feedback proved to help accelerate the process of correcting pitch and harmonization errors. The demonstrative and evaluative approach model that was applied showed its effectiveness in building students' musical awareness in practice. In other words, the active involvement of trainers as technical and musical facilitators was an important factor in the success of the coaching.

In terms of school capacity building, this activity also shows that limited facilities are not a major obstacle to choir training. The use of simple tools such as guitars as harmony

controllers is effective enough in building tonal stability. This is in line with the concept of practice-based vocal technique learning proposed by Milyartini *et al.* (2015), which states that vocal technique exploration can be developed through a contextual approach in accordance with available resources. Thus, the success of this activity shows that strengthening methods and consistency in practice are more decisive than the completeness of complex technological devices. Additionally, Biassoni *et al.* (2025) found that imaginative vocal training and contextualized practice significantly enhanced vocal awareness and self-monitoring in novice singers, supporting the effectiveness of interactive, feedback-oriented rehearsal structures as implemented in this PKM activity.

Overall, the discussion of the results of this activity shows that singing training through choir not only improves students' technical competence in breathing, intonation, and harmonization, but also strengthens affective and social aspects such as self-confidence, discipline, and cooperation. These findings reinforce the results of previous studies that choirs are an integrative learning medium, combining musical cognitive development and character building. Therefore, the sustainability of the program is an important factor so that the improvements that have been achieved are not temporary, but rather develop into a musical culture in the school environment.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of singing training through choir at Bahorok 1 Public High School shows that a participatory approach and structured vocal technique training are effective in improving students' musical abilities. Improvements were seen in breathing techniques, intonation accuracy, pitch stability, and the ability to maintain voice according to SATB divisions. In addition, students showed progress in maintaining harmony when all voices were combined, although further practice is still needed to achieve more optimal stability.

This activity also had a positive impact on the students' affective and social aspects, particularly in increasing their confidence, discipline, and teamwork. The rehearsal process, which emphasized balance and coordination between voices, encouraged students to be more sensitive in listening and adjusting themselves within the group. Thus, choir training not only contributed to improving vocal technique competence but also served as a medium for character building and strengthening musical culture in the school environment.

Based on the results obtained, the continuity of regular training with the guidance of competent teachers or trainers is an important factor in ensuring that the improvements achieved can develop consistently. Therefore, the integration of choir activities into the school's extracurricular program is recommended as part of strengthening continuous music education.

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