



Tactile Methods in Learning Dance Arts for Blind Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of tactile methods based on mask media in improving dance expression skills in visually impaired students. Dance expression skills are one of the important skills in art education, but for students with visual impairments, they have limitations in understanding movement visually. This study uses a quantitative approach with the A-B model *Single Subject Research* design, which involves three visually impaired students in class V at SLB Negeri A Pajajaran Bandung City as research subjects. The intervention was conducted in five sessions after three baseline sessions, using tactile methods through mask touching activities and gesture exploration. The results showed a significant increase in scores in the intervention phase compared to the baseline phase. Data analysis used average, directional tendency, stability, level change, and PND (Percentage of Non-overlapping Data) techniques, which showed that tactile methods exerted a positive influence with high effectiveness. Thus, tactile methods based on mask media can be an effective learning strategy in developing dance expression skills of blind students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dance art is a form of art education that not only trains motor skills, but also becomes an important means in developing students' self-expression and confidence. In the context of inclusive education, all children, including people with disabilities, have the same right to receive meaningful and quality education, as stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System which states that all citizens, including persons with disabilities, have the same right to get quality education, including dance learning (Badaruddin, 2023; Melandri et al., 2025; Pasaribu, 2024). Unfortunately, access to art learning for visually impaired students is still uneven. Based on research by the Australia-Indonesia Disability Research and Advocacy Network (AIDRAN) in 2023, it is stated that as many as 4 million or 1.5% of the total population in Indonesia are visually impaired (Artpradid, 2023; Cheng et al., 2025; Skrebneva & Fordham, 2024). This data proves that efforts to equalize access to education, including in the field of arts for visually impaired students, are very important to be carried out. This demands a special approach that does not rely on visual observation, but rather relies on other sensory explorations, especially the sense of touch (Badaruddin, and Firdaus, 2025; Komalasari et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important to develop learning methods that are adaptive and responsive to the sensory needs of visually impaired students, so that they can continue to express themselves fully in the art of dance (Abdul Gani et al., 2026; Olvhøj et al., 2025).

Based on the results of observations at SLB Negeri A Pajajaran Bandung City, it shows that dance learning is still carried out incidentally and has not yet become part of routine activities. Sudjana (2005) Learning is a conscious effort by a teacher to teach students through planned activities that encourage the achievement of learning goals effectively. In line with that, Sugiyono (2012) emphasized that learning is a process that is consciously designed so that students can learn optimally. This process involves three important stages: planning learning activities, executing the designed activities, and evaluating learning outcomes to ensure that goals are achieved (Abdilah et al., 2025; Amelia et al., 2025; Aprilianty et al., 2024). If you look at this statement, it can be concluded that dance learning carried out at the school is not optimal, the teaching methods are generally still verbal and demonstrative which is less effective for students with visual impairments. As a result, students' dance expressions have not developed independently and are still highly dependent on the teacher's direction. In fact, as stated by Firdaus et al. (2025); Rosala & Budiman (2020); Badaruddin et al. (2025) in their research on media-based dance learning, in fact effective learning can be obtained from direct experience, this is considered very effective in strengthening students' confidence. In line with the application of tactile methods that invite visually impaired students to directly touch the mask in an effort to improve dance expression skills.

Various studies have examined art learning for students with special needs, especially the visually impaired, with a multisensory-based approach or through verbal guidance. For example, the demonstration method with the help of direct touch has been shown to help blind students recognize motion forms (Ismaya & Andajani, 2019). On the other hand, research by Landrum & Kauffman (2013) emphasizes the important role of art in the emotional and social development of children with visual impairments. However, most of these studies still use a fragmented approach, without the integration of concrete media as

a tool of expression. Some previous research has shown that a hands-on experience-based approach through the sense of touch can help blind students understand the concepts of motion and space (Wahyuni et al., 2023). In line with that, Piaget (1973), It also states that knowledge is formed through the direct interaction of individuals with objects in their environment. This process is especially important for children, including those with visual impairments, because it is through this physical interaction that the learning experience becomes more concrete and meaningful. In addition, media-based dance learning has also been proven to increase the creativity and self-expression of students with special needs (Nurul et al., 2024). However, research that specifically examines the use of tactile methods based on mask media in dance learning for visually impaired students is still very limited. In this context, the tactile approach based on mask media presents a new contribution. Kassing et al. (2021) Reveal That masks in dance learning are not only used as a medium for understanding character and emotions, but also encourage students to be more courageous to express themselves. This method not only allows students to recognize shapes and expressions through touch, but also encourages direct emotional engagement through interaction with the media of masks.

The use of masks as an aid to expression in dance learning enriches affective and kinesthetic aspects, which are particularly relevant for visually impaired students (Badaruddin et al., 2023; Koong Lin et al., 2024; Santoso, R.G., et al., 2024). Although tactile methods have been widely used in occupational therapy or behavioral interventions, their systematic application in dance learning is still rarely the focus of mainstream research. This indicates the need for a more adaptive and multisensory approach to learning, such as tactile methods that provide opportunities for students to directly touch the media used. Therefore, this study aims to test the effectiveness of tactile methods based on mask media in improving the dance expression skills of blind students. The research was conducted using the *Single Subject Research* design as the right approach to analyze changes in individual behavior in depth.

2. METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach with the design of *Single Subject Research* (SSR) model A-B. This design was chosen because it was able to provide an in-depth picture of the influence of a treatment on the subject observed individually. Sunanto et al. (2005) this approach consists of two main phases, namely the baseline phase (A) which represents the initial condition of the subject before being given the intervention, and the intervention phase (B) which shows changes in behavior after the treatment is applied. The validity of the instrument was obtained through *expert judgement* by two experts, while the reliability of the instrument was tested through *the inter-rater reliability* technique using *the calculation of percent agreement*, which shows the level of suitability of the assessment between observers (Creswell, 2024; Kasmahidayat et al., 2024).

The subjects of the study were three visually impaired students in class V at SLB Negeri A Pajajaran Bandung City. The selection of subjects is based on consideration of their motor readiness and basic experience in learning dance, as well as recommendations from the school. The instruments used were in the form of an observation rubric of dance expression skills, which included seven indicators: facial expression through head movements, precision of hand movements, coordination with rhythm, use of mask media, accuracy of mask use, facial expression using masks, and courage to perform. Each

indicator was assessed using a scale of 1–3.

Data collection was carried out through direct observation by researchers in each learning session (Badaruddin, Masunah, et al., 2025; Fauziah et al., 2025). The initial three sessions were used as the baseline phase to obtain preliminary data, followed by five intervention sessions using a mask-media-based tactile method. The tactile method is carried out through the exploration of gestures with tactile guidance, the use of masks as an aid to expression, and the strengthening of students' responses through verbal stimuli and praise. Data analysis was carried out in a quantitative descriptive manner according to the *Single Subject Research* (SSR) model with an A-B design (Soro et al., 2024). Data was analyzed based on the average score of each session, trend trends, data stability, changes in levels between conditions, and using the *Percentage of Non-overlapping Data* (PND) technique to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Dance Expression Skills of Blind Students Before Tactile Application

The condition before the intervention is carried out is called the baseline phase (A). In this phase, the three subjects showed low dance expression skills. Observations were carried out in three sessions without special treatment. In general, facial expressions do not look optimal, body movements are still stiff, and the conformity of movement with rhythm tends to be unstable. The reliance on verbal instructions is very high, and the courage to perform is still limited.



Figure 1. Dance Learning Activities Before Intervention

Subjects exhibited less spontaneous motor responses, with minimal head and hand movements. The second subject had difficulty in matching the movement to the rhythm of the music and often stopped in the middle of the session. Meanwhile, the third subject shows enthusiasm, but his body expressions are not directed and do not reflect the emotions of the dance as a whole. Students were seen only moving to follow the teacher, not memorizing dances, not listening to music and beating music with incoherent movements. Not more than 20 minutes, there was 1 visually impaired student who felt bored so he immediately asked for permission to sit.

Table 1. Dance Expression Skill Score of Blind Students in the Baseline Phase

Student Name	Skor Baseline			Mean Baseline
	A1	A2	A3	
RNP	7	7	7	33,3%
SW	7	7	7	33,3%
TRUE	7	7	7	33,3%

Observation data showed that the average score of the three subjects' dance expression skills was in the low score range, which was only 7 out of 21 maximum scores or 33.3% of 100%. The data pattern during baseline was stable but the intersessional values did not show an improvement direction. These findings indicate that without interventions that are appropriate to the sensory needs of visually impaired students, their dance expression skills have not been optimally developed.

3.1. The Process of Learning Dance Using the Tactile Method

The condition during treatment is called the intervention phase. The intervention phase was carried out to provide a deeper picture of the change process in visually impaired students. Interventions were given in 5 sessions, each session lasting 30 minutes or 1 hour lesson. Each session has different intervention materials. The following will explain how the dance learning process with a tactile-based learning approach uses mask media.

Intervention 1: Introduction of Dance Expressions Through Tactile Media

In the first session of the intervention, the activity started with reading the basmalah and then building a warm atmosphere through light questions about the students' experience in dancing, the children responded enthusiastically, they shared stories about their moments when dancing. Next, to dilute the atmosphere while practicing touch sensitivity, researchers invited students to play "guess objects", where they guess simple objects such as erasers, pens, and books through touch. This activity is designed as an introduction to training the sense of touch which is the basis for tactile learning, as well as training students' focus. Next, the researcher introduced the concepts of facial expressions and emotions such as happy, sad, and angry. To strengthen understanding, students are given masks as concrete media that they can feel and wear to begin to feel the form of expression through touch. Students gave a positive response, they seemed surprised, happy, and began to show expressions based on the results of the mask media touch. Visually impaired students can already demonstrate facial expressions with masks that they separate or hold.



Figure 2. Ice Breaking Touch Sharpening



Figure 3. Tactile Exploration

Intervention 2: Introduction to Body Concepts and Exploration of Dance Movement

In the second session, students began to be invited to stand and recognize their own body parts through touch, starting from the tip of the head to the tip of the foot. This activity is designed to foster body awareness, which is an important foundation in expressing oneself through dance. After that, the researchers invited students to explore basic movements by asking reflective questions such as, "In which direction can the head move?" and "What movements can the hands do?" Through these questions, students begin to try different movements, such as swinging their hands or turning their heads to the right and left, according to the expressions of emotions that have been introduced

before. The activity of recognizing and exploring the movements of the limbs was then continued by making simultaneous movements together, accompanied by counting and clapping to build cohesiveness. The students' expressive abilities began to show development, they were seen starting to use body expressions when exploring movement. For students who are still afraid to move, the researcher provides support by inviting them to join hands during the activity, the researcher also helps students personally if they still feel difficult. This approach is quite helpful in reducing fear and creating a sense of security for blind students when participating in dance learning.



Figure 3. Recognizing Body Parts



Figure 4. Exploration of Dance Movements

Intervention 3: Compiling Exploratory Dance Movements

The third session was focused on repeating the movements that had been learned in the previous meeting. Before starting the core activity, the researcher invited students to do an expression guessing game as ice breaking. In this activity, researchers played several types of music with different emotional nuances, such as music with sad, happy, or angry nuances. When the music is played, students are asked to lift masks according to expressions that match the mood of the song, for example, sad masks when sad music is heard. This activity is a fun warm-up while helping to recall the variety of expressions that have been introduced. In session 3, students can already compile the movements that have been learned previously in session 2. The movements that were arranged included movements of expressions of pleasure, sadness, anger and fear. To improve the learning atmosphere, the researcher provided appropriate dance music, then students began to practice dancing to the accompaniment of music and moving along with the dance that came from the results of tactile exploration. They began to adapt to the dance music that the researchers provided. It can be seen that there is an improvement in skills in expressing dance movements, students have begun to connect body movements with appropriate facial expressions. To strengthen the learning experience, researchers occasionally gave students the opportunity to again touch the mask, so that they could better understand the character of expression and not lose the connection between movement and emotional meaning. Interestingly, in this session, visually impaired students seemed more confident. They were able to dance independently without having to be helped or touched directly by the researcher. Coordination with rhythm began to form, showing that they had begun to be able to adapt to the musical accompaniment and harmonize movement and expression more naturally



Figure 5. Guess the Expression Activity



Figure 6. Stringing Dance Movements Creations

Intervention 4: Practicing Creative Dance and Trying to Use a Mask

In the fourth session, students have begun to remember the sequence of dance movements and are able to perform them in their entirety accompanied by music. The series of movements they perform is the result of exploration through a tactile approach. The first movement depicts a happy expression, indicated by agile steps and hand waves. Furthermore, sad expressions are manifested through the movement of closing the face, bowing, and gentler movements, as if reflecting a sad mood. For angry expressions, students begin to demonstrate it by clenching their hands and showing the intensity of the movement. Meanwhile, in the expression of fear, they move faster while showing a mimic of fear and panic. In this session, the researcher also gave students the opportunity to wear a full mask during the dance performance. Some students seemed enthusiastic and immediately put on the mask without hesitation, while others still looked awkward. But overall, students showed positive development. They seem more confident and begin to enjoy the process of learning dance with a more complete expression.



Figure 7. Dancing Using Tactile Media

Intervention 5 : Presentation of Dance Works and Evaluation

The last session was used as an evaluation moment to see the development of individual students' skills. On this occasion, students dance together first, then the researcher provides space for each student to perform their dance movements independently accompanied by music. This activity aims to train the courage and confidence of blind students to display their work. The results of the observations show that there is a significant increase. First, blind students are able to wear their masks independently without the help of researchers, then students have the courage to appear in front of the class independently without any instructions from researchers. The ability of blind students is increasing, especially in terms of facial expressions, precision of movement, and the use of masks as a medium of expression. Students appear to appear

more confident and able to convey expressions as a whole, such as the masks they wear. After making the presentation, the students' response was excellent, with their pride and confidence dancing. They feel more confident and are no longer afraid to move freely, step, crouch, and jump, and they even want to be watched by the people around them.



Figure 8. VRE Student Dance Presentation



Figure 9. SSW Student Dance Presentation

3.2. Data on Dance Learning Outcomes with Tactile Method

This study aims to measure the effectiveness of tactile methods based on mask media in improving the dance expression skills of blind students. Data were collected through observation of three subjects who participated in the learning over eight sessions, consisting of three baseline sessions (A) and five intervention sessions (B). Each session was assessed using an observation rubric that included seven indicators of dance expression skills, namely: facial expressions, body flexibility, conformity of movement with rhythm, use of masks, accuracy of mask use, expression through masks, and courage to perform.

Table 2. Development of Dance Expression Skills Score for Blind Students

Name	Baseline			Intervention				
	A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
RNP	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	47,6%	57%	62%	71%	85%
SSW	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	47,6%	52%	66%	76%	81%
TRUE	33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	62%	71%	90%	90%	100%

The data obtained at baseline showed a score that tended to be low. Movements still look stiff, expressions are not formed, and confidence has not appeared optimally, so the data patterns in this phase have not shown a significant improvement trend. Entering the intervention phase, the tactile approach began to be applied gradually, starting from texture recognition, body exploration, to the use of masks as a medium of expression. Direct and systematic touch experiences help students recognize body positions, directions of movement, and the meaning of expressions in a more concrete way. Subjects begin to show progress in aligning movement with rhythm, displaying expressions that correspond to emotional characters, and using masks as a more appropriate expression aid. Here is a graph presented to see more clearly the improvement of the dance expression skills of blind students:

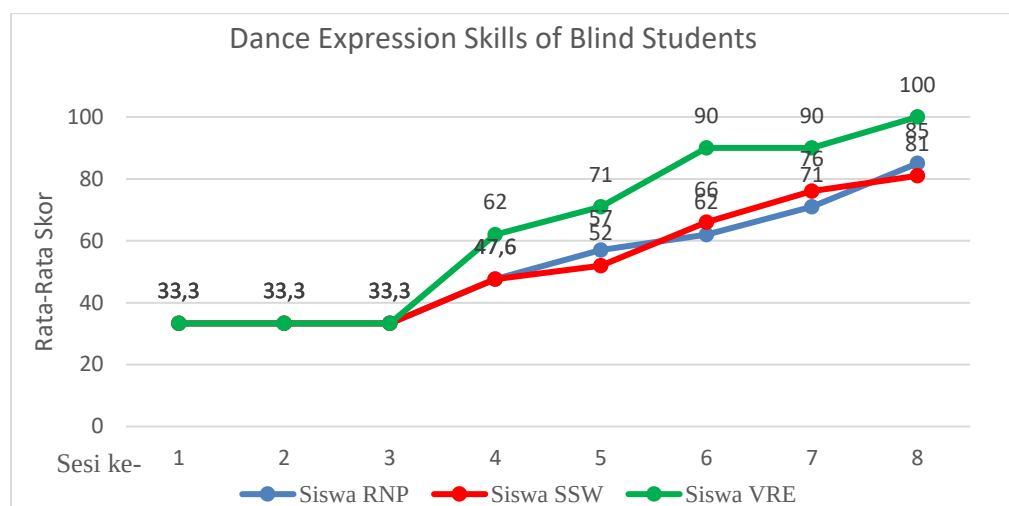


Figure 10. Development of Dance Expression Skills Score for Blind Students

The scores obtained by each subject during the intervention phase experienced a steady increase. The first subject (RNP) showed an improvement from the end-of-baseline phase score of 7 to 18 (11+) at the end of the intervention session. The second subject (SSW) increased from 7 to 17 (+10) at the end of the intervention phase, while the third subject (VRE) experienced a higher increase, from 7 to 21 (+14). The overall average score also increased significantly, indicating that all subjects experienced positive development of dance expression skills after the intervention was performed. Overall, trend graphs in all three subjects showed an increasing direction in the intervention phase, with data tending to be (variable) unstable compared to the baseline phase, but the instability showed a significant increase. To strengthen the results of the intervention effectiveness analysis, an overlap percentage analysis was also carried out (*Percentage of Non-overlapping Data/PND*) between phases.

Based on the results of the calculation above, it was obtained that none of the scores in the intervention phase (B) were within the range of scores in the baseline phase (A), so that a PND value of $0/5 \times 100\% = 0\%$ overlap was obtained. This 0% result indicates that the overall intervention data score is 100% higher than the highest score from the baseline data or PND of 100%. Thus it indicates that the intervention has a positive impact on students' dance expression skills. The improvement in score and data stability during the intervention phase reinforces the conclusion that tactile methods based on mask media are effective in helping blind students develop expressive abilities through dance. These findings are in line with behavioristic theory [Slavin & Madden \(2006\)](#), where stimulus in the form of tactile learning gives rise to noticeable behavioral changes after going through certain safeguards. In addition, multisensory and sensorimotor theories support that tactile activities can help visually impaired students understand movement in a concrete way. In line with what was expressed by [Gumelar et al. \(2023\)](#) which states that the learning method affects the level of effectiveness of the learning received. The application of tactile methods based on mask media has proven to be effective as a tool to build kinesthetic expression, replacing visual expressions that are not accessible to students ([Artpradid, 2023](#); [Giomi, 2024](#); [Triana et al., 2024](#)). This research also strengthens the view that self-expression is a form of emotional communication that can be realized through movement. With a tactile approach, visually impaired students are able to express emotions independently without continuing to rely on the teacher's direction ([Boswell et al., 2023](#); [Bower, 2022](#); [Jones et al., 2021](#)). This is in line with the opinion [Rosala & Budiman \(2020\)](#), which emphasizes the importance of hands-on

experience in art learning for students with special needs. It can be concluded that tactile methods based on mask media are effectively applied in the context of inclusive education to support and independence of blind students in dancing.

4. CONCLUSION

This study shows that tactile methods based on mask media can be an effective approach in improving dance expression skills in visually impaired students. Simple touches, masks worn, and direct exploration of the body are able to open up new spaces for them to understand movement, rhythm, and expression even without the aid of vision. After being given an intervention, the three students showed very significant progress. They appear more confident, more courageous, and begin to show more lively expressions when dancing. Masks, which were originally just an aid, have turned into a medium that makes them feel more free to express their emotions. This proves that with the right approach, limitations are not a barrier to growth and expression. More than just a method, this tactile approach is proof that art learning can be made more inclusive and enjoyable for all children, without exception. Hopefully, the findings in this study can inspire more educators to support the importance of adaptive learning strategies, friendly learning spaces, and truly understanding how each child, especially children with special needs, learns.

5. AUTHORES'NOTE

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