



'JOYFUL BRAILLE' BEYOND THE SIX-DOT CELLS: AN INNOVATIVE EXTENDED CHORAL MUSICAL NOTATION

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Submitted: 22 June 2025

Revised: 31 August 2025

Accepted: 10 September 2025

Peer-review under responsibility of 9th ASIA International Multidisciplinary Conference (Songkhla, Thailand) Scientific Committee

<http://connectingasia.org/scientific-committee/>

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Office # 6, First Floor, A & K Plaza, Near D Watson, F-10 Markaz, Islamabad, Pakistan,

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ABSTRACT

The Joyful Braille Music Notation is an innovative extension of traditional braille music notation designed explicitly for blind choral performance. Developed through engagement with the first blind choir in Malaysia, this new system expands the conventional 6-dot braille by incorporating lines above, below, to the right, or the left of the cell, and other new touchable musical notations. This extension enables more efficient reading and performance of choral music, particularly for blind musicians, by minimizing braille cell reading. The notations also incorporate contemporary vocal techniques, such as glissandos and breathing points, adapting them seamlessly into braille. The invention of The Joyful Braille Music Notation has had a transformative impact on choral performance for blind learners, as demonstrated through qualitative research. Choir members could adapt to the new notation, improving performance accuracy, enhancing expressiveness, and speeding up the blind musical notation reading processes. This innovation reduces the complexity of braille music, enabling blind singers to engage more deeply in ensemble settings. The system's user-friendly approach has also made it accessible to sighted and low-vision musicians, fostering inclusivity and collaboration in choral performances. Beyond choral music, this innovation has the potential to be applied to other musical instruments, opening new possibilities for blind musicians to engage in broader contemporary musical contexts.

Keywords: *Extended Braille Music Notation; Joyful Braille; Blind Choral Performance; Braille Vocal Techniques Notation; Inclusive Music*