EI MODULE FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN TERENGGANU

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a key pillar in building the preschool children socio-emotional in achieving greater success in the future. In this study, the researcher applied the use of Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module in testing the level of reliability of this module in building children positive emotions in the preschool in Kuala Nerus at Terengganu. Respondents in this study consisted of 100 preschool children aged 4 to 6 years and living in the Kuala Nerus area at Terengganu. The number of samples will be split into two groups which is 50 people from the children will be included in the experimental group using the module. Meanwhile, another 50 children will be included in the control group without using the module. The results showed that children from the experimental group recorded a higher level of mean score after attending the emotional intelligence module activity compared to children from the control group who recorded a lower level of mean score before and after the activity. The item reliability value also recorded a high value of 0.89. This proves that the items that have been constructed and used are authentic because it’s appropriate to the level of sample ability and understanding in the study.

Keywords: Preschool Children, emotional intelligence (EI), EI module, Terengganu.

I. INTRODUCTION

Early education is a very important early exposure in the world of schooling for children. According to Suppiah, Rachel, Norazilawati and Sandra (2017), the National Preschool Education Curriculum emphasizes early childhood education which includes language and communication development, cognitive development, spirituality and moral, socioemotional, physical, creativity and aesthetics. All these domains show that the Malaysian government gives full priority in providing comprehensive self-development to children at the preschool level before entering the real world of schooling (Norfaezah, Siti Nurhajariah, Awatif dan Ida, 2016).
Socio-emotional development is one of the most important developmental domains for children (Deborah, 2016). Goleman (1998) states, emotional intelligence is a prerequisite for the effectiveness of intellectual intelligence. Meaning, an individual’s intellectual intelligence cannot function properly if part of the brain is damaged due to emotional disability. Stable emotions can make children more confident when interacting (Ina and Eka Rizki, 2017). If social interactions are stable and good, children's potential is more evident in leadership, individual achievement, achievement in groups and even social relationships. Therefore, children should need good and stable emotional development in preparation for learning (Zaharah, 2016).

1. Problem Statement

This study touches on the problems that arise in the implementation of socio-emotional teaching and learning at the level of preschool children in Malaysia. Several problems have been identified that make the socio-emotional teaching and learning process difficult to carry out. Based on a study conducted by Nor Aizal Akmal and Azlina (2012) showed that preschool children were found to be weak in mastering one of the elements in the socio-emotional core that is the element of achieving emotional intelligence.

Even according to the views of Turcule and Tulbure (2014) stated to develop the elements of emotional intelligence, the early development of children is emphasized and this ability will continue to grow throughout getting an education in school. However, the preschool system now seems to be too concerned with cognitive and psychomotor development so that the emotional aspect has been neglected (Tajul Ariffin, 1990).

In addition, the results of interviews conducted with preschool teachers showed that the elements of emotional intelligence and other elements in the socio-emotional core were only used as side subjects. The lack of teaching aids or teaching and learning modules that are specialized in the socio-emotional core also causes teachers to have difficulty in implementing teaching and learning sessions. The difficulty for teachers to carry out this teaching and learning is due to the lack of guidelines that provide information in a planned and systematic manner based on the syllabus.

According to Kamisah (2013) states that preschool teachers still lack reference materials which is a source of obstacles to become more skilled. In addition, according to Mat Som (2005) stated that there are various challenges that have to be faced by the school in implementing BBM in R&D. Weaknesses in aspects of teaching practice can affect children’s social, cognitive and creative development, which in turn will determine their readiness to go to school (Bierman, Domitrovich & Darling, 2009). At this stage of the study, weaknesses in aspects of teaching practice can affect the development of emotional intelligence of preschool children as well as their preparation for primary school.

Recognizing this problem, researchers have decided to use an Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module that has been built previously outside Terengganu to be used in a study on preschool children aged 4 to 6 years around Kuala Nerus, Terengganu. Researchers used this module to test the extent of the reliability of the module in building positive emotions of preschool children in Terengganu.

2. Literature Reviews

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to control, understand and use emotions as a guide for how we think and act (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotions have a profound effect on every decision and action taken. Mayer and Salovey (1997) have developed the concept of emotional intelligence to explain the importance of emotion in life. They define emotional intelligence as knowing emotion, using emotion, understanding emotion and controlling emotions.

The findings of a study conducted by Jain (2015) and Gallagher and Vella-Brodrick (2008) found that there is a relationship between the level of emotional intelligence and the well-being of an individual's life. For Bar-On (2012) and Mavroveli, Petrides, Rieffe and Bakker (2007), individuals with good levels of emotional intelligence can easily adapt to new life and they also have good mental health.

Further, according to Dhani and Sharma (2017) and Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2009), the findings of their study show that individuals with mental abilities and positive personality traits are those with good levels of emotional intelligence. Individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence are able to achieve good levels of academic achievement (Maraichelvi & Rajan, 2013; Schute et al., 1998). Based on the findings of the study...
conducted by Shaheen and Shaheen (2016) and Tsaousis and Nikolaou (2002), an individual will have a healthy physical and psychological level if he has a good level of emotional intelligence.

Therefore, emotional intelligence is necessary and important in the early childhood development. This is to prevent them from having any problems when they enter primary school. Such acts of quarrelling and hurting others occur due to the unstable development of children's emotions (National Preschool Standard Curriculum, 2010). The development of emotional intelligence is important to children, as this element is a rule, an encouragement to social behavior as well as positive learning behaviors (Fantuzzo, Bulotsky, McDermott, McWayne, Frye & Perlman, 2007; Izard, Trentacosta, King & Mostow, 2004).

Based on the results of a study conducted by Fantuzzo et. al (2007) and Raver and Knitzer (2002), emotional intelligence is important and is fundamental to the success of a preschool environment that produces successful individuals. According to Paavola and Evelin (2017) and Denham (2006), children with high levels of emotional intelligence are able to develop a learning environment that is able to follow instructions, pay attention and listen, able to solve problems and be patient. The importance of emotional intelligence has also been highlighted in the National Philosophy of Education (FPK, 1996) which shows efforts to create a balanced, harmonious physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social people to produce knowledgeable, capable, dignified, responsible and capable of achieving personal well-being (National Preschool Standard Curriculum, 2010).

The goals of the National Preschool Standard Curriculum (KSPK, 2010) have also set a target for developing the children potential of four to six year olds in physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social aspects.

Emotional elements are still being considered and appreciated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) which aims to equip individuals with positive skills, beliefs and concepts so that they can succeed in the current environment and be prepared to address challenges and responsibilities in primary school.

3. Theoretical Framework

Teaching and learning module to help develop preschoolers’ EI was created involving a number of theories i.e. Gagne Information Processing Theory 6, Bandura’s Social Learning Theory 1 and Theory Zone of proximal Development (ZPD) by Vygotsky 22. The use of module in teaching and learning can encourage children to understand faster and the information can be transmitted through many different activities. Teaching and learning process will be more interesting with a variety of activities that can be included in the module. Figure 1 show the theories that have been used to produce the teaching and learning module to enhance preschoolers’ EI.

The present research was conducted with children at the preschool level. According to Piaget’s Theory of Development, children at this stage have an egocentric nature that will make it difficult for them to distinguish between delusions and reality. These children usually can only think of specific examples known as transductive. For them, every experience and all points of view of others are similar to what they themselves have. Based on the Development of Erikson’s Theory, the children at ages three to six years, will do things that are not fully aligned with their age due to the ongoing cognitive and physical development. If children feel criticized while experiencing curiosity, it will cause them to feel guilty and they will not take initiative in doing an activity again. Thus, the tug of war between the motivation to do new things and the prohibition to not try new things goes on. It is needed that adults promote well-meaning feelings in the children. Therefore, such children need the help of adults or peers who are better able to guide and an easily disclose the learned things. This method will involve the Zone of proximal Development (ZPD) theory by Lev Vygotsky 22 to support it. According to Vygotsky 22, students who experience learning difficulties can be resolved when getting modeled help from an adult or collaboration partners. Student performance can also be expanded to higher levels of potential. However, children also need an example to be imitated in order to facilitate the learning process. This process has been explained through social learning theory by Albert Bandura 1. Bandura suggested that indirectly children will learn a behavior change when observing the process and outcome of others’ behavioral changes. This process is called modeling.

However, each stimulus received from the external environment which aims to simplify the process of learning, will depend also on the degree of information processing received in the nervous system through the human senses such as hearing, sight, touch, action and so on. We used the information processing theory by Gagne 9 to explain how this process occurs. According to Gagne 6, to facilitate new learning, people need old experiences that are stored in long-term memory which associate to the new experiences. Therefore, to facilitate the new learning process, we conduct an attractive activity which was contained in the module. With an activity being
undertaken plus guidance from teachers and friends, teaching and learning process will be easier and will not boring. Children can see and apply the material learned in lessons. This will enhance their understanding through the teaching and learning process.

In addition to facilitating teachers in the teaching and learning processes, it was aimed by the present study to tap the level of preschool children’s EI stages i.e. to know the level of EI before and after the teaching and learning modules run. Theory used to assess the children EI is through the Four Branch Model of EI by Mayer and Salovey. Through this model, Mayer and Salovey agree that individuals who are able to achieve the harmony of life are those who can master the four branches of EI namely identifying emotion, understanding emotion, controlling emotion and using emotion. Accordingly, all theories and models involved were used to create the module revolving around these four aspects. So in a way, Mayer and Salovey’s model served as the spine of our teaching and learning module to promote the enhancement of preschool children’s EI.

4. Method

The selected study method uses experimental quantitative methods. The experimental design was chosen appropriately to see the reliability of Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module in constructing positive emotions of preschool children aiming to see comparisons between two or more data sets giving confidence to researchers that study observational results are due to developed module influence. Data collection involved pretest design and posttest design. The selection of the experimental study design was because the subjects involved in the study could be randomly distributed in control groups or experimental groups for comparison and these groups were balanced because they had similar characteristics.

The study sample consisted of 100 preschool children aged 4 to 6 years around Kuala Nerus, Terengganu. Preschool children around Kuala Nerus, Terengganu were selected to test the effectiveness of the Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module. The sampling method used is purposive sampling in the sample selection process. The sample was selected based on the assumption that children could supply data to answer the research questions. The number of samples will be split into two groups which is 50 people from the children will be included in the experimental group using the module. Meanwhile, another 50 children will be included in the control group without using the module.

There are two types of instruments in this study namely (i) Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module and (ii) questionnaires used before and after the use of Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module which is to identify the changes in emotional intelligence of preschool children in terms of identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions and controlling emotions. Table 1 show the themes, activities and elements of emotional intelligence building in the Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The sub elements to build Emotional Intelligence</th>
<th>Learning standards</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Emotional Element Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSE 2.1: Building a Self-Concept</td>
<td>PSE 2.1.3:</td>
<td>Activity 5</td>
<td>Let's Build</td>
<td>Know To Understand The Emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be positive about self-esteem.</td>
<td>• Build shapes of vehicles using dough</td>
<td></td>
<td>Know To Use Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSE 2.1.4:</td>
<td>Stating how to overcome self-weakness with guidance.</td>
<td>Activity 2</td>
<td>Help Neighbours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Acting</td>
<td>• Q &amp; A with teachers</td>
<td>Know To Use Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Q &amp; A with teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>’Gotong-royong’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Together clean up class area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSE 2.2: Building a Positive Spirit and Character</td>
<td>PSE 2.2.2:</td>
<td>Activity 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create passion and positive qualities such as patience, unity and helping.</td>
<td>• Together clean up class area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSE 2.3.4:</td>
<td>Activity 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speak confidently.</td>
<td>• Storytelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSE 2.3.5:</td>
<td>Activity 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who am I?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Reliability of the Module

The modules reliability were tested using Rasch Model analysis which aimed to see if the modules constructed had sufficient capabilities to help build the level of preschool children emotional intelligence. The results of Rasch analysis showed good reliability characteristics of 7.73 logit for the item range. As for the range of people, it is 10.49 logit. This shows a long and impressive measuring stick of 3.19 logits. The PCA indicator of 56.2 per cent exceeds the minimum threshold of 40 per cent required in the Rasch analysis. This proves that the modules built are able to be a mechanism in helping the developmental level of preschool children emotional intelligence.

2. Instrumentations

The research tool used in this research is the Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module in constructing the positive emotions of preschool children. To identify the level of children emotional intelligence in the preschool, researchers will use the Sullivan Emotional Intelligent Scale for Children (EISC) which has been adapted in the context of preschool children in Malaysia. EISC measurements include the ability to identify emotions, the ability to understand emotions, the ability to control emotions and the ability to use emotions.

A subset of EISC measurements included tests through facial expressions, storytelling, understanding and controlling emotions. There are 20 items to test the level of identifying emotions through face expressions and eight items tested through storytelling. Both of these subsets are under the domain of knowing how to identify emotions. The domain of knowing how to understand emotions has 12 items and the next nine items are contained under the domain of knowing how to control emotions. There is another section below the EISC scale that is empathy which contains ten items. Table 2 shows examples of EISC instrument adaptation items in the context of preschool children in Malaysia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Original EISC</th>
<th>EISC adaptation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to identify emotions</td>
<td>Test through facial expressions 5 AI</td>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>Sedih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Test through storytelling 1 AII</td>
<td>Scared</td>
<td>Takut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mad</td>
<td>Marah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It’s bedtime and Ben hears raindrops on the roof. Ben is just about to fall asleep when a bright of lightening fills her room and loud clap of thunder suddenly makes her wide awake. Point to the picture</td>
<td>Waktu tidur, Abu mendengar titisan hujan di atas bumbung. Semasa Abu hampir terlena, tiba-tiba Abu terus terjaga dari tidur apabila terdengar bunyi petir yang kuat dan kilat yang memancar ke biliknya. Tunjukkan perasaan Abu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that best describe how ben feels. 

Part I

Janna is playing bicycle in the park one Saturday afternoon. She looks at her good friend sitting down right in her path. He is trying to fix his damaged bicycle.

a. Would Janna feel sad that her friend’s bicycle was damaged?

Ability to understand emotions

1B

Part II

Janna bermain basikal di taman pada suatu petang Sabtu. Tiba-tiba dia melihat kawan karibnya sedang berputus asah basikalnya ketika itu.

a. Adakah Janna akan berasa sedih melihat basikal rakannya telah rosak?

Ability to control emotions

2C

Part III

Anda ingin mendengar muzik di dalam bilik anda, tetapi anda tidak dapat mencari CD baru hadiah hari jadi anda. Anda menghabiskan masa yang lama mencarinya, dan kemudian anda melihat CD anda di bilik adik anda. Anda telah mengingatkan adik anda untuk tidak mengambil barang-barang kepunyaan anda tanpa bertanya terlebih dahulu.

a. Patutkah anda akan menjerit pada adik anda kerana telah mengambil CD tanpa kebenaran?

Ability to use emotions.

1D

Part IV

Rakan baik anda mendapat basikal baru dan berasa sangat gembira. Adakah anda akan turut berasa gembira untuk rakan anda?

Rakan baik anda mendapat basikal baru dan berasa sangat gembira. Adakah anda akan turut berasa gembira untuk rakan anda?

Researchers have changed a number of items to suit the focus tendencies of children in Malaysia. In addition, every facial expression under the domain of knowing how to identify emotions is also altered and replaced with facial expressions that resemble Malaysians. Next, the researcher changed the scale of the study's answers from three choices to two choices only. For example, ‘Yes’, ‘No’, and ‘I Don’t Know’ were changed to ‘Yes’ and ‘No’. This is because the answer scales for the ‘No’ and ‘I Don’t Know’ categories recorded the same identity score.

II. RESULT

Does the teaching and learning module in the development of preschool children Emotional Intelligence (EI) have a good level of reliability?

Table 3. Reliability of Emotional Intelligence (EI) Module: Building Children’s Positive Emotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>102 input</th>
<th>100 measured</th>
<th>Infit</th>
<th>Outfit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Error</td>
<td>IMNSQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>134.6</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real RMSE</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>ADJ SD</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>Separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
<td>76 input</td>
<td>76 measured</td>
<td>Infit</td>
<td>Outfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>177.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real RMSE</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>ADJ SD</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>Separation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that the person reliability value is 0.74. This indicates that the sample selection for this study was accurate and met the characteristics required by the objectives of the study. Furthermore, this table also shows that the reliability value of the item also recorded a high value of 0.89. This proves that the items that have been constructed and used are authentic because they are appropriate to the level of ability and understanding of the study sample.
III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the teaching and learning EI modules for preschool children were able to help improve the level of preschool children emotional intelligence (EI) in the experimental group. However, the existing EI teaching and learning methods for preschool children were less effective in helping to improve the children's EI levels for the control group. Accordingly, the teaching and learning EI module for preschool children produced is effectively implemented because it successfully helps to increase the level of preschool children EI in the study area.

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Ethical clearance: Done research committee.

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