

# Using Teaching & Learning Module to Enhance Preschool Children's Emotional Intelligence: A Preschool Teachers Perception

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**Abstract---** A preliminary study conducted by the researchers found that preschool teachers in Malaysia are having problems teaching the socio-emotional components due to the lack of specific teaching tools, guidance and structure. In this study, a teaching module was developed to help preschool teachers in pedagogy of emotional intelligence (EI) to enhance the preschool children's EI in Malaysia. This module was developed based on Gagne Information Processing Theory, Bandura's Social Learning Theory and The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) Theory by Vygotsky. The module includes ten topics which cover all elements of EI: indentifying emotion, understanding emotion, controlling emotion and using emotion. Activities were designed for each of these elements and in-service teachers were the ones who taught the children using the module. The effectiveness of this module was examined through an interview among the preschools teachers (experimental group) who using the module. Results show both preschools teacher in experimental group satisfy with the effectiveness's teaching and learning module to enhance preschool children's emotional intelligence. It is significant increase of children's emotional intelligence in the experimental group. These findings suggest that the module can be a useful tool for preschool teachers to help develop preschool children's emotional intelligence.

**Keywords---** Socio Emotional Development, Emotional Intelligence (EI), Module, Preschool.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Many studies have found significant relationships between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and future success in education 1,2. Children who are able to apply EI would have better academic achievements 3,4,5,6. According to Jain, children who have higher EI are more apt to follow teacher instruction, pay attention, listen and solve problems with patience 7. Positive emotional skills instilled in children can allow them to develop EI and can shape behaviors which can assist children in learning and eventually to achieve better academic results 8.

Children with greater EI are better able to cope and control unexpected circumstance such as frustration, anger, sadness and so on 9,10,11.

EI is important in a wide variety of contexts in any person's life as Jain, Gallagher and Vella-Brodrick have noted that individuals who are successful in life (i.e. in carrier) use only 20 percent of intellectual intelligence compared to 80 percent of EI. In addition, individuals who have a higher level of emotional control are better able to

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lead good relationships with others through their social skills such as communication, building consensus and efficiency in influencing others 12.

## **II. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

An early study was conducted by some of the present researchers at several preschools at Johor Bahru, Malaysia and it was found that preschool children are weak in mastering the elements of EI which is contained under the socio-emotional pillar of the national curriculum for preschoolers 13. Apart from that, the results of interviews conducted with preschool teachers indicated that the elements of EI and other elements under the socio-emotional pillar (of the national curriculum) were not given proper importance by the curriculum forming authorities and the said pillar has only been used as an ancillary pillar only to be combined with the others pillars which are considered important such as science and technology pillar, communication pillar and so on. Whereas EI is very important and its elements ought to be given importance as it helps construct an individual's life trajectory such as higher mental abilities and positive personality attributes and may drive them in the right way to life 14,15. On children context have found that proper development of emotions is important for children because it is a regulation skill which promotes social behavior and positive learning 16, thus creating a conducive learning environment of a preschool setting.

In addition to the above problem, another problem is that of limited teaching aids or teaching and learning specific modules to enhance EI elements that can be used as a guide or facilitator for preschool teachers to facilitate them in teaching and learning processes undertaken. This scarcity of resources is particularly high in Malaysian context. Due to this dearth of available resources, preschool teachers in Malaysia find it difficult to carry out the teaching and learning. Moreover, there are limited specific modules available that provide information or knowledge about planned and systematic use of instructions to emotionally support and facilitate preschoolers. The teachers added that most of the teaching and learning process of EI and other elements under the socio-emotional pillar are just run only by some talk and storytelling and this makes it difficult for the students to understand the information received and thus somehow reduces their interest in learning and attention in class. According to Ovelyn, Baharom, Dg. Norizah, Molod, a compilation of modules accordance to the syllabus content, will successfully make the process of teaching and learning become effective and also fun for students 17.

The module is a pedagogical tool for teachers to provide the teaching and learning environment with different options (apart from the pre-designed curricula). Teaching modules can help teachers save time to implement the teaching and learning processes and help achieve teaching objectives with relative ease 18. Teaching module is a concrete material that can serve as a catalyst for the success of teaching and learning. At the same time, the use of these modules can strengthen students' understanding of the things they have learned.

Therefore, we produced a module which involves a number of activities based on certain theories so that teaching and learning of EI may become smoother and easier for students to understand and to support their development of EI. From what has been discussed before, which involves preschool children learning style and also problems experienced by teacher in the teaching and learning of EI in the Malaysian context, we selected a number of theories (information processing theory, social learning theory and the theory of Zone of proximal Development)

which were synthesized in the form of a teaching and learning module. This EI module was aimed at becoming a tool for teachers to teach emotional skills effectively. Moreover, this module was made in such a way that the students may find it easy and fun to learn emotional skills which encourage them to develop better EI. Enhancing EI was at the core of this module and all the theories mentioned earlier were consulted to have their say in terms of emotional development.

### III. DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING MODULE

Teaching module was developing to help preschool teachers in the pedagogy of emotional intelligent (EI) to enhance the preschool children's EI in Malaysia. Figure 1 show the Design of Donnelly & Fitzmaurice Module.

We used the design of Donnelly and Fitzmaurice module as a guide to develop the module of teaching and learning of emotional intelligent (EI) for preschool children 19. As per Donnelly and Fitzmaurice's module design, theory is very important in the development of any module. Our module was developing based on Gagne Information Processing Theory, Bandura's Social Learning Theory and The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) Vygotsky Theory.

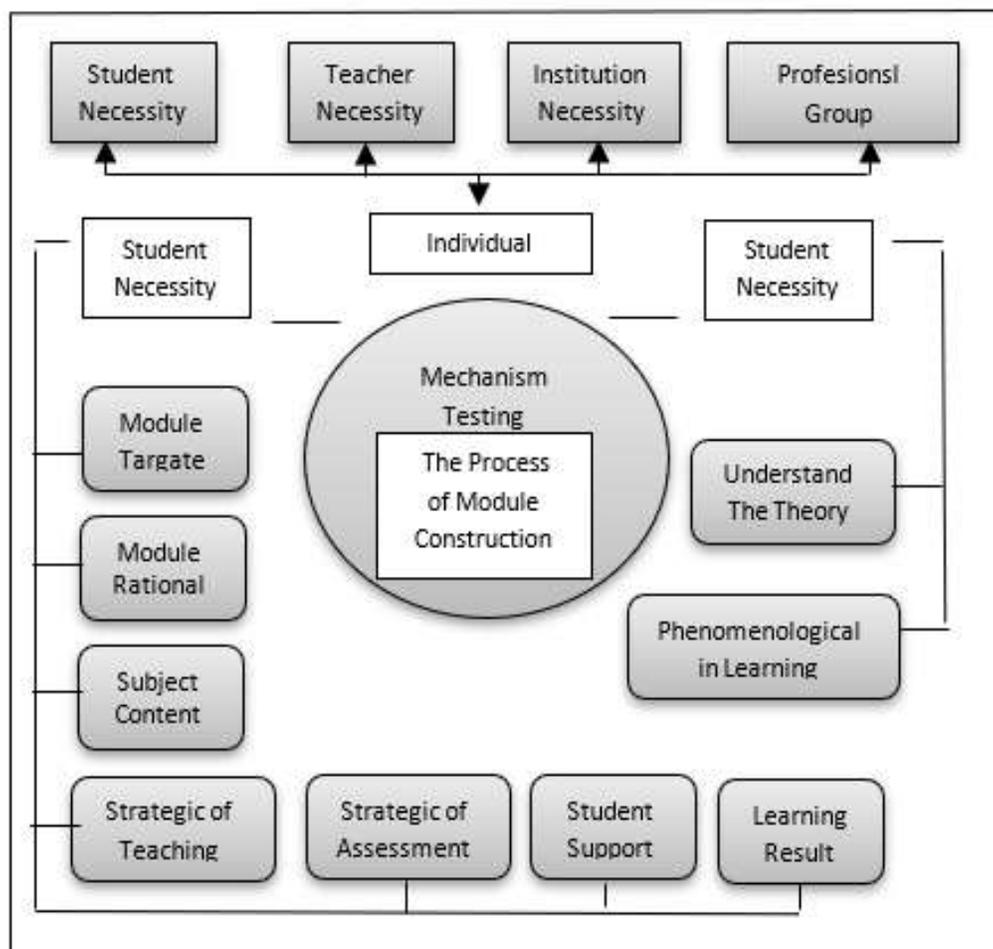


Figure 1: The Design of Donnelly and Fitzmaurice Module

The duration to implement the module for the preschool children was about six weeks. It includes ten topics to cover all the EI elements. There are four of EI elements which are identifying emotion, understanding emotion, controlling emotion and using emotion. Each of these elements has been focused with a suitable activity in which a teacher may help raise that particular element in the children. The implementation of our teaching and learning module of EI was conducted by preschool teachers. The effectiveness of this module was examined through an experimental study involving 100 preschool children who were assigned into either experimental group or control group. To assess the preschool children's EI, we measured it using the Sullivan Emotional Intelligence Scale for Children (EISC) which was adapted for Malaysian participants.

#### IV. RESULT

Table 1 show the perception of preschool teachers on the effectiveness of teaching and learning modules in enhance preschools children's' emotional intelligence.

Table 1: Preschool Teachers Perception on Teaching & Learning Module to Enhance Preschool Children's Emotional Intelligence (n = 100)

Elements Teachers	Time Provided	Module Length	Suitability of Activity	User Friendly	Suitability of Module Content Meet to Malaysian National Education Curriculum
<b>Teacher 1</b>	The time of 30 minute provided for each theme enough to implement all the activity which contained in the module. Even there have an activity which can finish early.	The module is not too thick. The instruction contained in the module concise and easy to understand. Easy to find specific parts when necessary. This is because the learning materials are arranged in a neat and organized. The information contained herein is concise.	Activities planned and implemented in accordance with the development of pre-school children. Every preschool children have equal opportunities in the experience of the learning process.	To attract students because there are certain images, as well as fun activities.	Activities that are carried out in the module help in building self-development preschool students. This is in line with the national educational philosophy that emphasizes the development of individual potential in a holistic and integrated to create a balanced and harmonious human.
<b>Teacher 2</b>	Most of the activity conducted can be finished within 30 minute that provided. However, it proposed that have one or two activities should be finish within 30 minute to 40 minute. So that students have enough time to complete the activity provided such as build character from the 'doh' activity	The information contained herein is concise. Description of each activity undertaken concise. Teachers do not need to take a long time to understand the activities to be undertaken. Only a few minutes to read and activities have been implemented. In addition the module content is easy to pass on to students.	Activities can help teachers in the teaching to achieve the specified learning outcomes. There is emphasis on 'learning through play' in the teaching and learning activities performed. There are also activities that provide two options that encourage teachers to modify activities according to the level of student achievement, interests and themes that have been planned.	Activities and images contained within the module interesting and easy to understand preschool children. Apart from that, the activities require teachers and students to cooperate. This can strengthen the relationship of students and teachers as well as to provide an opportunity for teachers to get to know his students closer.	Content modules in line with the national education curriculum. This is because the activity in the modules is achieving the set objectives of the emotional and social aspects. For example, students can work alone as well as teamwork. Besides, they can also understand and respect the feelings and rights of others, and this can create a positive relationship between a classes.

Based on Table 1 show that in term of allocation of time for exercises to carry out an activity module, available time is feasible. Modules are concise. Easy to be referenced and easy to find specific parts when necessary. This is

because the learning materials are contained in the module is structured and organized. Apart from that, both preschool teachers agreed that the activities are carried out in accordance with the level of pre-school children age. In addition, using the module can attract students' interest and attention to actively implement the activities provided. In terms of the elements of emotional intelligence which are applied to the module, according to the pre-school teachers, the preschool children are able to identify emotions himself and others, are able to understand the emotions, being able to understand the emotional changes, being able to control emotions and be able to use emotions towards a positive attitude when given an appropriate stimuli and activities available in the module. So as a brief, the teaching and learning module to enhance the preschool children's emotional intelligence is effectively implemented as successfully improving the preschool children's emotional intelligence.

## V. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that there are significant differences between the schools in the experimental groups before and after teaching and learning of EI module were conducted. It shows that preschool children's EI risen up from middle level to relatively higher level of EI. Meanwhile, the schools in the control group had no significant difference before and after the existing teaching and learning of EI were conducted. The level of preschool children's EI in this group is remained almost same at middle level. Therefore, teaching and learning of EI module was effectively implemented to increase the level of preschool children's EI. It has been said because of on the result, it is to show that the experimental group which used the module was successful in increasing preschool children's EI. At the same time, with the module can help preschool teachers to teach EI to preschool children rather more systematically.

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