

EI Rubrics for Preschool Children

Nor Aizal Akmal Binti Rohaizad^{1,*}, Mohd Izzamuddin Nadin¹, Azlina Binti Mohd Kosnin²,
Aqeel Khan², Grace Annammal Gnana Piragasam³

¹Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Development, University of Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Malaysia

²Faculty of Social Sciences & Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Johor, Malaysia

³Faculty of Human Development, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia

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Abstract Many researchers have done extensive research on Emotional Intelligence (EI) part. There are many instruments that have been developed to serve as a measure of emotional intelligence. These include the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI Test (MSCEIT), the Multi Factor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) and several other Emotional Intelligence measures. However, it is found that the existing EI instrument does not measure children's emotional intelligence (EI). The Emotional Intelligence should be emphasized in children's development. Children who have a good level of emotional intelligence (EI) will be able to manage their lives in a more orderly and harmonious. Good emotional control is a very important aspect in the well-being of individuals. In this study, the researcher wanted to do a basic analysis of the children EI by building a pre-school children EI rubrics age group of four to six years. The study was conducted at a preschool in Kuala Terengganu district involving 20 children. The research data will be through the evaluation process by five academic specialists in the field using the Cohen Kappa Consensus Coefficient Rating Scale formula. Qualitative data were analysed using triangulation methods through qualitative categorization and thematic analysis. Quantitative data, on the other hand, will be analysed using the Rasch Model to see its validity and reliability. The implications of this study are expected to be a basic children's Emotional Intelligence study focusing on EI development in education to produce a competent, skilled, creative and innovative generation.

Keywords Children, Emotional Intelligence (EI), EI Rubrics, Preschool

1. Introduction

Since the emergence of a book entitled 'Emotional Intelligence' (EI), introduced by Denial Goleman in 1995, many researchers have done extensive research on it. There are many instruments that have been developed to serve as a measure of emotional intelligence. These include the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI Test (MSCEIT) (Mayer et al., 2002), the Multi Factor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) and several other EI measures. However, according to a study conducted by Coskun, Oksuz and Yilmaz (2017), it is found that the existing EI instrument does not measure children's emotional intelligence (EI).

According to Gignac (2010), Tett, Fox and Wang (2005) measured emotional intelligence through self-report, assuming that participants in the sample had a deep and objective knowledge of their social and emotional skills, consistent and genuine in assessing those skills. However, childhood is an age where metacognitive awareness, abstract reasoning, and objective thinking are not influenced by events. Children can only think egocentric. They still cannot think inductive or deductive. Their concrete thinking and the use of expressive material can aid in the learning process.

2. Problem Statement

The rapidity of today's socialization world shows that individual success is not enough to have a good level of intellectual intelligence. In fact, they also need strength in terms of good emotional intelligence (EI) growth. This has been proven by numerous studies on the development of EI that show the individuals with good EI levels can have a positive impact on academic achievement, good social relationships and confidence in self-efficacy (Goroshit et al., 2012; Hogan et al., 2010; MacCann et al., 2011; Kotaman, 2016; Valente, 2020; Karkada, 2020).

In addition, every success, excellence, and happiness of life comes from individuals with good levels of emotional stability (Brackett et al., 2011; Berrocal et al., 2016; Paavola et al., 2017). Emotional stability at an early age is essential for them to grow up and become individuals who can realize the aspirations of Malaysia through the 11th Malaysia Plan and the 2050 National Transformation of Being a Developed Nation in all respects, covering economic, political, social, spiritual, and psychological and culture.

However, indicators for determining the level of EI in preschool children between the ages of four to six years are not yet known (Coskun et al., 2017; Peters et al., 2009; Rivers et al., 2012;). Teaching and learning the application of emotional elements to preschool children under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) is also problematic. According to Nor Aizal Akmal, Azlina and Nora (2012), the lack of teaching aids or teaching and learning modules specifically for the purpose of applying emotional elements to children has caused teachers to have difficulty in teaching and learning because there is no guidance in providing information or available syllabus and systematic knowledge based on syllabus to facilitate their teaching. Most of the teaching and learning processes of emotional intelligence elements and other elements of social psychology are carried out only by speaking and telling, which makes it difficult for children to grasp the information they receive and reduce their interest in learning and attention in the classroom.

In support of the Ministry of Education's goal of producing value-based citizens in accordance with the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013-2025 (in the third shift), this study identifies that the assessment of children needs to be developed not only in the psychological aspect, but also in the aspect of education which focuses more on unity and fostering closer understanding among children. This indicator is important for being a standard benchmark for determining the children EI level. In this study, an analytical study to identify the basic elements of children EI should be carried out empirically in order to determine the criteria in the construction of child EI rubric at the preschool level.

3. 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; Khan, 2012).

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 years old 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.

4. Research Objective

1. Identifying aspects of emotional intelligence (elements of identifying emotions, understanding emotions, controlling emotions and using emotions) at preschool age.
2. Study of emotional intelligence at preschool age.
3. Defining emotional intelligence indicators in the construction of emotional intelligence rubrics at preschool age.

5. Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of the study, the research questions are as follows:

Research question for objective 1:

- i What are the basic elements for identifying emotions at the preschool level?
- ii What are the basic elements for understanding the emotions at the preschool level?
- iii What are the basic elements for controlling the emotions at the preschool level?
- iv What are the basic elements for using the emotions at the preschool level?

Research question for objective 2:

- i How can emotional intelligence at preschool age be reflected in their learning process?

Research question for objective 3:

- i What are the indicators of emotional intelligence in the construction of emotional intelligence rubrics in preschool age?

6. Method

The main purpose of this study was to analyse the basic elements of children emotional intelligence (EI) at the ages

of four to six years. The analysis of EI basis element was performed to construct the preschoolers' EI rubrics. The study design that will be used in this study is qualitative design by conducting observations, interviews and expert evaluations to obtain valid and accurate findings. In addition, the researcher also used quantitative design to obtain the validity and reliability of the built in EI instrument. Participant observation sessions and semi-structured interviews will be held at a preschool in the Kuala Terengganu area.

The study participants were selected randomly based on the purpose of sampling. Researchers selected 20 children (10 boys and 10 girls) consisting of preschoolers (4 to 6 years). The selection of 20 study participants met the needs of the qualitative research in this study which clearly showed that the study participants were able to provide information up to a saturation point to avoid variant error.

The instruments used in this study are human-based, with researchers being the main tools. Researchers were also assisted by the instrumentation of the observation checklist and the interview checklist. This instrumentation is recognized by Creswell (2013) and Othman (2014) for obtaining accurate and stable data while understanding the true phenomena of the study. This checklist was constructed based on the domain of the EI indicator by Sullivan (1999), the EI indicator by Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2002) and the EI indicator by Goleman (1996) which was modified to fit the research needs.

Through the concept of a two-day workshop, 10 groups of two study participants will be assigned the task to perform appropriate activities that can build their EI. The Child-Centered Game Development Approach (Moser, 2012) is used as a reference to ensure that this activity is appropriate for the classroom environment.

Subsequently, through the data collected, an expert evaluation session will be conducted in which five academic experts from all over Malaysia will be appointed to evaluate the identified EI elements. Cohen's Kappa Coefficient (Cohen, 1960) will be used as an analytical formula to determine the validity of the study findings.

Data analysis will use qualitative categorization and thematic analysis through triangulation and typology methods. Based on thematic analysis techniques as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), constructs that build on themes in instrumentation will be extracted based on the EI elements studied. Further, the researchers focused on thematic analysis of data obtained from observational checklists and interviews by more specific categories to determine the validity of the scale. The categories are given specific themes that are relevant to the research question. The data set will go through a triangulation and expert verification process to answer the questions and meet the objectives of the study. Data analysis was also carried out quantitatively to obtain the reliability of the instrument built using Rasch Model analysis.

7. Conclusion

Therefore, through this study, assessments based on the elements of analytical emotional intelligence need to be identified to look at children EI which are not only from a view of psychological but also in educational aspect. EI elements and analytical rubric sections can be used as the basis for children EI measurement. In turn, this generation is believed to consist of a versatile generation with appropriate education outcomes in line with the goals of PPPM 2013-2025.

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Conflict of Interest

NIL

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Ethical Clearance

Done research committee.

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