

# The Application of Creative Process (CP) to Enhance Emotional Intelligence (EI) among Secondary School Students in KOMSAS Drama

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## Abstract

The objective of this research is to identify the effects of creative process (CP) in the Create-EMO module on students' emotional intelligence (EI) in the teaching and learning of KOMSAS drama, an arts literature component of the Malay Language subject in Malaysian secondary school. Teaching and learning activities in this module were based on the creative process (CP) proposed by (Wallas, 1926). Students' EI level was identified based on Goleman's (1995) four components EI: self-awareness (SA), self-management (SM), social awareness (SO) and social skills (SS). A quasi-experimental research method was used to assess the level of EI among students before and after using the Create-EMO module in KOMSAS drama. The students involved were 191 secondary school students in Petaling Utama, Selangor, Malaysia and they have been selected by stratified random sampling. Findings showed that the students' EI scores increased after the use of Create-EMO and all four EI components were significant. It is evident in the results that CP activities in the teaching and learning of KOMSAS drama have the potential to improve students' EI. Therefore, it is recommended that CP be introduced in the teaching and learning of any subject in secondary school because it is conceivable to impact students' EI.

**Keywords:** Creative Process, Emotional Intelligence, Secondary School Students, KOMSAS, Drama

## Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been a current concern, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. EI has been linked to emotional stress which is one of the significant crises or contributors to human self-development as emotions manifest human well-being and influence a person's decisions and actions in life (Nazira, et al., 2022). Between January and June of 2020, the Malaysian Ministry of Health (MOH) annual report statistics reported 465 occurrences of attempted suicide. Amir & Haziq (2020) reported that as of October 2020, the

Helpline Unit psychological support received 11,791 phone calls, of which 50% dealt with anxious emotions. In addition to emotional stress, individuals experience anxiety and anger owing to various social challenges such as economic and financial difficulties as well as family conflicts (Rafidah & Nasaruddin, 2020). The 2019 National Health and Mobility Survey (NHMS) in Malaysia indicated that 424,000 children suffered from mental health concerns. Half of these mental problems manifested as early as at the age of 14, and the remaining three-quarters appeared in the mid-20s.

Due to the current mental health concerns, the researchers were driven to design and developed a module called Create-EMO. This study provides an overview of the impact of the Create-EMO module on students' EI. This module was designed and developed to investigate the effectiveness of creative processes (CP) on students' EI by incorporating CP processes into the teaching and learning activities of drama in Malay literature component or known as *Komponen Sastera (KOMSAS)* (Fasheha et al., 2022).

### Literature Review

The creative process (CP) is related to cognitive functions that involved the expression of ideas (Batey, 2012). The environment, according to Batey (2012), can be accessed through socio-cultural interactions with current conditions such as classrooms, school environments, or organizations. Usually, the CP can be seen based on the student's self-report and evaluation of the product, where the product refers to the practise of creativity within the student. It can be seen that CP is very important because every process or stage carried out gives meaning and impact to the individual. According to Wallas (1926), the creative process is divided into four stages. The first is the identification and investigation of the problem (preparation). The second stage is the resting stage, where there is a break from having thought about the problem (incubation). The third stage is illumination, where the ideas popped up. Finally, the verification stage, where the alternative is controlled, corrected, and improved if necessary.

According to Morgan and Forster (1999), educators must first define creativity to identify creative students. A variety of approaches, methods, tactics, and strategies are significant in education to ensure the success of the learning process, especially in adopting creative components in the teaching and learning of literature components in Malay language subject. Nevertheless, many educators are still perplexed and unsure about the concepts (Zamri, 2016). So, the Create-EMO module was designed and developed with Wallas (1926) creative process (CP), hoping to enhance students' EI.

Since adolescence is marked by powerful emotions (Scott-Parker, 2017), emotional intelligence (EI) has been validated as a highly influential dimension in educational settings (Brackett, Rivers & Salovey, 2011). However, Farhana et al (2019) reported that the significance of EI for adolescents and students in Malaysia is still minimal. An individual's emotional quotient (EQ) or also known as EI is also the ability to see, express, recognize, use, and control one's own emotions together with the emotions of others (Matthews et al., 2017). This means an individual can understand, accept, organize, and manage emotions because they are functional. Therefore, how students feel in response to academics, such as repeating a year or failing an examination, and how they use and respond to their feelings will affect their school environment, either positively or negatively (Durlak et al., 2011). However, a student with a high intellectual quotient (IQ) does not guarantee academic success, but a student with an average IQ and a high EI has a better chance (Asma, 2021). Educators, on the other hand, should consider how to ensure that students have good EI in

school while instilling good values in them. These past studies showed that EI has an effect on students' excellence. In this study student's EI level based on Goleman's (1995) Theory of Emotional Intelligence included four EI components: self-awareness (SA), self-management (SM), social awareness (SO) and social skills (SS).

The National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) in 2015 showed that the highest mental health problems in Malaysia were among teenagers aged 16 to 19 years. Secondary school students who are adolescent ranged between the ages of 13 and 18. They experience changes in thinking and behaviour (Paul, 2018). A study by Ebner and Fischer (2014) confirmed the impact of age has a clear effect on the expression of emotions. Adolescents are seen in a significant category of seeing emotions in social interactions. They emphasised the importance of understanding the dynamics between generations to come for the benefit of the field and wider society.

According Ministry of Education Malaysia (2017) in the Malay Language Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document, the Malay Literature Component (KOMSAS), introduced at the secondary school level, is meant to improve the efficiency of *Bahasa Melayu* (Malay language). Traditional poetry, modern poetry (poems), short tales, traditional prose, novels, and drama are among the genres studied in KOMSAS. It also promotes the reading and appreciation of Malay literature by assisting in the acquisition of knowledge and literary abilities. KOMSAS drama was the chosen genre for this study as it involved direct interaction among students through props preparation and theatrical performances. After all, CP can also be applied in classroom activities involving poetry, theatre, and novels from the literary material (Lehtonen et al., 2016).

### Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to identify the student's emotional intelligence (EI) level before and after using Create-EMO. This study also aimed on determining which components of emotional intelligence (EI) are enhanced through the creative process (CP).

### Research Questions

Several questions arise from the objectives that were constructed. These include:

- i. What is the student's emotional intelligence (EI) level based on self-awareness (SA) before and after using Create-EMO?
- ii. What is the student's emotional intelligence level based on self-management before and after using Create-EMO?
- iii. What is the student's emotional intelligence level based on social-awareness before and after using Create-EMO?
- iv. What is the student's emotional intelligence level based on social-skills before and after using Create-EMO?
- v. Which components of emotional intelligence (EI) are enhanced through the creative process?

### Method

A descriptive quantitative method was used for this study. A quasi-experimental research design was applied through a set of tests to assess the level of emotional intelligence (EI) among students before and after using the Create-EMO module. This experimental method suits this study because treatment is offered before the EI results are identified (Sugiyono, 2012).

### Samples

The students involved in this study are in Form 4, aged 16 years old, and from secondary schools in Petaling Utama district, Selangor, Malaysia. There were 191 students selected as the study sample. These samples were selected by stratified random sampling. They were divided into groups, and then selected randomly. Nevertheless, these students had the same characteristics in terms of subject, topic, age, lesson time and learning environment. Creswell (2005) claimed that stratification sampling is the most appropriate technique. Therefore, considering the normal distribution to carry out quasi-experimental studies based on the Central Limit Theorem (Kwak & Kim, 2017) a minimum sample size of 30 to 50 is already sufficient.

### Research Instruments

To get the EI score before and after the intervention, researchers adapted Schutte's (1998) Self-Report Emotional Inventory (SSRI) into a survey questionnaire. Scores for pre and post tests were given based on the EI test which used four Likert scales with ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree. The EI scores of each Create-EMO component were determined by dividing 32 questions into four dependent variables (SA, SS, SO, and SM). The questionnaire also included a section for demographic information such as the name and gender of the entrants as well as information about their school, age, and location. The questions were written for secondary school students and translated into Malay language, as it is the language of instruction for KOMSAS, in Malaysian school. Cronbach's alpha reliability score for all variables shown in Table 1 is with a minimum of  $\alpha=0.813$ . Previous researchers claimed that an alpha value of 0.5 is good, whereas values greater than 0.7 showed high reliability (White et al., 2012; Felder & Spurlin, 2005).

Table 1

*Cronbach's Alpha*

| Section               | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Self-Awareness (SA)   | 8            | .816             |
| Self-Management (SM)  | 8            | .846             |
| Social Awareness (SO) | 8            | .813             |
| Social Skills (SS)    | 8            | .816             |

### Research Procedure

At the initial stage of this study, the researcher obtained approval from members of the research ethics committee of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), the Ministry of Education Malaysia and the Selangor District Education Office. The researchers also obtained permission from the school management involved to conduct the study in their school. Teachers and students were briefed on the activities to be carried out. Students who participated in this study read relevant research information in the permission letter, and had agreed to participate by signing the permission form.

A discussion session with the teachers involved was conducted prior to the implementation of Create-EMO module. Teachers were first provided with a guided module to facilitate the use of Create-EMO. Students went through the initial stage of the pre-test for EI questions before the intervention was given to them. The duration of five weeks was allotted for the intervention process before the students underwent the post-test.

### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.0 to calculate the mean of the EI scores obtained by students in the pre and post-tests. Mean differences between EI components were compared. The value of the difference between the mean of posttest and pretest where the higher mean indicates the creativity process applied in the Create-EMO module used effectively. To measure whether there is an increase in students' EI scores, a two-tailed paired t-test was applied using the value of  $p = 0.05$  as a two-tailed significant value. The test also showed a correlation between pre and post test scores for each EI component. According to Schutte et al (1998) the higher the score, the higher the level of EI would be. The average EI score is 124 and 111 or 137 are abnormally low or high (Malouf, 2014). In this study, scores below 88.8 are considered low and above 109.6 are considered high. Table 2 below shows the threshold score for each EI level for this study.

Table 2  
EI score levels

| Level    | Threshold |
|----------|-----------|
| Low      | 88.8      |
| Moderate | 99.2      |
| High     | 109.6     |

As seen in Table 3, the screening discovered no missing data. The data was passed to the next level of data analysis after the screening data method was completed.

Table 3  
Missing Data

| Variables       | N   | Valid | Missing |
|-----------------|-----|-------|---------|
| Pre-Create-EMO  | 191 | 100%  | 0.0%    |
| Post-Create-EMO | 191 | 100%  | 0.0%    |

### Results

An Independent Sample T-test was used to see if the difference is real or due to chance. The sample t-test was used in this section to compare the pretest and posttest EI scores for the treatment group. The data in Table 4 revealed that the post-test EI score had a significantly higher value than the pretest score.

Table 4  
*Mean and SD for Pre-test and Post-test*

| Create-EMO | N   | Mean   | SD    |
|------------|-----|--------|-------|
| Pre-test   | 191 | 81.74  | 5.371 |
| Post-test  | 191 | 101.58 | 8.435 |

Table 5 depicts a descriptive analysis of the pre-test and post-test for the study, with  $t(190) = -12.262$ ,  $p < .05$ , revealing a substantial improvement in the post-test EI score after following the CP in the Create-EMO module during t&I KOMSAS drama.

Table 5

*Descriptive Analysis*

| Create-EMO             | T       | Df  | Sig.(2-tailed) |
|------------------------|---------|-----|----------------|
| Pre_test-<br>Post_test | -12.262 | 190 | .000           |

This section discusses the analysis in terms of four EI domains. The results showed that all EI domains were greater in the post-test than in the pre-test. Table 6 displays the means and SD values for the EI domains derived from the Create-EMO group.

Table 6

*Mean and Standard Deviations Values for Pre-test and Post-test*

|        |                            | N   | Mean  | Std.<br>Deviation | Std.<br>Error Mean |
|--------|----------------------------|-----|-------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-Self-Awareness (SA)    | 191 | 19.90 | 4.434             | .321               |
|        | Post Self-Awareness (SA)   | 191 | 25.08 | 3.798             | .275               |
| Pair 2 | Pre-Social Skills (SS)     | 191 | 20.31 | 4.406             | .319               |
|        | Post Social Skills (SS)    | 191 | 25.39 | 3.589             | .260               |
| Pair 3 | Pre-Social-Awareness (SO)  | 191 | 20.81 | 4.21              | .320               |
|        | Post Social-Awareness (SO) | 191 | 25.57 | 3.486             | .252               |
| Pair 4 | Pre-Self-Management (SM)   | 191 | 20.72 | 4.540             | .329               |
|        | Post Self-Management (SM)  | 191 | 25.53 | 3.717             | .269               |

The correlations between the ei component scores are displayed in table 7. As discussed in the preceding section, there is a significant negative correlation between the ei scores before and after using create-emo with sa ( $r = -.087$ ,  $p < .05$ ), ss ( $r = -.098$ ,  $p < .05$ ), so ( $r = -.107$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and sm ( $r = -.101$ ,  $p < .05$ ), clearly showing that students scores higher for each component before are score more higher after.

Table 7

*Correlations of Domains*

|                       | N   | Correlation | Sig. |
|-----------------------|-----|-------------|------|
| Pair 1 PreSA & PostSA | 191 | -.087       | .233 |
| Pair 2 PreSS & PostSS | 191 | -.098       | .176 |
| Pair 3 PreSO & PostSO | 191 | -.107       | .140 |
| Pair 4 PreSM & PostSM | 191 | -.101       | .165 |

Table 8 presents the analysis of the t-test. After utilizing the Create-EMO, the difference between the two means and SD is taken from the pretest and posttest scores. The data indicate the mean and SD for SA (C= -5.183, SD=6.083), SS (C= -5.084, SD=5.950), SO (C= -4.759, SD= 5.916) and SM (C= -4.817, SD=6.151). A paired-samples t-test shows that SM had a higher significant difference before and after using the Create-EMO,  $t(190) = -10.822$ ,  $p < .05$ . Followed by SO  $t(190) = -11.119$ , SA  $t(190) = -11.776$  and SS  $t(190) = -11.808$ . The results revealed that the EI score for the treatment group had increased significantly higher for each EI domain after utilizing the Create-EMO.

Table 8  
*Paired Samples T-test Results*

|                    | Paired Differences |          |                 |   |        | t       | df  | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------|-----------------|---|--------|---------|-----|-----------------|
|                    | Mean               | Std. Dev | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |        |         |     |                 |
|                    |                    |          |                 | Lower                                     | Upper  |         |     |                 |
| Pair1 PreSA-PostSA | -5.183             | 6.083    | .440            | -6.051                                    | -4.315 | -11.776 | 190 | .000            |
| Pair2 PreSS-PostSS | -5.084             | 5.950    | .431            | -5.933                                    | -4.235 | -11.808 | 190 | .000            |
| Pair3PreSO-PostSO  | -4.759             | 5.916    | .428            | -5.603                                    | -3.915 | -11.119 | 190 | .000            |
| Pair4PreSM-PostSM  | -4.817             | 6.151    | .445            | -5.695                                    | -3.939 | -10.822 | 190 | .000            |

## Discussion and Conclusion

The objectives of this study were to identify the student's emotional intelligence (EI) levels before and after using Create-EMO. The EI level was identified based on 4 EI components: self-awareness (SA), self-management (SM), social awareness (SO) and social skills (SS). The results confirm that using the Create-EMO module for teaching and learning activities increased students' EI levels.

On the pretest of EI, data shows that students' level of EI fell in the low category, where the mean was at a value of 81.74. After the students experienced the intervention, their EI scores increased to a moderate level and almost to the highest level, with a mean value of 101.58. Indirectly, the researchers agreed with the opinion of Golden and Dornheim (1998) that the higher the score, the higher the level of EI. Our descriptive results revealed an increase in students' EI scores after completing CP activities contained in the Create-EMO module.

According to the analysis, the data from the Paired Sample Test showed that the SA component obtained the lowest mean value, followed by SS, SM, and SO during the pretest. Indirectly, these findings indicated that the level of students' self-awareness of their own emotions (SA) is low. SA is a component that involves the student's ability to identify and understand emotions, drives, and their effects on others. The second lowest is the SS component, which involves students' ability to manage relationships, build networks, build



relationships, and the ability to find common ground. The SO component obtained the highest mean value for the post-test results compared to the other components. The SO component consists of students' skills to empathize with people around them according to their emotional reactions and students' ability to understand the emotions of others. The highest score was followed by SM, where the improvement was related to their self-control in controlling emotions before taking action. SM was also among the essential components of a student's EI, and this can make students better understand emotions with others and be more empathetic. Based on the correlations, data of all components are significant negative correlations, and this was because students who get high scores during the pretest will get higher scores in their post-test.

These results also showed that all components, namely SA, SM, SO, and SS, are significant. Likewise, based on the results of the t-test, data found that the SA component was the component that showed the most increase as a result of subtracting the score value between the pre and post-tests. The second highest is SS, followed by the SO and SM components. However, the results of the paired-samples t-test before and after the intervention showed that the scores for the SM component were the most significant, followed by SO, SA, and SS, and this is because most students show more improvement on the SM component. Therefore, it can be summarized that there was an increase in students' EI scores after the use of Create-EMO.

Perhaps, the increase in students' EI scores could be due to the CP activities they performed at each EI level. If we look at the scores of the SM components that obtained the most significant difference, the activities carried out involved the stages of incubation and illumination in CP. The incubation and illumination stage involved activities that concerned the process of ideas development and making connections between ideas. Indirectly both stages impact students to think about managing and controlling their emotions before making decisions. Looking at the SO component, the increase in their scores may also be due to the effect of the CP they experienced, namely verification. At this stage, it involved students polishing their ideas to be better, and it can help them generate empathy and understanding towards the organization and their surroundings.

Subsequently, for the third significant component of EI, SA, the increase in their marks may also be due to a factor from the CP they went through, which is the preparation stage. This process can build their self-confidence, assess their emotions and aware of their own emotions because they need to think, generate initial ideas, and dare to express their ideas, which will involve other friends. They need to be prepared if there is an element of rejection or ideas or suggestions from group members for the success of the drama learning activities. Lastly, the creative process involved in the SS component appeared in all the stages in the CP, from the preparation and incubation stage to the verification stage. In each stage, students went through the initial process of searching, making connections, developing, grinding, and even improving their ideas. Indirectly, these processes affect the students' social skills (SS) elements, such as building bonds, inspirational leadership, influence, developing others, teamwork, and collaboration.

This study has specific important implications in terms of theory and practice. From the findings of this study, we could see the importance of EI to the current generation for their future needs, which is supported by (Farhana et al., 2019). Every teacher and student need to be clear about creativity and how to be creative in teaching and learning, as stated by (Zamri, 2016). If they go through the CP correctly, creative process can help improve student's EI. Having said that, CP is not just to produce students who are creative in producing works of



art or something aesthetic, but it can be applied in the teaching and learning process. This study has provided an overview of the CP impact on the teaching and learning activities of KOMSAS drama. The Create-EMO module can serve as a guide or reference on how each stage in the creative process can be carried out in classrooms that involve elements of EI.

The focus of this study was the drama genre in KOMSAS for form 4 students, aged 16. Data were obtained using Schutte's (1998) Self-Report Emotional Inventory (SSRI). This study focused on the theory of emotional intelligence by Goleman (1995) and Graham Wallas's creative process model (1926). Future studies should also try to apply CP in other subject area, and on other group of students. The use other EI instruments can also be considered for the target audience. Other theories of EI and the latest CP can also be applied in similar study so that it is appropriate to the level of students and teachers today. As a suggestion for future research, Create-EMO module can be used as a guide and applied in other subjects such as mathematics, science, history, geography, and subject area, to make teaching and learning sessions more engaging. Indirectly, the elements of EI in Create-EMO can also be applied in the classroom. This study provided new evidence that activities that went through the CP in the Create-EMO module have the potential to improve students' EI in the teaching and learning process. It also proved that each stage in CP affects each component of EI.

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