

DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH PLAY ACTIVITIES

M. Fadlillah

Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo

Email: fadly_ok@yahoo.co.id

ABSTRACT

Early childhood is children who have a variety of potential intelligences. Which they must be developed and given stimulus, in order to develop optimally. One of the important intelligence to be developed is emotional intelligence. Because it will affect the personality and will shape the character of the children to interact with their environment. If the emotional intelligence of children can develop well, will undoubtedly be able to give a positive impact on their daily life.

One effective way to be able to develop the emotional intelligence of early childhood is by playing. Because the play had become his world childrens and can't be separated from life. Playing is an activity that is very interesting and liked by kids. By playing the child's feelings to be cheerful, carefree and happy, so as to influence the development of emotional intelligence. Based on research on the triune brain show that play activities may indirectly affect the functions of the brain, like reptile, limbic, and neocortex. The third part of the brain which is associated with the development of human intelligence. If all three can function properly, children can learn and develop his emotional intelligence with optimally. Therefor, it is time for play activities a top priority as a means to develop emotional intelligence early childhood. Hopefully this article can be useful for parents and early childhood educators.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, play, early childhood

INTRODUCTION

In Law Number 20 Year 2003 about National Education System stated that early childhood education program is one of development effort which is intended for children from birth to 6 years which is done through giving the educational stimulation to assist the growth and development of physical and spiritual so that children become ready when enter further education. Early childhood education is the education which intended to develop a range of potential or intelligence early childhood. It is known that the appropriate time to give stimulus or positive stimuli to someone is when they're in early age, so that their intelligence can develop optimally.

In the neuroscience mentioned that early age has a very important role because there is great leap development of human brain and it grows very rapidly,

reach 80%. At birth, human being reached 25% of brain development, by the age of 4 years its develop reached 50%, and until the age of 8 years it can reach 80%. After that it develops until the age of 18 years (Mulyasa, 2012 : 2). This case shows that the early childhood is the period of the golden age. That is a very right and good time for a given learning stimulus. The hope by providing the stimulus will make a growing variety of child intelligence.

One of the early childhood intelligence which very important to be developed and given stimulus is emotional intelligence. Children who have good emotional intelligence will affect their personality in daily life. Therefore emotional intelligence must begin to be developed early on, so that it can be dominant in themself as adult. In a broader context, this emotional intelligence can form a positive character for children, so will be able to provide a positive provision for further life.

One of effort which can be given in developing emotional intelligence of early childhood is by playing. It is based from the assumption that play is children's world. In other words, play is natural activity favored by children. Therefore, the most effective learning stimuli is by playing.

From the research mentioned that play is an activity that can be used as a method in developing a child's emotional intelligence. According to Johan Amos Comenius as quoted by Ahmad (2003: 217) state that; '*Childrens games and pastimes were to be encouraged for such participation was natures wholesome medium for developing their wits, manners and habits.*'

This case gives us an overview that play (game) gives effect of spirit, happines and cheerful for children, so unwittingly it can affect the development of emotional intelligence of children. In line with this case, Morse and Wingo as quoted by Rahmat (2003: 217) states, *The social, intlectual, and emotional growth of the child finds expression in his play activities* '.

Lots of activities, skills and habits which may be revealed by the form of games and other fun activities. Through play activities can give children the opportunity to learn and practice new ways in thinking, feeling, and acting. By

following various play activities, emotional intelligence of the child will be able to properly stimulated.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF CHILDREN

The term of emotional intelligence is a combination of two words, which are intelligence and emotional. It is necessary to be able to interpret the emotional intelligence completely by understanding the definition of each of these terms first.

The definition of intelligence is reaction power of quickly and accurately adjustments either physically or mentally to new experiences, making the experience and knowledge that has been held so that are ready for use when confronted with the facts or new condition (KBBI, 1994: 78).

According to Stern Berg, intelligence is the ability that has five common characteristics, which are the ability to learn, to take advantage of the experience, thinking abstractly, adapt, and motivate themselves to solve problems appropriately (Rita L. Atkinson et al., 1994: 129). In line with that statement, Gardner adding that intelligence is the ability to solve problems or to create product that is valued in a culture or more (Yuliani Conscience Sujiono, et al., 2011: 1.4).

From description above, it can be understood that intelligence is an ability to steer, understand, and adjust the soul, mind, actions, as well as resolve problems faced appropriately. So someone who said to be smart, when he can resolve any problems encountered well and full of calculation or consideration between soul, mind, and actions.

While the definition of emotional is everything connected with someone's thoughts and feelings. Daniel Goleman in his book 'Emotional Intelligence' which translated by Hermaya (1997: 411) reveals that emotion is a term whose precise meaning is still confusing both psychologists and philosophers for more than a century. In the most literal sense, oxford english dictionary defining emotion as any activity or turbulence of thoughts, feelings, desires, any condition of mental greatly or overflowing. It means that emotional problems are very closely related

to someone's personality. Therefore, emotions is very difficult to be clearly defined.

In line with the opinions of Golman above, in the study of psychology, it is mentioned that emotional problems are unsolved problems. It can be seen from the absence of a clear statement of the definition of the emotion itself, psychologists have tried to give them the sense of emotion, but the statement still hit by the absence of a clear separation between the definition of feelings and emotions, so that there is still ambiguity (M. Alisuf Sabri, 1993: 74). In this context, psychologists classify wide range of emotions in various ways, but almost all classifications refer to an emotion as positive emotions and negative emotions (Santrock, 2011: 289).

Although it is difficult to be defined, however there are some psychologists who expressed his opinion about the emotional meaning. According J.P. Du Preez, emotion is the body's reaction when faced with certain situations. He further said, the character and intensity of emotion are intimately associated with cognitive activities (thinking) of human as a result of the perception of the situation that happened (Abdul Aha, 2011: 11-12). This definition implies that knowledge of someone about something will directly impact on the behavior and reaction of the body. Such as fear, sadness, and joy. Besides, emotions also be interpreted as a feeling or effect that occurs when a person is in a situation or interaction which is important to him, especially important for the well-being (Santrock, 2011: 289).

Then, in the view of Islam, emotion is one of important element in human life, especially children. Because emotions as a form of attitude appearance shown by children. In this context, Islam recommends that a person to be able to control his emotions well and be able to show positive emotions, as well as leaving negative emotions. As has already been spoken of Allah which means: *"And due to the grace of Allah you do gentle on them. If you get tough minded and be rude, they would kee away from you. Therefore forgive them, ask forgiveness for them, and open discussion with them of the affairs. Then, if you has determined, then put*

resignation in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who put their resignation in Him.
"(QS. Alimran: 159).

The verse above makes clear that a person has been ordered to be able to control emotions. Someone may be prohibited hardly from being rude and tough minded, then a person has been ordered to always be gentle, forgiving, and discuss on all issues. If it can be done, a tremendous emotional intelligence is become reality.

From some explanation of the meaning of emotional intelligence above, we can get the comprehension that emotional intelligence is ability to understand the feelings of self and the ability to understand the feelings of others, the ability to motivate oneself, and the ability to manage emotions well in ourselves and in relation with others (Goleman, 2011: 512). Furthermore, Goleman said that emotional intelligence is the ability that one has more to motivate themselves, resilience face the failure, controlling emotions and delay gratification, and set the condition of soul, can put his emotions at the right portion, sort of satisfaction and set the mood.

Meanwhile, according to Robert K. Cooper (Gina, 2002: 44) emotional intelligence is the ability to feel, understand something effective, the power and sensitivity of emotion as a source of energy, information, connections and humanity influence. The meaning is emotional intelligence can make a person is able to feel and understand everything related to social activities (others).

Characteristics Emotional Child

Emotion is a reaction of soul in great spirit, such as affection, fear, sadness, or anger. Some psychologists argue, at birth, a baby does not have knowledge at all about emotions. However, he gained through the process of learning as well as learning to read and write. Therefore, in this context, the emotions of a child is influenced by the surrounding environment. Children can be happy, sad and fear that as a result of the influence of it.

According to psychologists, emotions on a child is divided into two kinds (Saad Riyadh, 2004: 189), which are:

- a. Positive emotions

Positive emotions are emotions that have a good impact for a child. These emotions include feelings of love, affection, and happy. This feeling will arise, when a child sees something he likes. As an example, a child that his parents bought his favorite toy, certainly he will show very pleased expression, so he looks cheerful and always laughing.

b. Negative emotions

Negative emotions are emotions that have bad impact for a child, like anger, fear, despair, sadness, and disgust. These emotions will arise when someone finds things he hated or painful. As an example, children who ask a toy to his parents, but not fulfilled, then he will show the unhappy attitude, then he would get angry or even cry.

From both forms of the emotion, emotional of someone, including early childhood can be identified in detail as follows:

- 1) Anger; The most common cause of anger is the quarrel of the game, unachievement of desire, and a great attack from other children. Children express an anger with outbursts of it marked by crying, screaming, bullying, kicking, jumpings, or hitting.
- 2) Fear; at first the child's reaction of fear is panic, then become more specific such as running, dodging, hiding, and crying.
- 3) Jealous; a child become jealous if he thinks that the interest and attention of parents turning to others in the family, usually newborn sister. This behavior is all aimed to attract the attention of his parents.
- 4) Want to know; children have a curiosity to new things, as well as to his own body and the bodies of others.
- 5) Envy; children often feel envy related to the ability or goods owned by others.
- 6) Happy; children express a joy with smiles and laughter, clapping, jumpings or hug someone or things that make them happy.
- 7) Sad; children feel sad because of the loss of a loved one, or everything that is important for him. In typical children express sadness with tears and with the loss of interest in normal activities, including eating.

- 8) Affection; children learn to love other people, animals or objects that please them. A child can verbally express the affection when he's in adult age, but at young age, he express it physically by hugging, patting and kissing object of affection (Ahmad Susanto, 2011: 150-151).

Those emotions above are often shown by the children. Although a child can not understand the emotions faced him well. In the view of the child, everything that he may express are manifestation of the environment. Moreover, it is only temporary. It means, mostly children, often experience emotional changes so quickly. For example, after a child crying and angry to someone, the child also can be instantly forget it, like there is no problem happened.

In connection with the transition of the children's emotions, Hurlock (1978: 216) reveals that the rapid transition is happened to the kids, at first laugh then cry, or from anger to smiles, or jealousy to love. Things like these caused by three factors; the cleaning system of the concealed expression replace with the frank emotions, less perfect understanding of the situation due to non-mature intellectual and limited experience, short span of attention so that it's diverted easily. With the increasing of age, the emotions become more steady.

Thus was some emotion characteristics shown by child in day life. There are times when children show positive emotions and sometime they show negative emotions. In the framework of the development of children's emotions, parents or educators necessary to give an impulse or train the child to balance and control his emotions well.

Factors Affecting Children's Emotional Intelligence

According to Daniel Goleman (1999), there are two factors that affect the emotional intelligence, these factors are divided into two, internal factors and external factors, such explanations are:

- a. Internal factors, which are arising factor from the individual that is influenced by the state of emotional brain of person, the emotional brain is influenced by the state of the neocortex, limbic, prefrontal lobes and other things that are in the emotional brain.

- b. External factors, which are factors that come from outside the individual and affect the individual to change attitudes, external influences that have individual nature can be individually, in groups, between individuals affect the group or vice versa, can also be indirectly which through intermediaries, such as mass media, either printed file and electronic as well as advanced information services via satellite.

Besides two factors above, there are other factors more detailed. As revealed by Hurlock (1978), which are:

- a. Health condition

Child health will greatly affect children's emotions. Children who have a fairly good health, they will generate pleasant emotions. While the children are in poor health (sickly), they will be able to have an impact on unpleasant emotions.

- b. Home atmosphere

The house is one of the main determining the child's emotional intelligence. If children grow up in a home environment contains more happiness and try hard to minimize the attitude of quarrel, jealousy, revenge and other unpleasant feelings, then he has the opportunity to be a happy child.

- c. How to educate children

Authoritarian parenting, which uses the method of punishment to strengthen compliance strictly, will encourage unpleasant emotions. Democratic way of educating children and permissive will lead to a more relaxed home atmosphere that will support the expression of pleasant emotions.

- d. Relationships with family members

Bad relationships with their parents or siblings will cause more anger and jealousy that these emotions will tend to dominate the lives of children at home.

- e. Relationships with peers

If the child is well accepted by the peer group, the pleasant emotion will become dominant on himself, whereas if the child is rejected or ignored by a group of peers, an unpleasant emotion will become dominant.

f. Overload protection

Excessive behavior to the child will be able to be bad impact for children. Parents who protect children excessively (overprotective), who lived in prejudice of danger against everything, will give rise to fear in their children.

PLAY IS USE FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF CHILDREN

The world of children is a play. So learning process is appropriately managed by playing. Play is a series of events or child's activities to have fun. Whatever the activity, as long as it contained the element of pleasure or happiness for young children, it can be called a play.

In line with this definition, in the Dictionary of Indonesian mentioned that the term of play derived from the basic word 'play' which means do the activity to please, either it uses a tool or not. In this context, a play should be understood as an attempt to make children happy, comfortable, cheerful, and excited.

Adang Ismail (2012: 26) argues that the play can be defined into two parts. *First*, play is defined as 'play' which is a fun activity without seeking to win and lose. *Second*, the play is defined as 'games' which is a fun activity that requires winning and losing. In the first sense, play is interpreted merely for pleasure regardless of the final result, but in the second sense, other than have fun, also pay attention to the final result to be obtained.

Santrok (2002: 272) said the game is a fun activity that is carried out for the sake of the activity itself. According him, the game allows children to release excessive physical energy and liberate pent-up feelings. By playing the child's feelings will be happy, so will experience the convenience of doing a series of learning activities.

Of the few opinions about the sense of playing, it is understood that the core of the play is to gain pleasure and soul satisfaction of every activity

undertaken, either it attends the final result or not. In addition, the play is also intended to develop children's intelligences, including emotional intelligence by interested and fun way. Because of the play, in fact a child learn something. So it's well known of term 'play while learning'. It means that the core of child's activity is playing, but by playing then a child will be able to learn and get to know a lot of things that were not already known.

Importance of Emotional Intelligence Playing for Kids

To be able to develop the emotional intelligence of children according to age stage is by playing. Many psychologists and researchers who have proven the importance of play for early childhood's intelligence. According Zakiah Darajat as quoted Ismail (2012: 23) the play has an important role in the personal development of child. It means that the play will indirectly affect the child's personality. Though his own personality is closely related to one's emotional. While Joan Freenan and Utami Munandar mentioned that, in general, experts agree play is an activity that helps children achieve complete development, both physical, intelektual, social, moral, and emotional (Ismail, 2012: 23). So it can not be denied that the play may be an appropriately media to develop emotional intelligence of early childhood.

According to Ratna there is no reason to interpret the play as learning activities. It is precisely at the age children learn effectively and easy to understand something as they play (Ratna, 2007: 161). So the play is one of the basic needs of children as a form of learning for them. If this requirement is not fulfilled, then the child will experience grief, it will interfere with the child's emotional development.

According to Maslow, as quoted by Muhammad Anis (2009: 88-89), basic human needs can be classified into five levels whose fulfillment must be tiered, begin the lowest level to the highest level. Maslow's theory of needs which introduced, which are:

- a. Physical needs (biological)
- b. Need for security
- c. The needs for affection and social resonance

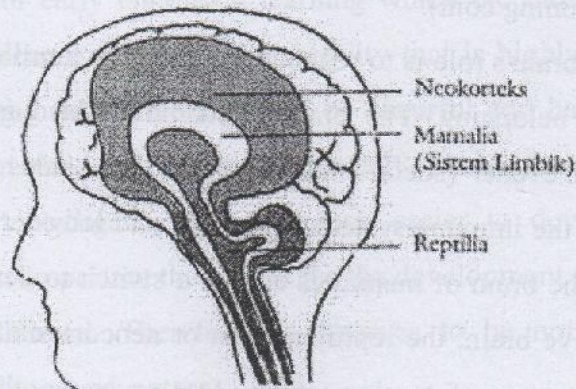
- d. The need for the recognition of self-esteem
- e. Self-actualization needs.

In this context, including the need to play a physical or biological. This means that play is a child's basic needs that must be fulfilled. With the fulfillment of these needs of children will feel happy, comfortable, and always in happiness. In addition, children with physical play will be healthy and fit, so it will affect the growth and further development. Furthermore, Maslow revealed that basic needs are tiered from the bottom to the highest level, in the sense of a higher need will arise and will be attempt to fulfillment when lower level needs have fulfilled (Mohammad Anis, 2009: 90).

Playing is a natural method that gives a practicality to children in various activities which will become reality in the next life. Rahmat explained through play children learn how to use the tools, how to develop skills, how to avoid hazards, and how to cooperate with other children (Grace, 2003: 216). Play for young children can learn and learn a lot of things, can get to know the rules, socializing, putting themselves, organize emotion, tolerance, cooperation, and uphold sportsmanship. In addition, play activities also can develop mental intelligence, spiritual, language, and motor skills of early childhood (Mulyasa, 2012: 166). Therefore, there is no day without playing for early childhood. For them, playing is an interesting and fun learning activities.

Playing Relations with Emotional Intelligence

Playing and emotional intelligence in early childhood education has a very close relationship. Playing indirectly can influence and facilitate children in developing intelligence. Related to this, much research has been done by experts of education and psychology. One of them is research about "triune brain" by Dr. Paul MacLean. The definition of triune brain is the fact that the brain is composed of three parts, which are the reptile brain, the limbic system, and brain neocortex (Hamruni, 2009: 36). Each part of the brain has specific neural structure and organize the tasks that must be done.



- a. Reptile brain, is c or survival.
In addition, as a human instinct when faced particular problem.

Behavior that is in the reptilian brain associated with survival instinct and the urge to develop species. When people do not feel safe, this reptilian brain spontaneously rise up and stand by or flee from danger. This is what is known as an 'fight or flight' (rumahkemuning.com).

According to Eric Jensen as quoted by Rovey Widiyanto (in kompasiana.com) He stated that reptilian brain starts from the brain stem which at the base of the brain and are connected with the spine. The brain serves as the control center, autonomous nervous system, and to regulate the body's main functions. Also set the person's reaction to danger or threat. When the reptile brain is active, people will not be able to think, that work is instinct. Reptile brain is active when a person lack of sleep, threatened, fear, stress, or when the condition of the body and mind are tired.

- b. Limbic brain, is the brain that plays an important role related to memory and emotion. In addition, It is part of the brain that has a function to control emotions, anger, anxiety, joy, and love. The main structure in this limbic brain is the amygdala and hippocampus (Laura, 2014:113). Amygdala is involved in emotional awareness and expression of person. While the hippocampus plays an important role in one's memory storage. The limbic system is located in the central part of the human brain. It has emotional and cognitive functions which are save human feeling, a

pleasant experience, memory, and learning ability of human (rumahkemuning.com).

The brain's role is to regulate the need for families, social strata and a sense of belonging. The brain of mammals also give meaning to an emotion or events (social and emotional). Besides it plays a role in controlling the immune system, hormones and long-term memory. Limbic system in the brain of mammals acts as a switch to determine which ones will be active brain, the reptilian brain or neocortex of the brain. When a person in a state of tension, stress, fear or anger, then the information received will be forwarded to the brain reptilian brain. And if someone in a state of happy, calm, and rilex. then the neo cortex of the brain is active and can be used to think (kompasiana.com). In other words, if the child is in a safe condition, comfortable, and fun, then the limbic system it will work well. Under these conditions a child can learn well.

- c. Brain neocortex, is a part of the brain that serves to intellectual, learn and perform memory. According to Laura (2014: 115) the neocortex known cerebral cortex is the highest frontal brain region and most recently evolved in the brain evolution. According to her, the brain has a noble functions, such as thinking and planning.

In kompasiana.com mentioned that neocortical brain is 80% of the total human brain and also called brain thinking. Here, human can develop language skills, abstract thinking and can solve problems. The brain will works maximal when the limbic system works well. That is, if the limbic system receives a feeling of comfort and fun, then a layer of the neocortex of the brain is able to function optimally.

Thus the description of the triune brain owned by everyone, including early childhood. From the illustration above, we are explained that someone must be in a condition that is safe, comfortable, and enjoyable so that each parts of triune brain can run the function well. If the child is in an unsafe condition and depressed, respectively the brain has less well functioning. In this regard, we could be taken notion that if we want to develop emotional

intelligence early childhood and other intelligences, learning to be made interesting and fun. For early childhood learning which the most interesting and fun is playing. Because the play is an activity that is highly favored by children. By playing the child's feelings will be cheerful and happy, so that parts of the brain triun child will function optimally. Under these conditions the child's emotional intelligence will be much easier to develop. These explanations show how important the play is for the development of emotional intelligence early childhood. Therefore, it deserves to be noticed by the parents and early childhood educators.

In order to achieve good development of emotional intelligence, we need activity form whose the play has a good game and it has been corresponding for kids development. Do not let the game which make children experience development delays or learning disorders. Preferred forms of the game should have certain benefits in accordance with the child's age and developmental level. As examples, the form of game that can be given to early childhood in order to develop emotional intelligence, which are puzzles, blocks, catwalks, dakon, hide and seek, and play a role.

CONCLUSIONS

One intelligence early childhood is important for developed and cared for parents and educators is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand the feelings of yourself and the ability to understand the feelings of others, the ability to motivate oneself, and the ability to manage emotions well in ourselves and in relation with others. Emotional intelligence is sometimes positive and sometimes negative. Which includes positive emotions are feelings of love, affection, and happy. While that included negative emotions are feelings of anger, fear, despair, sadness, and disgust.

The development of intelligence in order to run effectively and have a positive impact for early childhood, then it should be done by playing. It is because one of the most preferred activity by children are playing. Based on research on the triune brain show that play activities may indirectly affect the

functions of the brain, like reptile, limbic, and neocortex. The third part of the brain which is associated with the development of human intelligence. If all three can function properly, children can learn and develop his emotional intelligence with optimally. So it is clear, by playing, early childhood's emotional intelligence will be able to develop optimally towards a better life.

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