

# Needs and Criteria in Developing Creative Movement Module for Preschool Children

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## **Abstract**

This research is concerned on the development of a module on creative movements for children as a medium in teaching and learning. The development of this module is prior to issues in adapting creative movements among preschool children in teaching and learning. The respondents selected in this research are 30 preschool teachers in the district of Ledang, Tangkak. This research is a survey that includes the 'needs' aspect and also 'criteria' in adapting movement activities in the children's movement in the preschool classroom as suggested by the National Preschool Curriculum Standard 2017 (KSPK). The result of the survey shows that the aspects of 'needs' and 'criteria' in creative movement activities in the children's movement have to be developed and has got a potential to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the preschool classroom.

**Keywords:** Creative Movement Module, Preschool, Needs, Criteria

## **INTRODUCTION**

The objective of the Revised National Preschool Curriculum Standard (KSPK) 2017, is not only to prepare the preschool children to standard one with reading, writing, counting and reasoning skill but also as a well- balanced person physically, emotionally, spiritually and socially. They also should be able to encourage skills, knowledge, creative values that comprehend a safe exciting and meaningful environment. Therefore, creative movement that combines creative, active and exciting activities is a method to achieve the objective of Revised KSPK (2017).

Creative movement among children consist of four basic elements that is the human body, space, time and connection (Laban, 1975). These elements stresses on the development of gross motor movement among children and creativeness of behavior and the way of thinking to cultivate a healthy child. Creative movement activities for example, dancing, moving and music is natural in a child’s creative learning (Rebecca, 2011). Therefore, the learning of creative movements are already in its platform for a child’s learning because it helps children to grow holistically as it is in line with the well-being and the instinct of a preschool child. Looking at today’s scenario, creative movement is an element that is given less attention by the preschool teachers as it only emphasize on the readiness of the children’s cognitive achievement. This condition is something to be worried about as if it still continues it won’t give a good impact on the development and growth of a child consistently and holistically.

Curriculum development centre has prepared a creative guidance booklet for teachers to prepare their teaching session effectively and well planned, but there are some research found that the teachers are not prepared and did not have sufficient knowledge in conducting creative activities as recommended in education. (Muhamad Fazli, 2010; Ling Pik Kuong , 2010 ; Norsita Ali & Zainal Madon, 2014). This also happens in the preschool education system. Although the Education Ministry have prepared the teaching and learning modules, such as the Basic Core Modules and also the Thematic module, the emphasis on creative movement activities are still not enough. An analysis on the modules have been made and the summary of the module analysis is shown in table 3:

Table 3  
Analysis of Creative Movement Activities in Thematic Module and Basic Core Module

Module	Analysis of KSPK (2010) module
Thematic	Only one out of 27 activities used creative movement as a suggested activities and the other 2 activities involves movement and music.
Basic Core	Only 3 out of 116 activities involves creative movement.

Besides that, Ling Pik Kuong (2010), stated that activities regarding creativity are not documented in detail in the National Preschool Curriculum Standard 2010 (KSPK) as well as creative movement. Through the research of modules that has been given by Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM) to the preschool teachers, modules such as the basic core module than covers teaching guidance in Mathematics, English language, Malay language, somehow the guidance on teaching of outdoor activities are not prepared conceptually and practically for creative movement. If this situation continues, teachers will face difficulties in conducting physical activities, whereby the creative movement activity is listed in the physical development strand and esthetic and creativity strand that have to be accomplished by the preschool children.

In addition to that, preschool teachers have to be aware that movement activity is capable to develop physical, social and cognitive development (Copeland et al, 2012; Obeng & Cecilia Sam, 2010) somehow, the factors of lack of knowledge and guidance and guidance, support by parents with the limited infrastructure and weather makes creative movement is given less attention (Mclaughlin E.M, 2011; Gersak Vesna, 2012). Based on these few problems any type of guidance, and substance is very much needed for the preschoolers to conduct creative movement activities efficiently. Obviously there is a crosswise between the formal way of teaching that has being used before with the creative teaching that needs knowledge, ability and the commitment of the preschool teacher. However, with the existence of the teaching guidance, it helps to direct preschool teachers in conducting a creative movement activity, confidently and does not feel pressured because of lack of knowledge or preparation.

### **CREATIVE MOVEMENT AMONG CHILDREN**

Creative movement is considered as non-competitive, spontaneously driven, body movement that enables children to express emotions, tell stories and build a relationship (Greer-Paglia, 2006). Furthermore, creative movement is also the art of dance that uses natural body movement (Kaufmann & Ellis, 2007) and expression through creativity (Bannon, 1994; Cheung, 2010; Dow, 2010). It is through creative movement, children are free to express their feelings and personality according to their desire and style. They don't need any examples or imitate others. This is because in creative movements, the emphasis is given to the process that is happening in the creative movement not on the outcome of the creative movement.

Creative movement also can be the focal point for children to express their feelings about any condition in their daily life (Chueng, 2010) or respond to stories, songs or poems (Dow, 2010) that they heard. It is because the basics of creative movement may happen in any situation that enables children to feel free in moving their body and at the same time express their feelings through songs, poems, rhythm or in silence (Mayesky, 2015).

Creative movement is an individual activity that can be done alone or in groups (Dow, 2010; Lorenzo-Lasa, Ideishi, & Ideishi, 2007; Von Rossberg-Gempton, et al, 1999) and have a positive impact on children throughout all ages and any level of skill (Gilbert, 1992; Lorenzo-Lasa, et al, 2007; Lukes, 2010). Through individual creative movement, children learn about their inner self either physically or their internally. By learning through groups, it helps to encourage cooperation, teamwork and understanding. Mayesky (2015), quoted that children learn to respect personal space and shared spaces in their work while they are moving.

Creative movement is recognized by dance teachers and movement therapist as it gives benefits to all children at all ages and development (Allen & Coley, 1996; Bannon, 1994; Gilbert, 1992; Lorenzo-Lasa, Ideishi, R & Idieshi S.K, 2007). Creative movement is capable to promote socio-emotional development skill that enables children to interact and communicate with their friends (Graham, n.d.; Gottlob & Oka, 2007; Lorenzo-Lasa, et al, 2007). Creative movements also help children to learn the skill to solve problems (Bannon, 1994; Kaufmann & Ellis, 2007; Lorenzo-Lasa, et al, 2007; Lukes, 2010; Theodorakou & Zervas, 2003), cooperation (Chueng, 2010; Lukes, 2010; Von Rossberg-Gempton, et al, 1999) and social skills that are acceptable to express emotions (Bannon, 1994; Gilbert, 1992; Lorenzo-Lasa, et al, 2007).

Thinking skills can be developed through creative movement activities. When children perform in creative movement, they have the chance to make their own decision and have the chance to make their own decision and brave enough to take risks. (Dow,2010). This will increase the capability of their thinking skill to find more than one solution to solve any situation that they face. (Dow, 2010; Ylonen & Cantell, 2009). At the same time, creative movement boost the critical thinking skill of children (Chueng, 2010; Lukes, 2010) and literal thinking (Theodorakou & Zervas, 2003) and it gives chances for children to think and innovate (Cheung, 2010). Therefore, creative movement not only has got its benefit on mere movement only but able to promote other skills such as critical thinking, creative and problem solving skill if this creative movement is conducted efficiently.

One of the skills that have to be mastered in 21 St Century learning is communication skill. The uniqueness of creative movement is it helps to increase the communication skill of children (Cheung, 2010) . The involvement of children in creative movement will develop their nonverbal skill (Graham, n.d., 2007 ; Von Rossberg-Gempton, et al., 1999), that also helps their intrapersonal or interpersonal skill (Bannon, 1994). Creative movement is not only for normal children but it can also be applied to children with special needs. Research that is done among creative movement programs with autistic children shows that there are improvements in their social skills throughout the program (Greer-Paglia, 2006). Children with low verbal skill capacity had shown better improvements in social skills than normal children. He suggested that creative movement program to be given to children as an alternative for them to express themselves.

At the same time, teachers reported that creative movement are able to encourage socialization, imitation and self-calmness among their students. These show that the advantages of creative movement had achieved its aim not only for the development of normal children. (Greer-Paglia, 2006). Creative movement has a positive impact for children that faced difficulties to communicate (Dow, 2010). Therefore, creative movement opens up chances and provide space for children to communicate better and help increase the skill with creative ways and loved by children.

### **ELEMENTS OF CREATIVE MOVEMENT**

Creative movements have got its own theme or several basic elements that become the strand for the movements. According to Laban (1975), there are 16 themes in creative movements. Those themes have been divided into two levels that is the basic level and the advanced level. In this article the focus is only given to the basic movement as it is suitable for the age level of the preschoolers because they have not mastered the basic or creative movements yet. The basic stage enables children to move with four elements of consciousness that have been introduced. These four elements had also been used in creative movement skills because it is the basics for creative movements. Through these elements, it helps children to refine their creative movements through their act of moving. Diagram 1 shows the four elements:

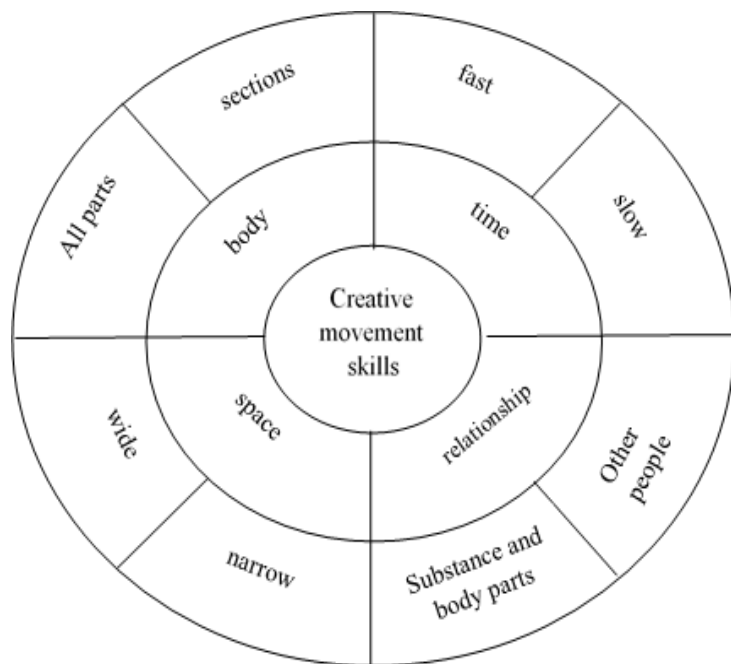


Diagram 1

Customization of creative movement's elements. KSPK (2010) and Laban (1978) and Creative Movement and Education (Salmah Ayub, 1994).

Diagram 1 shows four basic elements in creative movement that is being used that is i) body elements that shows what is done by the body or the different sections or parts of the body ii) Space that looks upon where or how space is used in wide or narrow space in the classroom or out of the classroom iii) Element of time t that focuses whether the creative movements is done in a fast or slow tempo and iv) relationship element that looks at the body parts, with other people that is the teacher, peers and substance or objects.

### NEEDS AND CRITERIAS OF CREATIVE MOVEMENT MODULE

The needs to integrate creative movements in early childhood curriculum have been identified long ago by the researcher in early childhood education. (Gersak, 2012). This is in line with the National Preschool Curriculum Standard , 2010 (KSPK) that have fixed that the basic element in creative movement that is the body, time, space and energy have to be mastered by the preschool children. Same goes to the Revised National Preschool Curriculum Standard, 2017 (KSPK) creative elements are still used as a standard content that have to be mastered by children. Hence the emphasis on the criteria in this module is in line with the standard achievement that has been set and documented in KSPK (2010) and the Revised Version of KSPK (2017). Children are expected to take part actively and move creatively.

The main limitation or problem in steering the activity is that the teachers a not skillful yet and lack of experience in conducting a student centered activity (Miller & Almon, 2009)

especially of activities involving creative elements (Ling Pik Kuong, 2015). Any guidance and substance are seriously needed by the teachers to widen their knowledge and skills (Aliza Ali, & Zamri Mahmod, 2016) especially in creative learning and child centered. Therefore the instructional substance at the preschool level has to be developed according to the criteria's and needs in order for the children to progress.

### **NEEDS ANALYSIS**

Needs analysis phase is very important in developing a module to gather information on the needs that is required in the module. Opinions of teachers are the important information to specify the criteria and features of the module that is developed. Opinions of teachers are the important information to specify the criteria and features of the module that is developed. According to Morrison (2011) , the procedures to develop a module starts with identifying instructional problems through needs assessment, goal analyses and performance assessment. The informations that is gathered in needs assessment is based on the context of the environment that the study or research takes place (Saedah Siraj, Norlidah Alias, Dorothy DeWitt, & Zaharah Hussin, 2013) and conducting what is needed to solve problems ( Reinbold, 2013 ).

There are many types of needs in needs analysis. Needs analysis in this study is based on felt needs (Burton & Merrill, 1991). Felt needs is a desire of an individual to improve their performance that is requested by someone else. Felt needs is a gap between performance level or self-acquired skills with the performance level or skills that is wanted to be achieved.

Besides that, need analysis is done to know the possibilities that may cause problems (Branch, 2009; Gagne, Wager, Golas, & Keller, 2005) and do what is required to solve the problem (Reinbold, 2013). Gagne et al., (2005) stated that needs analysis is very important because it gives information that is needed in specifying the structure and substance development instruction in the next phase.

This study is done to collect information from preschool teachers about the needs of a module that is going to be developed to solve the ongoing problems faced by teachers on the teaching and learning of creative movement. In this context of research, the research analysis is done at the earliest stage of the module development to identify the needs of the module itself, which way of teaching is suitable for creative movement activity and what is needed by preschool teachers in conducting the teaching and learning process of creative movement in a better way.

The research feature and module development have to go through the analysis phase to make sure the module that is developed meets its objective and gives positive impact for teachers as one of their teaching substance. According to Saedah et., Al (2013) needs analysis have to be done before the development of the module and it is going to be judged in the next phase. Through this needs analysis study, researcher have to collect data as a requirement to develop this creative movement module.

The article objective of this phase of needs analysis are:

- Identifying the needs of teaching module for preschool teachers for the teaching and learning of creative movement.

- Identifying the criteria of teaching module that should be included in teaching creative movement module?

Based on the objective of this research, questions that have to be answered are as such:

- Is there a need to develop creative movement module for preschool teachers?
- What are the criteria needed to generate a suitable module for teachers in executing the teaching of creative movements?

**METHODOLOGIES**

This research took 30 respondents among the preschool teachers of Ministry of Education from different schools using a survey form. Sampling method is used by choosing a homogenous group, but shared various information. The respondents that are chosen is based in their qualifications and experience that are eligible to teach preschool and implements KSPK in teaching. Questionnaire are being initiated beforehand to make sure that the information gathered will be better. The researcher had chosen 3 respondents with that share the same criteria with the real research sample to look at the suitable questions.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

Research findings on the need analysis are divided into two divisions that is the needs of the creative movement module for preschool teachers and criteria needed in the module that is developed.

**1. The needs of the creative movement module for preschool teachers.**

Based on the research analysis on the aspects of the needs of the creative movement module there are few findings that have been analyzed. 37% of preschool teachers

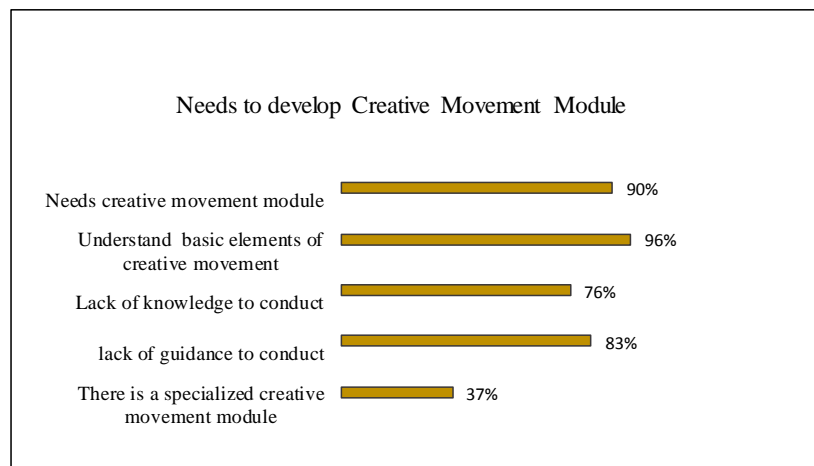


Table: 6

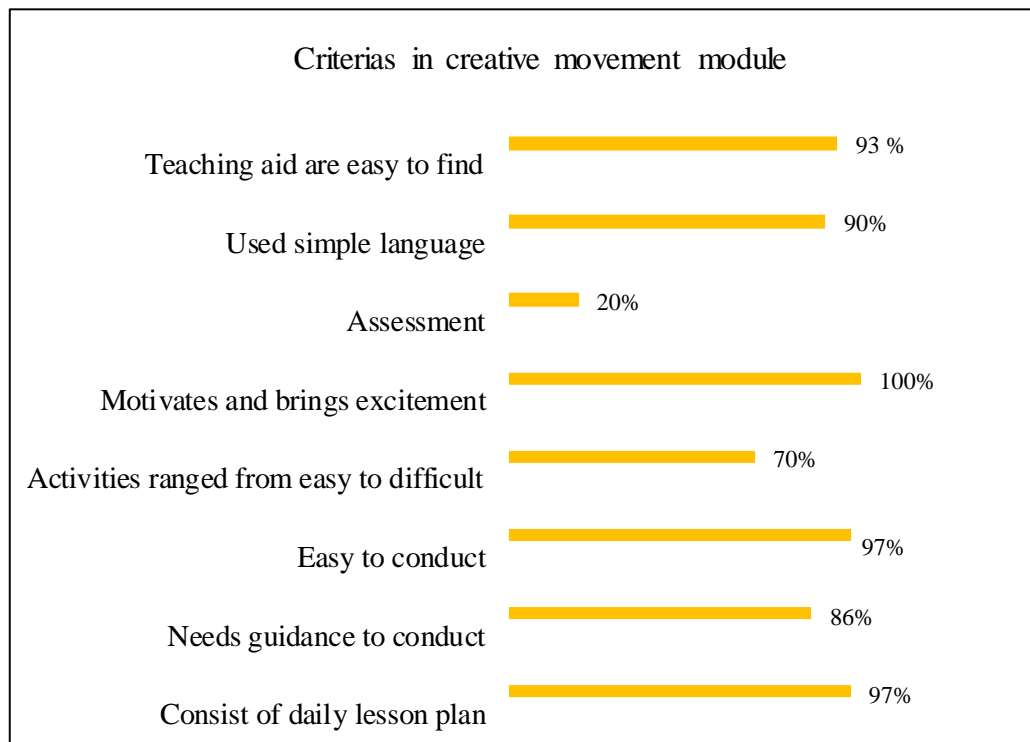
claimed that there is a specialized module on the teaching of creative movements while the others mentioned that there is no such module provided by the Ministry of Education. Meanwhile, 83% of them claimed that they are lack of guidance to carry out

creative movement activities in classroom and 76% claimed that they don't have enough knowledge on creative movement activities. Somehow there are 96% of preschool teachers claimed that they knew and understand about the elements of creative movements that is the body, space, time and relations. 90% of preschool teachers claimed that they need a specialized module to conduct the creative movements' activities.

**2. Criteria in creative movement module.**

Through this phase of analysis, there is also information about criteria on creative movement module that is needed by the preschool teachers. There are 97% of preschool teachers need a daily lesson plan with its objective in the developed module and 86% needs guidance on the implementation of creative movement activities comprehensively. 97 % of preschool teachers hope that the modules are easy to be carried out. 70 % stated that they need the activities to be arranged from easy to difficult. Only 20 % of preschool teachers need assessment in the creative movement activity. All preschool teachers mentioned that the activities in this module should be able to motivate and excites students. 90 % hope that the module uses simple language and 93% claimed that they need teaching aids that is easy to be obtained to conduct creative movement activity. Table 7 shows criteria that are needed from preschool teacher towards creative movement module that is developed.

Table 7:  
Criteria in Creative Movement Module





## **CONCLUSION**

Data collection in this needs analysis research is targeted directly to the user of the module that is the preschool teacher so that the information that is obtained are capable to solve existing problems of a teacher that needs guidance in a form of a module in teaching and learning creative movement.

The result of the research of needs analysis found that the creative movement module has to be developed to help teachers to execute it better and effectively. The analysis also found that preschool teachers had known four elements in creative movement as found in KSPK (2010) that is the body, space, time and relationship in conducting it. This shows that knowledge does not guarantee its implementation even though they are aware of its importance and benefit in implementing the creative movement activities. A research by Gersak (2012) found that preschool teachers did not conduct much of creative movement activity, even if they have the knowledge and awareness of the importance in conducting the activities for learning and development of preschool children.

This research analysis also found that there are a few teachers assumed that creative movement activities are less important to be conducted based on the finding of the needs of this module if compared with teaching core subjects such as reading, writing and counting. A study by Haslina Hanapi (2013) found that standard one teachers are more inclined to cognitive test compared to other domain that somehow influence a bit of the teaching of preschool teachers that focuses on reading, writing and counting in their teachings so that children that will be produced are in line with the inclination. It only takes an attention to one domain only that is the cognitive domain that will affect the imbalance in the development of children and it is not in line with the vision and objective of the National Education Philosophy (FPN) that hopes to produce a balanced student physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. Furthermore, the findings of this needs analysis also looks upon the features that is needed by preschool teachers in the teaching module of creative movements that is developed.

Preschool teachers needed the guidance on the teaching in detail and an example of daily lesson plan in conducting the creative movement activities that are included in this module. It coincides with the research of Ling Pik Kuong (2010) and Norsita Ali & Zainal Madon (2014) that stated teachers are not well equipped with the knowledge to carry out elements of creative activities in the classroom and need guidance to conduct them. Activities that are easy to be carried out, exciting and motivates is the primary choice of preschool teachers in selecting activities in a module. Skinner & Belmont (1991) explained that positive motivation will reflects positive emotion such as happiness, interested, and high spirited. Therefore the relation between the needs and learning in children is one of the most important things in learning something for the preschool children. Same goes to teaching and learning in creative movement. The attention is not only on the achievement but have to be looked from the needs aspect of children itself.

According to Gagne et al. (2005) in Aliza Ali & Zamri Mahmud (2015) some of the factors of problems and its solution about teaching and learning can be known through this analysis phase. Researchers have to suggest several strategies based on empirical data so that teaching can be conducted better (Branch, 2009). Researchers will run their findings on needs

analysis as a guideline in constructing and developing module in the next phase. As a whole, the findings of needs analysis shown that creative movement activity module has to be developed for the usage of preschool teachers so that the teaching of creative movement is more directed and effective.

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