

Creative Drama-Based Psychoeducation: The Effect on Improving Emotional Intelligence of Adolescent Orphans

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Abstract. This study aimed to analyze the effect of creative drama-based psychoeducation on emotional intelligence in adolescents. A one-group pretest and posttest quasi-experimental design was adopted. Before the treatment, an initial assessment was conducted, and 10 adolescents from an orphanage were assigned. Creative drama-based psychoeducation consisted of five sessions. Three assessments were conducted, namely emotional intelligence scale, general knowledge related to emotional intelligence, knowledge related to emotional intelligence skills. The results showed that creative drama-based psychoeducation had a significant effect on emotional intelligence of adolescents in orphanage with a significance value of .005 (p value $< .05$). Based on this result, analysts, practitioners, and parties were expected to cooperate and play an active role in developing emotional intelligence of adolescents in orphanage through creative drama-based psychoeducation.

Keywords: adolescent, creative drama, emotional intelligence, psychoeducation

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Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period of development that occurs from the age of 10 to 11 until late adolescence or early twenties (Papalia et al., 2013). This period is prone to conflict with self or the social environment due to the major changes in physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects. In most cases, adolescence is referred to as an important and critical period in the human life span. Therefore, there is a need for contributions from both cognitive and emotional aspects (Papalia et al., 2013). Some adolescents lacked family care during developmental stages because of parental divorce, economic hardship, or orphanhood (Apriani & Listiyandini, 2019; Nyiagani & Kristinawati, 2021). To provide a decent life, children are placed in a social welfare institution or orphanage.

Life in a children's social welfare institution or orphanage has its own challenges. This is because children are required to mingle and socialise with all residents of orphanage, including the caretakers and friends. This is certainly not easy, because all residents of orphanage have different backgrounds from the area of origin, age, and personality (Nyiagani & Kristinawati, 2021). Adolescents who live in children's social welfare institutions or orphanages are vulnerable

to problems and pressures compared to adolescents who live with their families (Rachmawati et al., 2019).

Based on the initial assessment, it was found that adolescents in the orphanage had psychological problems related to emotions. This assessment was carried out by administering the Scutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) compiled by Schutte et al. (1998) and later translated by Silfiasari (2019). The administration of this scale is carried out to determine emotional intelligence of adolescents in institutions based on three aspects, namely appraisal and expression of emotions, regulation of emotions, and utilization of emotions. The results showed that out of 16 subjects, 4 people had very low scores, 6 people had low scores, 4 people had high scores, and 2 people had very high scores. Consequently, 10 adolescent girls in orphanage have problems related to emotional intelligence. Initial interviews reported frequent minor conflicts among adolescents at orphanage, including belittling remarks, excessive joking, and expressions of dislike that offended peers and escalated into physical altercations because of poor emotional regulation. The initial assessment and interviews showed a need to strengthen emotional intelligence among these adolescents.

Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity to monitor and regulate feelings and to apply emotional awareness to guide thoughts and actions in accordance with environmental demands or personal goals (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1999; Armesto et al., 2025). Mayer et al. (2016) defined emotional intelligence as an individual's ability to reason validly with emotions and the associated information, and to use those emotions to enhance thinking to achieve desired emotional states and experiences in the individual and others.

Salovey and Mayer (1990), who first used the term emotional intelligence, postulated that emotional intelligence consists of three categories of adaptability, namely appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotions in solving. The first category included appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and appraisal of emotion in others. Appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself consisted of verbal and nonverbal components. Appraisal of emotion in others consisted of nonverbal perception and empathy components. The second category of emotional intelligence, regulation, has the components of self-regulation of emotions and regulation of emotions in others. The third category, emotion utilization, includes the components of flexible planning, creative thinking, directed attention, and motivation. Although emotions are at the core of the model, it also includes social and cognitive functions related to the expression, regulation, and utilization of emotions.

Mayer and Salovey (1999) reformulated a revised model of emotional intelligence that focused on the cognitive component, conceptualizing the term in relation to the potential for intellectual and emotional growth. The revised model comprises four branches, namely (1) perception, appraisal, and expression of emotions, (2) emotional facilitation of thinking, (3) understanding, analyzing, and using emotional knowledge, and (4) reflective regulation of emotions for emotional and intellectual growth. Perception, appraisal, and expression of emotions are viewed as the most basic processes, while reflective regulation requires the most complex processes. Each branch has associated stages or levels of ability, which individuals master sequentially.

Mayer et al. (2016) reviewed, updated, and extended the four-branch model proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1999). The model defined four domains of emotional intelligence abilities and skills. The first domain addressed emotional problem solving, including the identification of emotional content in faces, voices, and visual designs, as well as accurate emotional expression. The second domain described facilitation of thinking through emotions that functioned as motivational and informational input.

The third domain focused on understanding emotional meaning and behavioral implications. The fourth domain addressed emotion regulation in oneself and in others. Therefore, this study used the concept of emotional intelligence, including the definition of Mayer et al. (2016) and the four areas/branches of Mayer and Salovey (1999) and Mayer et al. (2016). The process facilitates thought using emotion, understanding emotions, and managing emotions as the basis for developing creative drama-based psychoeducation module in improving emotional intelligence of adolescents in orphanage.

Emotional intelligence in adolescents is important because provides adolescents with a good understanding of self-awareness about emotions, have a good understanding of the people, maintain good social relationships, and can adapt to change (Alfonso-benlliure & Lee, 2021; Dewi & Yusri, 2023). Emotional intelligence possessed by adolescents can also help to control attitudes and behavior to be in accordance with existing social norms. Therefore, adolescents who have good emotional intelligence can filter out negative influences that come from the surrounding environment (Yunalia & Etika, 2020). High emotional intelligence translates to the ability to control emotions, overcome problems during the developmental stages, and achieve independence (Yunia et al., 2019). Adolescents with low emotional intelligence often show limited understanding of others and reduced interpersonal competence. This limitation appears in difficulties forming and maintaining interpersonal relationships (Goleman, 2005; Dewi, 2024).

Improving emotional intelligence in adolescents has been widely studied. This was found from several previous studies, including adolescents in orphanage, such as life skills training, emotion regulation training, and group counselling (Dewi et al., 2013; Suwanasaeng et al., 2018; Yasa & Fatmawati, 2022). Furthermore, the analysts found activities that focus on psychoeducation and emotional intelligence in adolescents and have proven successful in developing emotional intelligence in adolescents, such as group counselling psychoeducation (Hussin et al., 2020) and creative drama-based psychoeducation (Akyil & Deniz, 2022). This shows that emotional intelligence in adolescents, including adolescents in orphanage, is important and needs to be improved, as well as the development of appropriate and up-to-date interventions. Previous work identified aspects that required improvement in subsequent work, particularly during treatment implementation. Key considerations included more comprehensive measurement, appropriate experimental design selection, sufficient activity duration during treatment, broader target populations, and use of varied and engaging methods (Dewi et al., 2013; Suwanasaeng et al., 2018; Hussin et

al., 2020; Akyil & Deniz, 2022; Yasa & Fatmawati, 2022).

HIMPSI (2010) explains that psychoeducation is an activity carried out to increase understanding and/or skills as an effort to prevent the development and spread of psychological disorders in a group, community, or society, and activities carried out to increase understanding of the environment about the disorders experienced by a person after undergoing psychotherapy. Meanwhile, creative drama is a structural method that allows increasing individual creative opinions and expressing emotions freely, and is considered effective in recognizing individual emotions, as well as increasing imagination and helping to learn relationships between situations easily, one of which is during puberty (Akyil & Deniz, 2022). The phrase creative drama emanated from the name of the book *Creative Dramatics*, written by Winifred Ward, a pioneering American dramatist, in the 1930s (Hong & Hong, 2022).

Creative drama is a method that can be expressed in improving cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills by including many sensory tools, which will form an animation (life) of a goal or thought based on the experience of a group or group members by utilizing methods, such as improvisation and role play (Akyil & Deniz, 2022). In creative drama, there will be a leader who will guide participants to imagine, act out, and reflect on the issues presented in the story or situation. There is no script, technical assistance, or audience in creative drama (Freeman et al., 2022).

An explanation of creative drama-based psychoeducation for adolescents has been conducted by Akyil and Deniz (2022). In the study, Akyil and Deniz (2022) compiled creative drama-based psychoeducation program with 20 sessions, each having goals and targets that include behavioral, cognitive, and affective, based on the existing emotional intelligence model as proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1999). The results of Akyil and Deniz (2022) showed that creative drama-based psychoeducation is effective for increasing emotional intelligence in adolescents. Previous explanations showed efforts to improve emotional intelligence among adolescents. A planned intervention included the implementation of psychoeducation based on creative drama for adolescents living in orphanage.

This study is interested in creative drama-based psychoeducation because, based on the argument of Akyil and Deniz (2022), drama is considered a field of art that contributes to emotional development. Drama activities allow participants to gain deeper insight into personal experiences and surrounding environments in a broader, universal context, beyond surface observation. The methods also function as tools for acquiring, experiencing, and enhancing emotional

intelligence (Manon, 2021). Psychoeducation based on drama provided benefits for adolescents by supporting deeper self-understanding and awareness of the surrounding environment, while also strengthening emotional intelligence. In creative drama, the individual benefits from the values of society and culture. Individuals participate in the process by using past experiences, impressions, traditions, and customs during rehearsals. In this context, the dimension of learning by doing and living can be mentioned in the constructivist method. Experiential learning produced more lasting knowledge. Learning quality remained high because creative drama functioned as a rehearsal of real life and provided individuals with opportunities to examine worldviews and confront potential problem situations (Başarı & Ayhan, 2021). It is also beneficial for adolescents who will improve emotional intelligence to be allowed to overcome perspectives about the world and the problems faced.

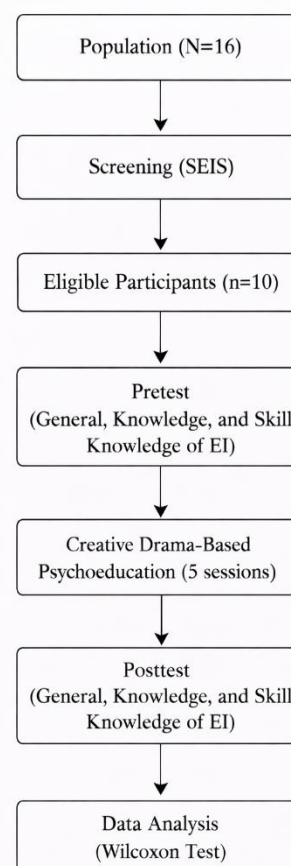


Figure 1. Study Design of Creative Drama-Based Psychoeducation Intervention

A previous study (Akyil & Deniz, 2022) suggested that integrating creative drama into educational activities was beneficial. Teachers are motivated to incorporate this method into the educational process. This study is important because the results can inform programs or activities in orphanage. Caregivers, staff, and adolescents can apply the results to support new

residents who face emotional challenges, particularly in developing emotional intelligence.

The previously described problems require intervention to prevent persistence and more serious consequences. Emotional intelligence is closely related to adolescents' subjective well-being and overall positive mental health (Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Mayer et al., 1999; Zeidner et al., 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to improve emotional intelligence to help adolescents achieve subjective well-being and positive mental health. An effort in improving emotional intelligence is through creative drama-based psychoeducation.

Based on the theoretical review, empirical evidence, and emotional challenges faced by adolescents living in orphanage, there is a clear need for an intervention that integrates cognitive understanding and emotional experience. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the effect of creative drama-based psychoeducation on emotional intelligence of adolescents in orphanage, including the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions, as well as facilitate thinking. The results are expected to contribute empirical support for the use of creative drama-based psychoeducation as an effective method for enhancing adolescent emotional intelligence in institutional care settings.

Methods

Study Design

A one-group pretest and posttest quasi-experiment design was adopted. Quasi-experimental design is an experimental study that does not place the smallest experimental unit randomly (nonrandom assignment) (Hastjarjo, 2019). In this study, a control group was not used because the initial objective was to determine whether there was a significant difference in subjects who obtained low results from initial screening through the use of the emotional intelligence scale, and after treatment. Furthermore, considerations of the lack of resources, time, and costs to conduct a pure experiment using a control group. The purposive sampling method with predetermined characteristics was adopted. Three assessments were carried out, namely general emotional intelligence knowledge, knowledge related to emotional intelligence skills, and emotional intelligence scales. These assessments were administered before and after the provision of creative drama-based psychoeducation. Figure 1 shows the study design of the creative drama-based psychoeducation intervention.

Participants

A purposive sampling method was used to select 10 participants based on specific criteria. The characteristics of participants were adolescents aged 10-21 years with a junior high to high school

educational background, no physical disabilities or mental disorders, and who had scores in the low to very low categories in emotional intelligence. Categorization of participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Categorization of Participants

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Low	4	25
Low	6	37
High	4	25
Very High	2	12.5
Total	16	100

Procedure and Data Analysis

The analyst contacted orphanage to complete the licensing process, followed by an initial assessment. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. For participants under 18 years of age, consent was also obtained from orphanage management acting as the institutional guardian. Anonymity, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any stage were maintained in the study.

The initial assessment was conducted at As Salam Shobuur orphanage in the Sengkaling area, Malang Regency. This assessment used Scutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) compiled by Schutte et al. (1998) and translated by Silfiasari (2019), containing 22 valid items with an alpha reliability of .90. Among the 16 adolescents in orphanage, 10 had "low" and "very low" emotional intelligence scores. These 10 adolescents were given treatment in the form of creative drama-based psychoeducation. A module was then compiled to be used as a field guide in the context of creative drama-based psychological education to improve emotional intelligence of adolescents in orphanage. The module was developed based on existing literature on emotional intelligence models and creative drama-based psychological education. Subsequently, the module was drafted, assessed, and checked by the supervising lecturer to determine its readiness, as well as testing the readability on adolescents outside the sample and one caregiver at orphanage.

Three instruments were used in this study, including in the implementation of this module. First, emotional intelligence was measured using SEIS developed by Schutte et al. (1998) and adapted into Indonesian by Silfiasari (2019). This scale measured emotional assessment and expression, regulation, and utilization. The instrument consisted of 22 valid items assessed on a 5-point Likert scale, including items formulated positively and negatively. Indonesian version showed high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$), and previous studies have reported adequate construct validity. Sample items included (1) positive

Table 2

Creative Drama-Based Psychoeducational Treatment Plan

Session	Material Focus	Objectives	Methods	Duration	Main Output
1	General EI	Increase general emotional intelligence knowledge (definition, components, impact)	Lecture, discussion, mini-games	90 minutes	EI knowledge score ↑
2	Perceiving Emotion	Emotional intelligence skills: identifying and expressing emotions	Role play, reflection	90 minutes	PE score ↑
3	Facilitating Thought Using Emotion	Emotional intelligence skills: using emotions to facilitate thinking	Role play, discussion	90 minutes	FTUE score ↑
4	Understanding Emotion	Emotional intelligence skills: understanding emotional meanings and transitions	Role play, reflection	90 minutes	UE score ↑
5	Managing Emotion	Emotional intelligence skills: regulating emotions independently	Role play, feedback	90 minutes	ME score ↑

Note. The treatment was conducted over five consecutive days (one session per day). The interval between pretest and treatment was one day, and the interval between treatment and posttest was one day.

items, “I am aware of my emotions when I experience them,” and (2) negative items, “I have difficulty controlling my emotions when facing problems.” The second instrument was General Emotional Intelligence Knowledge Test, used to assess the understanding of the definition, domains, and impact of emotional intelligence through a multiple-choice test. Finally, Emotional Intelligence Skills Knowledge Test measured knowledge of emotional intelligence by providing a checklist of statements related to specific abilities in the four branches of emotional intelligence developed by Mayer et al. (2016). The readiness of the last two instruments was assessed and checked by the supervising lecturer as an expert.

The intervention consisted of five consecutive daily sessions (one session per day), each lasting approximately 90 minutes. The pretest was administered one day before the first session, and the posttest was administered one day after the final session. Session 1 focused on enhancing general emotional intelligence knowledge, covering definitions, branches, influencing factors, impacts, and improvement strategies, using lectures, discussions, and mini-games. Sessions 2–5 focused on emotional intelligence skills and knowledge using creative drama methods, primarily role play and guided reflection.

The intervention explicitly targeted emotional intelligence in general through psychoeducational delivery in session 1. Emotional intelligence skills and knowledge were addressed through experiential creative drama activities in sessions 2–5, corresponding to the four-branch emotional intelligence model.

After the implementation of creative drama-based psychoeducation, a data analysis process was conducted using tables and diagram analysis to determine differences before and after treatment. Statistical data management using IBM SPSS Statistics 23, with non-parametric analysis (subjects under 30 people), Wilcoxon, and descriptively explained the comparison of pretest and posttest scores with the aim of determining the difference when the treatment was administered. A high posttest value showed that the treatment had an effect.

Results and Discussion

Participant Demographic Characteristics

Participants in this study consisted of ten adolescents living in an orphanage. The age ranged from early to late adolescence (13–18 years), and all participants were female. In terms of educational background, participants were enrolled in junior and senior high schools, representing different grade levels. The length of stay in orphanage varied among participants, ranging

from less than one year to more than five years. Regarding family background, participants included adolescents with orphan, single-parent, and economically disadvantaged family conditions that led them to reside in orphanage. These variations showed diverse developmental and life experiences among the participants, which influenced emotional conditions and responses to the intervention.

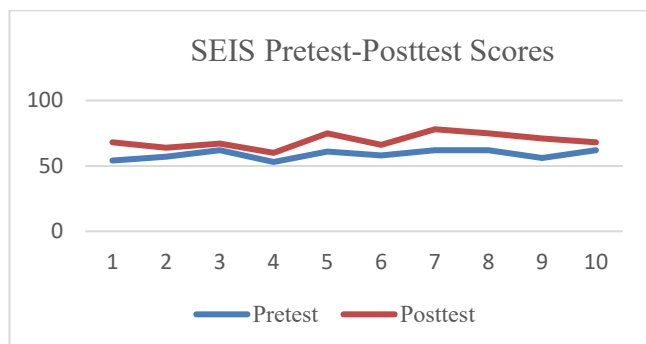


Figure 2. Diagram of SEIS Pretest and Posttest Scores

Changes in Emotional Intelligence Pretest and Posttest Scores

The implementation of creative drama-based psychoeducation led to significant changes in emotional intelligence of participants. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest emotional intelligence scores ($p = .005$, $p < .05$). This result suggested that the intervention had a significant effect on improving emotional intelligence among adolescents in orphanage. Descriptively, an increase in emotional intelligence scores was observed in the majority of participants following the intervention. Before the intervention, all participants were categorized as having “low” or “very low” emotional intelligence. However, after participating in psychoeducation program, most participants shifted to “high” or “very high” categories. Only one participant remained in the low category but an increase in score was still observed compared to the pretest.

Figure 2 shows the changes in emotional intelligence scores for each participant using a line graph. This figure clearly shows individual patterns of change from pretest to posttest, suggesting that the majority of participants experienced an upward trend, but the magnitude of improvement varied across individuals.

Change in Emotional Intelligence Based on Aspects

Further analysis was conducted to examine changes in emotional intelligence across its four aspects, namely perceiving, understanding, managing, and facilitating thought using emotion. To accurately represent individual changes, each aspect was presented using a line graph that showed pretest and posttest scores for the participant. In general, improvements were

observed across all four aspects following the intervention. The most consistent increases were found in the aspects of perceiving emotion and managing emotion. These results were consistent with the nature of creative drama activities, which showed emotional expression, role-playing, interpersonal interaction, and reflection.

Although improvements were observed in facilitating thought using emotion and understanding emotion, the magnitude of change in these aspects varied among participants. Some participants showed steady improvements across all aspects, while pronounced changes were observed in specific aspects in some cases. These variations suggested that individual differences played a role in how adolescents benefit from psychoeducational interventions.

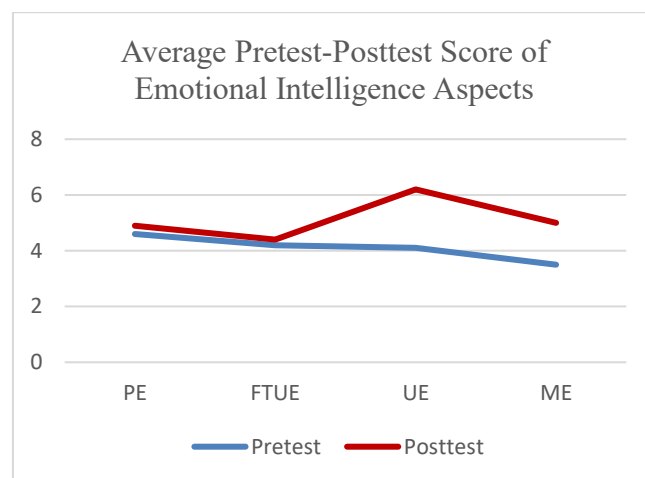


Figure 3. Diagram of Average Pretest-Posttest Score of Emotional Intelligence Aspects: Perceiving Emotion (PE), Facilitating Thought Using Emotion (FTUE), Understanding Emotion (UE), Managing Emotion (ME)

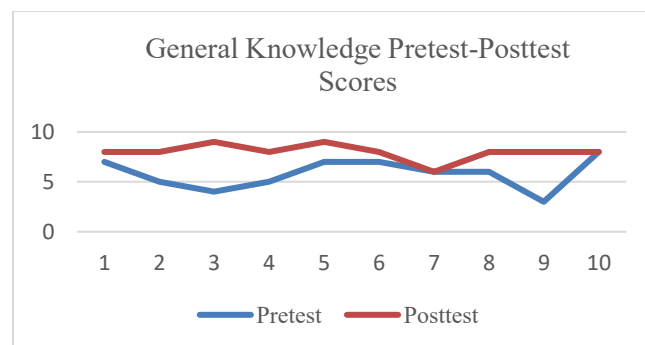


Figure 4. Diagram of General Knowledge Pretest and Posttest Scores

Changes in Emotional Intelligence in General Knowledge and Skill Knowledge

In addition to emotional intelligence scores, changes in general knowledge and skill-related knowledge of emotional intelligence were examined. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test showed a significant increase in general emotional intelligence knowledge ($p = .011$) and emotional intelligence skill knowledge ($p = .005$) after the intervention. Descriptive analysis showed that

most participants had higher posttest scores in both types of knowledge. Although a small number of participants showed stable scores in one of the assessments, the general trend suggested an improvement in participants' understanding of emotional intelligence concepts and related skills.

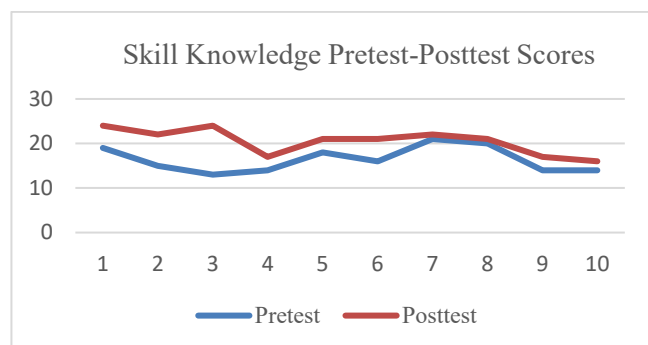


Figure 5. Diagram of Skill Knowledge Pretest and Posttest Scores

An Overview of the Implementation of Creative Drama-Based Psychoeducation

The following was an explanation of the description of the activities that have been carried out. In the first session, participants received material on emotional intelligence, including definitions, branches, influencing factors, impacts, and strategies for improvement, using lectures and discussions. The intended outcome was for participants to gain knowledge and explain the material presented. By the end of the session, adolescents at As-Salam Shobuur orphanage were able to define emotional intelligence, describe its branches, and identify relevant factors and impacts. Pretest and posttest results showed an increase in scores, suggesting improved understanding. The facilitator concluded the session by providing feedback on the importance of emotional intelligence, emphasizing its impacts as discussed in the material. In the second session, which focused on the first branch or area of emotional intelligence, namely perceiving emotion, an emotion from a predetermined range of emotions was role-played. This session aimed to help adolescents at orphanage identify, express, and distinguish emotions, as well as understand how emotions are expressed depending on context and culture, particularly in orphanage environment. Activities in the second session showed that participants were generally capable of observing emotions, easily identifying and understanding feelings such as happiness, sadness, and anger shown by others during roleplay exercises. This session aimed to help adolescents at orphanage identify, express, and distinguish emotions, as well as understand how emotions are expressed depending on context and culture, particularly in orphanage environment. Activities in the second session showed that participants were generally capable of observing

emotions, easily identifying and understanding feelings such as happiness, sadness, and anger shown by others during roleplay exercises. However, different reactions were shown when identifying the emotion of fear with sadness and anger. An important feedback from the activity showed that emotionally intelligent individuals must develop the ability to observe, understand, and differentiate emotions, as emotional expression also depended on context and culture.

The third session focused on the second branch of emotional intelligence, facilitating thought using emotion. Activities included roleplay exercises based on experiences and emotional events, with settings and situations drawn from orphanage environment. This session helped adolescents use emotions to guide thinking, particularly in orphanage context. Observations from the session showed that most participants struggled to facilitate emotions in thinking. The majority depended primarily on strong emotions, such as anger, rather than using a broader range of feelings to process situations and find solutions when faced with challenges, including being scolded or reprimanded. One adolescent showed difficulty in directing attention and thoughts because anger dominated their response. Feedback showed the importance of developing skills in this branch of emotional intelligence, as effective facilitation of emotions in thinking is essential for growth in the subsequent areas of emotional intelligence.

The fourth session focused on the third branch of emotional intelligence, which was understanding emotions. Participants engaged in roleplay using situations from orphanage. The session aimed for participants to label emotions, interpret meaning, recognize emotional transitions, and assess situations that might trigger emotions. In the roleplay, one child (F) initially felt happy but became angry and sad when an orphanage administrator (I) scolded F without reason. F shared these feelings with a friend (A), who initially felt shocked and then suggested retaliating against the administrator. Participants were able to identify emotions accurately, including F experienced anger and sadness, A felt shock, and I expressed anger. Emotional transition for F was from happiness to anger and sadness, caused by the administrator's actions. The facilitator provided feedback, explaining that F's anger reflected feelings of injustice and sadness, suggesting being blamed despite innocence.

The fifth session focused on the fourth branch of emotional intelligence, managing emotions. Roleplay used orphanage-based scenarios similar to session four. This session helped participants remain open to both pleasant and unpleasant feelings, as well as moderate negative and enhance positive emotions. Observations showed that participants applied strategies to regulate

emotions during interactions, reflecting the skills targeted in the session.

Results from this session showed that participants were able to describe effective strategies for managing emotions, such as discussing and resolving conflicts appropriately between F and orphanage administrators. The facilitator explained to the friend that retaliation was unnecessary, showing the importance of preventing ongoing problems. Feedback further showed the need to understand emotions before responding by recognizing the type of emotion, its intensity, and naturalness. For example, sadness could negatively affect relationships with friends when left unaddressed. Although feeling sad was natural, managing emotions required regulation and control. Positive strategies included engaging in enjoyable activities, such as watching favorite movies or pursuing hobbies, and attempting to re-establish communication with others by showing understanding and avoiding selfishness. Participants were also advised to avoid actions that could have harmful effects, such as self-harm or venting emotions onto others.

Discussion

Based on the results presented previously, a participant still has a low score related to emotional intelligence, which can be explained by the existence of several internal factors and external factors (Goleman, 2005). In this context, outcomes were influenced by internal psychological factors, including experience, emotional state, cognitive ability, and motivation. During the activity, one participant showed high enthusiasm for participation and task completion. However, the participant often rushed to complete pretest and posttest items. Others frequently questioned this behavior, as participants tended to tease peers through joking, even in situations that required a serious attitude. The results of psychoeducation are consistent with the report of Akyil and Deniz (2022) that creative drama-based method is effective for increasing emotional intelligence in adolescents. These results were consistent with evidence showing that emotional intelligence had a developable structure (Altunbaş & Özabacı, 2019; Yilmaz, 2021; Akyil & Deniz, 2022). The structure followed the four branches described by Mayer and Salovey (1999) and Mayer et al. (2016), namely perceiving, understanding, managing, and facilitating thought using emotion. Each of these branches consisted of several specific abilities. It was also clarified by Ciarrochi and Mayer (2007) that emotional intelligence can be improved through education and training methods. Emotional education is considered a continuous and permanent learning process that enhances the development of competence as a key element of an individual's comprehensive development life (Castillo et al., 2021). The results of this study also showed that creative drama-based

psychoeducation method can significantly help improve and develop emotional intelligence of adolescents in orphanage.

Emotional intelligence in adolescents is important because it provides adolescents with a good understanding of self-awareness about individual emotions and people, as well as maintaining good social relationships (Dewi & Yusri, 2023). Adolescent emotional intelligence has a relationship with subjective well-being and positive mental health (Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Mayer et al., 1999; Zeidner et al., 2012). Adolescents who have high emotional intelligence can control emotions, overcome problems during the developmental stages, and achieve independence. However, when adolescents have poor emotional intelligence, there is a lack of understanding of others and interpersonal relationships (Dewi, 2024; Goleman, 2005).

Drama is considered a field of art that contributes to emotional, mental, and social development of adolescents, as it requires active participation (Üstündağ, 2010; Akyil & Deniz, 2022). This concept supports deeper and more universal self-perception and environmental awareness among adolescents, rather than surface-level understanding (Aral et al., 2000; Başkaya, 2000; Akyil & Deniz, 2022). Creative drama applies across all educational levels and age groups. Observations showed that varied and engaging activities in creative drama content supported achievement of educational goals by reducing monotony in instructional delivery (Başarı & Ayhan, 2021). In this context, the use of creative drama method proved beneficial. Analysts, practitioners, and relevant stakeholders, including orphanage caregivers and foundation owners, are motivated to incorporate this method to improve emotional intelligence among adolescents in orphanage. Development studies of this method should also be conducted to develop creative drama-based psychoeducational activities. Future investigations could include quantitative studies examining relationships between creative drama and constructs such as emotional intelligence. Longitudinal designs that assess one or more of these variables across diverse participant characteristics and age groups would support broader application of creative drama-based psychoeducation.

The success of creative drama-based psychoeducation was influenced by several factors. The first is the enthusiasm of orphanage youth in creative drama-based psychoeducation process. Participant satisfaction supported this outcome, as the majority reported high or moderate satisfaction with the activities conducted. Secondly, the group of adolescents was able to show a disciplined and active attitude in every stage carried out. Discussion, shared input, and mutual affection among adolescents fostered

a positive group atmosphere. This environment promoted positive changes in emotional intelligence, knowledge, and skills.

In general, from all sessions attended by the participants, an understanding was obtained that someone who is emotionally intelligent will be able to observe, understand, manage, and facilitate thinking using emotions. By also paying attention to the emotions of others, it will also indirectly facilitate and improve the ability for interpersonal and intrapersonal communication, and facilitate relationships with others. This relates to the context of orphanage where the participants live. Initially, the majority admitted difficulty in handling situations, such as reprimands, punishments, or conflicts. Through the activities, participants learned to remain calmer in these situations by applying principles of emotional intelligence. Additionally, participants gained an understanding of context- and culture-dependent emotional expression, moving beyond the initial perception of emotions as having a single form toward recognition of varied emotional expressions.

This study still has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results and drawing conclusions. The analysts conducted this activity without including other people to become observers. Therefore, the observations made were less able to record the interactions that occurred between subjects in the activity, more specifically. The study did not include measurement instruments that thoroughly assessed emotional intelligence skills shown by participants before and after the intervention. These limitations serve as evaluation points for future implementations of psychoeducational program, allowing for more comprehensive and accurate results.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study shows that creative drama-based psychoeducation supports the development of emotional intelligence among adolescents living in orphanage through an experiential and reflective learning process. By engaging adolescents in role-playing, emotional expression, and guided group reflection, the intervention increases emotion awareness, promotes understanding of experiences in social contexts, and provides opportunities to practice more adaptive management strategies. The participatory and group-based nature of creative drama fosters empathy, perspective-taking, and interpersonal sensitivity, allowing emotional learning to develop from shared experiences rather than from abstract instruction. In general, creative drama-based psychoeducation facilitates emotional intelligence as a lived and integrated capacity, making it a relevant and supportive method for promoting emotional development among adolescents in institutional care settings.

Recommendations for analysts, practitioners, and related parties include collaborating and actively participating in the development of adolescent emotional intelligence in orphanage. This includes reflecting on and reviewing the implementation of psychoeducation method while addressing the limitations identified in the study. Some suggestions include using an experimental study design with a control group to clearly evaluate the effectiveness of creative drama-based psychoeducation and reduce potential bias. Other recommendations are assigning observers, developing and applying evaluation tools specific to creative drama activities for emotional intelligence skills, and conducting further studies, such as quantitative studies examining one or more variables related to creative drama-based psychoeducation and emotional intelligence. To ensure the wider use of psychoeducation, further study is expected to include various subjects from different characteristics and age groups.

Declaration

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Author Contributions

Conceptualization: H.A.M.; Methodology: D.F.S.; Data collection and investigation: H.A.M. & D.F.S.; Data analysis: D.F.S.; Writing—Original Draft Preparation: H.A.M. & D.F.S.; Writing—Review & Editing: H.A.M.; Supervision: S.S.F.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The authors declare that no Artificial Intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript.

Ethical Clearance

This study was conducted with formal approval from the orphanage institution. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants and their legal guardians prior to participation.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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