



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***EFFECTS OF LIFE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM ON DEVELOPING
CRITICAL THINKING, CREATIVE THINKING, AND LIFE SKILLS
COMPETENCY AMONG IRANIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL GIRLS***

FATEMEH PARASTEH GHOMBAVANI

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By

FATEMEH PARASTEH GHOMBAVANI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

May 2013

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DEDICATION

To my parents (my lovely MOTHER and FATHER), for their close cooperation in this long journey, to my sisters and brother for their continuous moral support and to my honey niece and nephew, Sara, Alireza, Sahel, Artin, and Ava.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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FATEMEH PARASTEH GHOMBAVANI

May 2013

Chairman: Associate Professor Mohd Ibrahim Nazri, PhD

Faculty: Educational Studies

The most important element in the educational system is “thinking” that is goal-directed and purposeful approach to arrive at meaningful, thoughtful and effective decision making to have better quality of their life; and the problem is that improving of thinking skills is necessary in Iranian educational system. The goal of this quasi-experimental study was to investigate whether life skills training program affects the critical thinking, creative thinking, and life skills competency of Iranian fifth grade primary school girls.

The participants who were 65 fifth grade primary school girls in a public primary school in Tehran in the academic year 2010-2011 were randomly assigned to two experimental groups (E1 and E2) and two conventional groups (C1 and C2) by utilizing Solomon four group design. In the present study conducted pre-test, post-test, and follow up test. The participants in the E1 and C1 were pretested, then

students in experimental groups (E1 and E2) underwent life skills program. The training program was conducted during 12 weeks; each week consisted of seventy minutes. Four groups (E1, E2, C1 and C2) completed the post-test, and then the students were assessed by the follow up test after eight weeks to explore the lasting effects of training. The participants completed three scales to measure variables: California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST), Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) Figural, Form A and B, and Life Skills Questionnaire (LSQ). The data were analyzed by using independent t-test, one way ANOVA, repeated measure and two way factorial design analyses.

The results indicated that the overall and subscales of critical thinking skills improved in experimental groups with life skills training, and they outperformed the conventional groups. As well, the results of follow up showed that life skills training resulted in lasting change of critical thinking in experimental groups, and findings were favorable towards increasing the critical thinking skills. In addition, findings indicated that experimental groups are superior in creative thinking performance in comparison to the conventional instruction. Moreover, creative thinking improved in flexibility, elaboration, and abstractness of title subscales of creative thinking in experimental groups. This training also leads to lasting change in overall and fluency, flexibility, elaboration and abstractness of title subscales of creative thinking in experimental groups. Besides, the results revealed that the experimental and conventional groups do not differ in overall and subscales of life skills competency, and life skills training did not change life skills competency in experimental groups.

Furthermore, the results showed the overall favorable view of students in experimental groups toward integrating the use of life skills training in the teaching and learning of thinking. The study may serve as a conceptual framework for future studies. It can also contribute to the improvement of creative and critical thinking by life skills training; increase their understanding of thinking especially in decision-making and problem solving. Moreover, it can promote positive social adjustment and contribute to the development of pedagogical practices in the teaching of thinking to students.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN PROGRAM LATIHAN KEMAHIRAN HIDUP TERHADAP
KEMAHIRAN BERFIKIR KRITIS DAN KREATIF SERTA KOMPETENSI
KEMAHIRAN HIDUP DALAM KALANGAN MURID PEREMPUAN DI
SEKOLAH RENDAH**

Oleh

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Perkara yang paling penting dalam sistem pendidikan adalah "berfikir" yang mengarah kepada matlamat dan pendekatan yang bertujuan mencapai keputusan yang bermakna, bernas dan keberkesanan serta berkualiti terhadap kehidupan; dan permasalahan itu boleh mempertingkatkan kemahiran berfikir yang merupakan keperluan dalam sistem pendidikan di Iran. Matlamat kajian kuasi-eksperimen ini ialah untuk mengkaji sama ada program latihan kemahiran hidup memberi kesan kepada pemikiran kritikal, pemikiran kreatif dan kompetensi kemahiran hidup murid-murid perempuan gred 5 sekolah rendah di Iran.

Responden kajian terdiri daripada 65 orang murid perempuan gred 5 di sebuah sekolah rendah awam di Tehran pada tahun akademik 2010-2011, mereka dibahagi

secara rawak kepada dua kumpulan eksperimen (E1 dan E2) dan dua kumpulan konvensional (C1 dan C2) menggunakan reka bentuk 4 kumpulan Solomon. Dalam kajian ini yang dijalankan pra-ujian, selepas ujian, dan ujian susulan. Sampel di E1 dan C1 diberikan prauji, pelajar dalam kumpulan eksperimen (E1 dan E2) menjalani program kemahiran hayat yang berterusan. Program latihan dijalankan selama 12 minggu; setiap minggu 70 minit. Empat kumpulan (E1, E2, C1 dan C2) yang telah selesai diberikan ujian pasca, dan kemudian pelajar dinilai menerusi ujian susulan selepas lapan minggu untuk keberkesanan latihan. Responden menyelesaikan tiga skala untuk mengukur pemboleh ubah: Pemikiran Kritikal Kemahiran Ujian California (CCTST), Torrance Ujian Pemikiran Kreatif (TTCT), Borang A, B dan Soal Selidik Kemahiran Hidup (LSQ). Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan ujian-t bebas, ANOVA sehala, *repeated measure* dan dua hala analisis reka bentuk faktorial.

Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa sub skala keseluruhan dan kemahiran berfikir secara kritis bertambah baik dalam kumpulan eksperimen dengan latihan kemahiran hidup, dan mereka mengatasi prestasi kumpulan konvensional. Keputusan susulan juga menunjukkan bahawa latihan kemahiran hidup membolehkan perubahan kekal terhadap pemikiran kritikal dalam kumpulan eksperimen, dan berkecenderungan ke arah meningkatkan kemahiran berfikir secara kritis. Di samping itu didapati juga bahawa kumpulan eksperimen baik dalam prestasi pemikiran kreatif jika dibandingkan dengan arahan bentuk konvensional. Selain itu, pemikiran kreatif bertambah baik dalam fleksibiliti, menerang, dan merumus sub skala tajuk pemikiran kreatif dalam kumpulan eksperimen. Latihan ini juga membawa kepada perubahan kekal dalam keseluruhan dan kefasihan, fleksibiliti menerang, dan merumus sub skala tajuk pemikiran kreatif dalam kumpulan eksperimen. Selain itu, keputusan

menunjukkan bahawa tiada perbezaan perubahan antara kumpulan eksperimen dan konvensional dan sub skala kompetensi kemahiran seumur hidup, latihan kemahiran hidup tidak mengubah kompetensi kemahiran hidup dalam kumpulan eksperimen.

Tambahan pula, hasil kajian juga menunjukkan pandangan keseluruhan yang menggalakkan terhadap pelajar dalam kumpulan eksperimen ke arah mengintegrasikan penggunaan latihan kemahiran hidup dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran pemikiran. Kajian ini boleh dijadikan sebagai rangka kerja konsep untuk kajian akan datang. Ia juga boleh menyumbang kepada peningkatan pemikiran kreatif dan kritis melalui latihan kemahiran hidup, meningkatkan kefahaman mereka untuk berfikir terutama dalam membuat keputusan dan menyelesaikan masalah. Lebih-lebih lagi, ia boleh menggalakkan kesesuaian sosial yang positif dan menyumbang ke arah perkembangan amalan pedagogi dalam pengajaran berfikir kepada pelajar.

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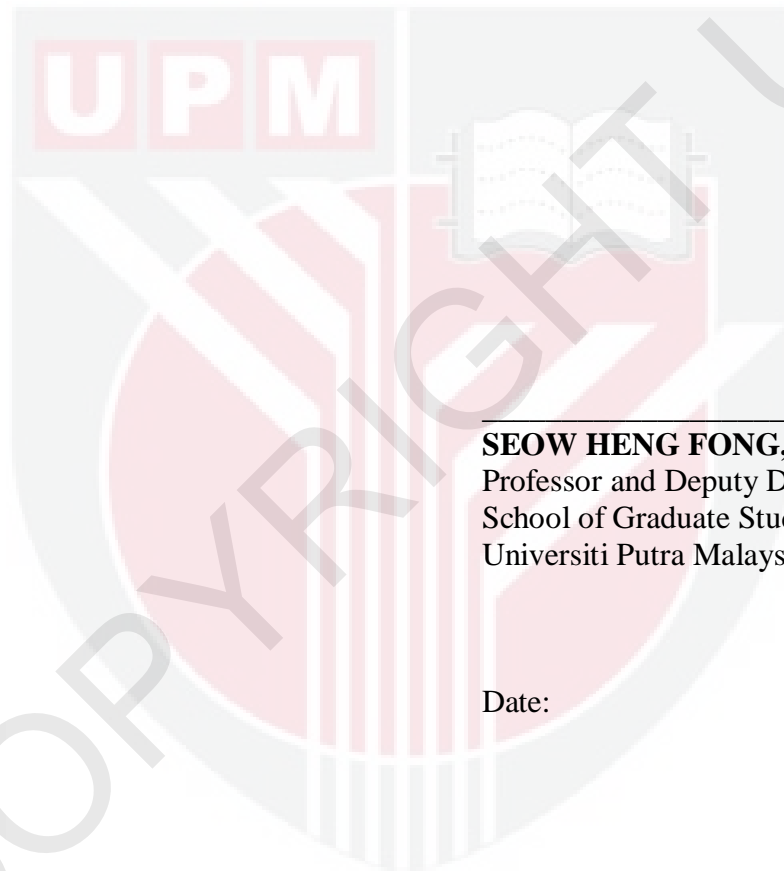
Earning a Doctoral degree has really been the greatest challenge and the most significant success of my life. Alhamdulillah, praise is upon Allah Ta'ala. Without His blessing, this study would never has been finished.

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I certify that a thesis Examination Committee has met on -----to conduct the final examination of Fatemeh Parasteh Ghombavani on her thesis entitled “Effects of Life Skills Training Module on Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking and Life Skills Competency among Primary School Girls” in accordance with the Universities and College Act 1971 and the constitution of the University Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The committee recommends that the student be awarded the doctor of philosophy.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:



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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not currently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or any other institution.



FATEMEH PARASTEH GHOMBAVANI

Date: 23 May 2013

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