



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***TOTAL, ACADEMIC AND ARTISTIC SELF-CONCEPTS OF ART SCHOOL
STUDENTS AND THEIR ASSOCIATIONS WITH THEIR ART
ACHIEVEMENT***

WONG XI YING

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WITH THEIR ART ACHIEVEMENT**

By

WONG XI YING

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti
Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science**

November 2020

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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Students' self-concept has been a predictor to academic achievements, but how this would work for the performing arts and visual arts majors is unknown. The thesis investigates the profile of self-concept of artistically and musically talented students, urged by the fact that gifted students, in general, were reported to have low self-concept and suffered from societal-behavioural problems. A total of 337 Form Three students was set as the operational population for data collection. A total of 232 samples were taken from Malaysian Art School or Sekolah Seni Malaysia located at several branches nationwide. Data was collected at art schools in an appropriate classroom over one week with students completing all three instruments as groups. Self-concepts were collected using Self Description Questionnaire-II (SDQ II) and Arts Self Perception Inventory (ASPI). Simultaneously, the results of students' Form Three Evaluation or Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PT3) were taken as an evaluation of achievement. It took approximately 30 minutes for the administration of the study. The profile created comprises information of total self-concept, academic self-concept, artistic self-concept and their associations with genders, artistic domains, and their art achievements. Artistically talented students have a moderately high level of self-concept, and their self-concept was significantly different between gender and the specific artistic domain. There is also a positive association between total self-concept and academic self-concept with art school students' art achievement. In understanding Malaysian Art School students, total self-concept and domain-specific self-concept are indicators for gender and domain differences. However, academic self-concept does not seem to be of much significance in revealing these students' characteristics. Meanwhile, domain-specific self-concept is not a

predictor of art achievement, but total self-concept is when cross-domain artistry is concerned with Malaysia Arts School.

Keywords: Art, Academic Achievement, Cognitive Transfer, Conative Transfer, Self-Concept



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**KONSEP KENDIRI KESELURUHAN, AKADEMIK DAN ARTISTIK
PELAJAR SEKOLAH SENI DAN PERHUBUNGANNYA
DENGAN PENCAPAIAN KESENIANNYA**

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Konsep kendiri pelajar telah menjadi peramal kepada pencapaian akademik. Namun, bagaimanakah cara ini memberi kesan kepada jurusan seni? Penyelidikan ini menyelidiki profil konsep kendiri pelajar berbakat seni dan muzik. Hal ini didorong daripada fakta yang nyata bahawa pelajar berbakat secara umumnya mempunyai konsep kendiri yang rendah dan menghadapi masalah tingkah laku sosial. Populasi operasi terdiri daripada 337 orang pelajar tingkatan tiga. Sebanyak 232 sampel didapatkan dari Sekolah Seni Malaysia yang terletak di seluruh negara. Data dikumpulkan di bilik darjah sekolah seni yang bersesuaian selama seminggu dengan melengkapkan ketiga-tiga instrumen secara berkumpulan. Konsep kendiri dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan Self Description Questionnaire-II (SDQ II) dan Arts Self Persepsi Inventory (ASPI) manakala Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 (PT3) dikumpul untuk penilaian pencapaian. Pelaksanaan kajian ini mengambil masa kira-kira 30 minit. Profil pelajar Sekolah Seni Malaysia merangkumi maklumat seperti konsep kendiri keseluruhan, konsep kendiri akademik, konsep kendiri artistik dan kaitannya dengan jantina, domain seni serta pencapaiannya dalam mata pelajaran kesenian. Pelajar berbakat seni didapati mempunyai tahap konsep kendiri yang tinggi. Konsep kendiri mereka berbeza secara signifikan antara jantina dan bidang seni masing-masing. Terdapat juga perhubungan positif antara konsep kendiri keseluruhan dan konsep kendiri akademik dengan pencapaian mata pelajaran kesenian dalam kalangan pelajar sekolah seni. Dalam memahami pelajar Sekolah Seni Malaysia, konsep kendiri keseluruhan dan konsep kendiri khusus berdasarkan domain adalah petunjuk untuk perbezaan jantina dan domain. Namun, konsep kendiri akademik kelihatan kurang penting dalam mengungkap ciri-ciri pelajar Sekolah Seni Malaysia. Sementara itu, konsep kendiri domain khusus bukan peramal pencapaian seni tetapi konsep kendiri total adalah salah satu seiring dengan kesenian silang domain yang ditumpukan di Sekolah Seni Malaysia.

Kata Kunci: Seni, Pencapaian Akademik, Pemindahan Kognitif, Pemindahan Konatif, Konsep Kendiri



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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NCLB	No Child Left Behind
CAPP	Comprehensive Arts Planning Program
PT3	Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga
ASPI	Arts Self-Perception Inventory
SDQ II	Self-Description Questionnaire II
CERAD-K	Korean Version of the Consortium to Establish a Registry for Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Packet
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
GCA	General Cognitive Ability
BFLPE	Big-Fish-Little-Pond Effect
REM	Reciprocal Effects Models
EMC	Extended Music Curriculum
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
JKEUPM	Ethics Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects Universiti Putra Malaysia
KPM	Ministry of Education
PBS	School-Based Assessment
ANOVA	Univariate Analysis of Variance
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Arts play a pivotal role in positively impacting the development of a person's general learning capacity. Activities in arts were proven to have enhanced students' performance on art-specific tasks alone and non-artistic performance such as academic achievement (Cannon Wilson, 2016; Gibson & Larson, 2007; Richards, 2003; Swaminathan & Schellenberg, 2015). In January 2002, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was signed into law in the United States to close the achievement gap of minority students and their peers (Ruppert, 2006). This law recognised the arts as a core subject in school to improve students' performance in other core subjects. Art education was increasingly being developed to acquire the required abilities and skills in the general education curriculum. Besides promoting creative, perceptual, and cognitive skills, arts educations improved students' self-esteem, confidence in their abilities, motivation, and academic production (Meleisea, 2005).

The concept of art education was first established and realized in Italy and revolved around countries like France, Britain, Germany, and the United States (Macdonald, 2004). In 1870, the law entitled "An Act Reading to Free Instruction in Drawing" was legislated (Lentis, 2017). It mandated drawing as one of the compulsory subjects in all public schools of Massachusetts. Thus, Massachusetts had become the first state in the United States to enact mandatory public school art education. Art education was also implemented in most Asian countries, including Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Singapore, Korea, and Mongolia (Maira, 2005). Besides implementing art in the school curriculum, there were art schools all around the world. Notable art schools were established in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia (Chappell, 2016; de Araújo, 2018; Liao & Fisher, 2018; Smith, 2018a, 2018b, 2017).

Art schools, a model of public school in nurturing artists within the modern secondary school system, began to receive attention as a legitimate educational institution in the 1980s (de Araújo, 2018). It provided pre-professional training focusing on artistic domains for students who were talented in arts. One such example is the Comprehensive Arts Planning Program (CAPP), a three-year arts education program with specific strategic education plans for artistically talented students implemented in Minnesota, United States (Cornwell & Rushton, 2012). High schools were required to offer at least three art areas from media arts, theatre, dance, music, and visual arts and the children were compulsory to study two out of these four arts areas (Cornwell & Rushton, 2012).

In Malaysia, a specialised secondary school for the arts is conceptualised and organised under the Ministry of Education as Malaysian Art Schools, or Sekolah Seni Malaysia in a centralised manner, with campuses built in the states of Johor, Sarawak, Perak, Sabah as well as in the capital city Kuala Lumpur. The Malaysian Art Schools offer four streams of the art program: music, dance, theatre, and visual art, embedded in and taught concurrently with the general secondary curriculum. The four main streams of art program were compulsory for all lower form students. After Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga or Form 3 Assessment (PT3), upper form students would choose an artistic subject of their choice. The artistic subjects included three visual arts divisions (design, fine arts and visual communications), music, dance and theatre (Hariz Mohd, 2016). Besides choosing an art subject, art school students would also having a similar curriculum with ordinary school students. They would choose either Science, Art or Accounting streams. This ensures a balanced development of students, as stated in the National Education Philosophy (Mok, 2012). Through studying all these subjects, art school students were trained for problem-solving, planning and organising, communication and working with others with the influence of art (Stephens, Roselina Johari, Pan & Elezaa Zainuddin, 2013).

There have been struggles to secure a place for the arts in education in many countries in Asia. Many issues occurred such as lack of resources, basic amenities and insufficient classrooms, and even short supply of trained teachers (Maira, 2005). Merely making art as compulsory subjects in the school curriculum, as to how Malaysia did, neither reduce these problems nor increase the social awareness of the importance of arts. This situation also happened in Korea as the music was not considered a priority in schools, although almost all school principals believed it was a crucial subject (Jang, 2005). Indirectly, students' experience in the arts was minimised due to their focus on elementary schools' academic performance. Without exposure to the unique avenues of cognitive development and personal expression nurtured by arts, students could not meet their full potential (Gibson & Larson, 2019, 2007).

The discipline of Music in Brazil was replaced by the discipline of Art Education in the 1970s. This indicated the disappearance of music as a curricular subject (Fonterrada, 2008). The stakeholder did not value music as much as musicians, even though it was a form of art. In Malaysia, the reduction of weekly learning hours of visual art and music in public schools in 2015 (Malaysia Ministry of Education, 2015) is alarming. The importance of the arts in education has been undermined both at the policy-making level and in implementing junctures of restructuring the school curriculum. Continuous advocacy of arts in education, supported by empirical facts, is critical to safeguard Malaysian students' rights to art education.

Arts positively boosted intelligence, especially on reasoning, cognitive and critical thinking skills. Students who were talented in arts proved to have better academic achievement than other students (Cornwell & Rushton, 2012; Stiegelbauer, 2008). The recent studies also suggested that NCLB increases students' average mathematics performance, especially those from low-

achieving students (Dee & Jacob, 2011; Dee, Jacob, Hoxby & Ladd, 2010). A large number of studies indicated that art (Catterall, 1998; Eisner, 1998; Hetland & Winner, 2001) specifically music (Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac & Cabanac, 2013; Cogo-Moreira, de Ávila, Ploubidis & Mari, 2013; dos Santos-Luiz, Mónico, Almeida & Coimbra, 2016; Hogenes, Van Oers, Diekstra & Sklad, 2016; Yang, Ma, Gong, Hu, & Yao, 2014) were related to academic achievement. It could be concluded that earning experience in the arts could improve students' thinking skills and academic achievement. Research, however, showed the contrasting result when they were conducted from different angles. Research supports that NCLB failed to improve students' learning (Hursh, 2007). Students excelled in visual arts reportedly lacked interest in academic achievement and had poor academic skills (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde & Whalen, 2000). Most of the research focused on core academic subjects such as mathematics and language (Braunreuther, 2010; Cannon Wilson, 2016; Catterall, 2012, 2006; Gibson & Larson, 2019; Gruber, 2018; Richards, 2003). Only a few studies evaluated the association between art and students' art achievement (Day, 1985; Hoepfner, 2006). The achievement of art school students in Malaysia remained unknown.

Arts promotes students' self-assessment, leading to self-discipline, self-esteem, self-awareness and even self-motivation (Cornwell & Rushton, 2012; Júlíusdóttir, 2001; King & Education, 2007). By involving in arts, students could evaluate themselves better. This further leads to the improvement of students' self-concept. Previous research proved that the longer the students get involved in art, the higher their self-esteem was. Students who had high-art experience tended to think they are good at reading, mathematics and in school generally (Burton, Horowitz & Abeles, 2000). Talented students also feel more successful than other students (Rafati, F., Rafati, S., Mashayekhi, Pilehvarzadeh, & Mashayekh, 2014). However, there was no clear evidence that learning in the art, including music, dance, theatre and visual art can improve students' self-concept (Ellen & Stéphan, 2013).

Self-concept is one essential item in many disciplines such as developmental and personality psychology, sport science, health and clinical areas, and educational purposes (Kornilova, 2009; Marsh & Martin, 2011). One way of providing evidence of the importance of certain learning subjects, art subjects included, is by measuring learner's self-concept and correlations. Self-concept had been proven to affect students' learning experience, academic behaviour, and academic achievement. Recent research showed that self-concept and cognitive ability have positive correlations by direct and indirect effects (Chen, Hwang, Yeh & Lin, 2012). Academic self-concept facilitates students' emotional, social, mental and physical development (Craven & Marsh, 2008; Marsh, 2014; Marsh & Martin, 2011), and is regarded as one of the most potent motivating forces in predicting a desirable behaviour and learning outcomes (Marsh, 2014). Academic self-concept had also been shown to predict students' academic self-efficacy beliefs and some affective-motivational variables. Maximising students' academic self-concept could boost students' academic performance. Simultaneously, students would presume themselves of having high cognitive

abilities and confident that their academic achievements in mathematics or language, were satisfying (Ferla, Valcke & Cai, 2009).

Researching the effect of academic self-concept on the development of students became more important nowadays. The relationship of academic self-concept and academic achievement was evident with the establishment of reciprocal effects model and many other research findings that outlined the strong relationship between the two variables (Dulay, 2017; Hau & Marsh, 2015; Marsh & Scalas, 2010a; Pinxten, De Fraine, Van Damme & D'Haenens, 2013, 2010; Seaton, Parker, Marsh, Craven & Yeung, 2014). Studies indicated that self-concept could associate with better educational attainments five or 10 years later after graduating from high school hence the lasting effects of self-concept (Liem, Marsh, Martin, McInerney & Yeung, 2013; Marsh & O'Mara, 2008a).

1.2 Problem Statement

The question of the association between academic self-concept and academic achievement was genuinely a vital research question that has been discussed. Research focusing on academic self-concept and academic achievement were conducted on mainly public high school students (Affum-osei, Adom, Barnie & Forkuoh, 2014; E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik, 2011; Niepel, Brunner & Preckel, 2014; Seaton, Parker, Marsh, Craven & Yeung, 2014) and some on students with learning disabilities (Möller, Streblov & Pohlmann, 2009; Zheng, Gaumer Erickson, Kingston & Noonan, 2014). Research on the self-concept of a particular group of students, art school students, for example, is limited.

Previous research on art or music student concerned more on general self-concept or specific domain such as musical self-concept (Austin, 1988; Colwell, Davis & Schroeder, 2005; Demorest, Kelley & Pfordresher, 2016; King, 1983; Petersen & Camp, 2016) rather than measuring academic self-concept and artistic self-concept. Meanwhile, the reports of suffering from significant problems including behaviour problems, social problems, low academic achievement, the problems of planning for the future, on lack of vision for the future, suffering from chronic diseases and the problem of school drop-out observed among the gifted students (Alqadhi & Buhijji, 2017), and that gifted students had a low self-concept (Preckel, Götz & Frenzel, 2010) implies that artistically talented students may also be of the risk of suffering from similar problems and issues. Preckel, Götz and Frenzel (2010) further mentioned that students in gifted classes reported decreased self-concept.

As a predictor for these problems (Hosova & Duchovicova, 2019a; Sander & Scherer, 2014), self-concept is the crucial information needed in understanding the situations of artistically talented students. This study intends to investigate and provide a self-concept profile of such artistically talented students who are now learning in Malaysian Art Schools and its associations with their art

achievements. Thus, the study helps to close the gap of domain-specific information within the knowledge of self-concept and understand better the situation of artistically talented students.

What are the characteristics of the self-concept of art school students? Do they differ according to gender and artistic domains? To what extent do self-concept affect art achievement among art school students? Operationalised research questions are as below:

1. Was there a difference in the total self-concept among different gender of art school students?
2. Was there a difference in the academic self-concept among different gender of art school students?
3. Was there a difference in the artistic self-concept among different gender of art school students?
4. Was there a difference in the total self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains?
5. Was there a difference in the academic self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains?
6. Was there a difference in the artistic self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains?
7. To what extent did the total self-concept affect art achievement among art school students?
8. To what extent did the academic self-concept affect art achievement among art school students?
9. To what extent did the artistic self-concept affect art achievement among art school students?

1.3 Objectives

This study intends to provide a profile of students' self-concept in the Malaysia Arts Schools, and its correlations with their art achievements in art subjects. For profiling self-concept, it covers total and domain-specific categories and compares the differences according to gender and the four artistic domains. Specific objectives were:

1. To compare the total self-concept, academic self-concept and artistic self-concept among different gender of art school students.
2. To compare total self-concept, academic self-concept and artistic self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains.
3. To determine the association between self-concepts and art achievement among art school students.

1.4 Hypotheses

Specifically, this study addressed the following hypothesis:

- H₀₁. There was no statistically significant difference in total self-concept among different gender of art school students.
- H₀₂. There was no statistically significant difference in academic self-concept among different gender of art school students.
- H₀₃. There was no statistically significant difference in artistic self-concept among different gender of art school students.
- H₀₄. There was no statistically significant difference in the total self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains.
- H₀₅. There was no statistically significant difference in the academic self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains.
- H₀₆. There was no statistically significant difference in the artistic self-concept levels of students in different artistic domains.
- H₀₇. There was no statistically significant association between total self-concept and art achievement among art school students.
- H₀₈. There was no statistically significant association between academic self-concept and art achievement among art school students.
- H₀₉. There was no statistically significant association between artistic self-concept and art achievement among art school students.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The research was necessitated to understand art school students more thoroughly. According to Caldwell and Vaughan (2011), a future study must address the critical issues and nature of talent development in the arts as arts highlight education in a holistic view of human development. Self-concept, perception of artistic ability and achievement were highly relevance to talented students, especially art school students. These students might surpass in more than one field. Thus, it was crucial to ensure a student in understanding how their abilities related to their self-perception (Cukierkorn, 2007). Data collected might also support art schools, teachers, and parents to understand students' educational needs better to improve the learning environment.

The research explored the nature and extent of self-concept of art school students and its association with achievement. If there was a particular association between self-concept and achievement, future research was assured into the nature of art identification and development among students. This study would contribute to the literature on a generalization about the association between self-concept and achievement among art school students, thus determining where conative transfer happened. The results of the research would also conclude if educational interventions were justified for art school

students. If most talented students' future were unrevealed, part of our country's most incredible cultural resource might remain untapped.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The investigation only explored the association between artistic self-concept and art achievement among art school students. The association of art and art achievement was not determined in the research, although supported by the literature review. Causation did not imply in current investigation as the research design of this study was a correlational study. Thus, we could not find out the causal relationship between academic self-concept and art achievement. The direction of causation was also not determined in the research. Moreover, variables such as motivational variables, personality variables or even non-academic self-concept were not accounted for in this study. Art achievement measured were only based on the academic results of students in art subjects.

The data collector characteristics could also be biased as students selected were distinctive from their class and domains. Thus, tutors who were teaching them have different gender, age, abilities and teaching practice. This might affect the test results as the tutors' characteristics might influence students' response. The students were limited to form three art school students in Malaysia. Students might have talent in creative writing or media arts, but the Arts Self-Perception Inventory (ASPI) did not evaluate self-concept in creative writing or media arts. Students might also be talented in more than one domain as they were compulsory to involve themselves in all the four domains from form one to form three. However, students were only indicated as one primary artistic domain in the questionnaire's demographic portion due to research purposes. Only formal learning opportunities were investigated as the samples were taken from art school. There might have students engage in informal private art lessons.

1.7 Definitions

1.7.1 Art School Students

Art school students comprised of students who study in art schools in Malaysia and has potential in arts. They were interviewed before their school enrolment and studied the same subjects as in other government secondary schools but focus on art subjects.

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