

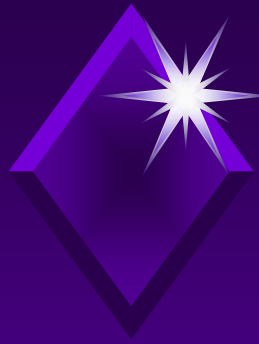


Understanding Creativity across Cultures to Enhance Learning to Live Together

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Introduction

- ◆ Learning to live together is crucial in this era of **globalization** and increasing **cultural diversity**.
- ◆ Extremely important to maintain peace and save lives esp. in the current conflicts in the Middle East and also to solve problems mushrooming around the world today.
- ◆ This requires a constellation of different aspects to contribute towards the enhancement of learning to live together.
- ◆ Among them are **cultural, social, economic, political, moral and spiritual** aspects that need to be in place for this to happen. This is a challenging task and it calls for high level of **creativity and creative problem-solving**



- ◆ There is also a need to **understand diversity** and to learn to be **tolerant** towards diversity.
- ◆ This paper discusses and present findings based on one aspect of diversity, that is, diversity in creativity and creative perception.
- ◆ There are **two** aspects to this. One is the **need for creativity to address challenging issues** due to globalization and diversity.
- ◆ The other is to **understand the cultural differences in personality specifically creative perception** that is vital for tolerance in the face of diversity.



Conceptual Framework

**Creativity &
Creative Problem
solving Skills**

Diversity & Individual Differences:

- 1) Cognitive – Intelligence, **Creativity**
- 2) Affective – Social, Personality
- 3) Psychomotor -



Issue:
Learning
to
Live
Together

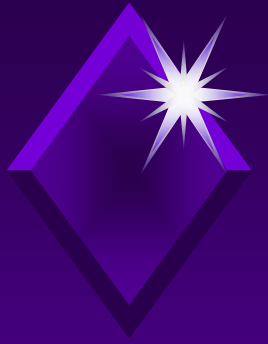


- ◆ To do this, students from two culturally different countries were investigated, namely **Malaysian and American** students. Understanding the differences in creativity and creative perception is vital in understanding behaviour which is crucial in **avoiding misunderstandings** which are the causes of major conflicts.
- ◆ Studies have shown that these difference may be influenced by **gender** (Cox, 2002; Palaniappan, 2000, 1995).



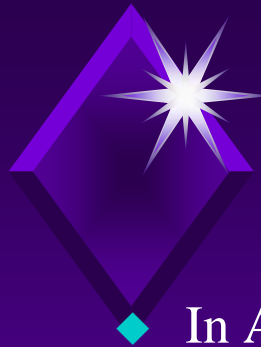
Objective

- ◆ Based on the above rationale, the main objective of this research is to study **cultural differences** between Malaysian and American students' creativity specifically **creative perception**. It also aims to investigate **gender** differences in creative perception in these countries.



The research questions that this study intends to answer are:

- ◆ a) Are there differences in creative perception between Malaysian and American students?
- ◆ b) Are there gender differences among Malaysian and American students in SAM, the **achievement** measure of Creative Perception?
- ◆ c) Are there gender differences among Malaysian and American students in WKOPAY, the **personality** measure of Creative Perception?



Literature Review

- ◆ In Asia Pacific region, Learning to Live Together program was initiated by UNESCO- Asia-Pacific Network for International Education and Values Education (APNIEVE). According to this report Learning to Live Together was defined as follows:

Learning to live together in peace and harmony is a dynamic, holistic and lifelong process through which mutual respect, understanding, caring and sharing, compassion, social responsibility, solidarity, acceptance and tolerance of diversity among individuals and groups (ethnic, social, cultural, religious, national and regional) are internalized and practised together to solve problems and to work towards a just and free, peaceful and democratic society.



- ◆ A framework like the above is important to emphasise the importance of peaceful co-existence among the diverse peoples and to ensure everyone regardless of race, religion, ethnicity and gender will work together to garner the creativity needed to solve the challenges facing mankind such as global warming, AIDS, SARS and other social issues such as racism, sexism and human issues such as equality and democracy.
- ◆ Economic issues such as currency manipulation and trade disparity also requires everyone involved to practise patience, understanding and tolerance.



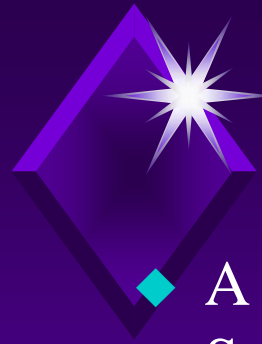
- ◆ In all these challenges, one crucial ability required is **creativity** and creative problem-solving skills as well as the ability to understand the differences in individual characteristics including creativity and creative perception among the parties involved.
- ◆ Education plays an important role in advancing this effort to learning to live together.
- ◆ Many schools have incorporated Moral education or Civic lessons in the curriculum to enable the seeds of good behaviour to be sown right from the early years.



- ◆ Education is also important to equip and enhance thinking skills including critical and creative thinking skills in schools.
- ◆ Teacher training curriculum should incorporate this in their training to produce teachers who will be able to incorporate this in their teaching.
- ◆ It cannot be denied that many teacher training institutions and schools in some countries have overlooked this in place for teaching only **content** areas to ensure academic excellence at the expense of thinking skills.
- ◆ It is important that this trend is reversed to produce a more creative and civic conscious citizenry.

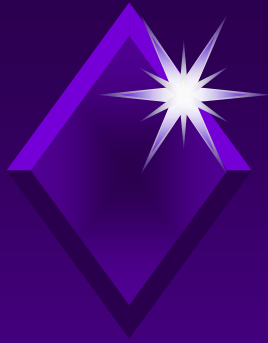


- ◆ Research is also **lagging** behind in producing ideas and practical findings that can help facilitate teacher-training and teaching in schools in the areas of creating a more creative and civic minded people.
- ◆ Hence, this research is designed to help advance knowledge on **what creativity is** and also whether there are **cultural differences** and in which areas that might be important to focus on when dealing with strategies on how to implement the learning to live together initiatives.



Methodology

- ◆ A random sample of students in Malaysia and United States were obtained.
- ◆ In the Malaysian study, after securing the necessary ethics approval, 132 students were randomly chosen from among 1500 undergraduates at a local university.
- ◆ A reliable and valid creativity measure called the Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory (KTCPI) (Khatena & Torrance, 1990) was administered together with another survey on background information of the students.
- ◆ Among 132 surveys received, only 111 complete responses were received. There were 17 male and 92 female students in the Malaysian sample.



- ◆ In the American study, 132 undergraduates were randomly chosen in a public university.
- ◆ They were also administered the KTCPI together with the survey on background information.
- ◆ However, only 126 complete responses were received. There were 28 male and 94 female undergraduates in the American sample.



Instrument

- ◆ Creative Perception is measured using the **Khatena-Torrance Creative Perception Inventory (KTCPI)** (Khatena & Torrance, 1990) which comprises two subscales – **Something About Myself (SAM)** and **What Kind of Person are You? (WKOPAY)**.
- ◆ Both subscales take about 25 minutes to complete.
- ◆ The variables investigated in this study are defined and measured are as follows:



*The factor scores of Something About Myself
are:*

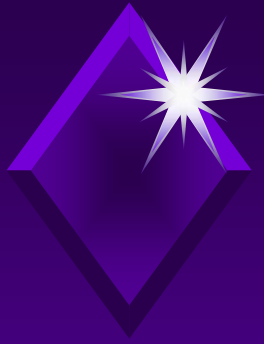
- ◆ **Environmental Sensitivity (ES)** relates to being open to ideas of others, relating ideas to what can be seen, touched, or heard; interest in beautiful and humorous aspects of experiences, and sensitivity to meaningful relations.
- ◆ **Initiative (IN)** relates to directing, producing and /or playing leads in dramatic and musical productions; producing new formulas or new products; and bringing about changes in procedures or organization.
- ◆ **Self-strength (SS)** relates to self-confidence in matching talents against others, resourcefulness, versatility, willingness to take risks, desire to excel and organizational ability



- ◆ **Intellectuality (IT)** relates to intellectual curiosity, enjoyment of challenging tasks, imagination, preference for adventure over routine, liking for reconstruction of things and ideas to form something different, and dislike for doing things in a prescribed routine.
- ◆ **Individuality (ID)** relates to preference for working by oneself rather than in a group, seeing oneself as a self-starter and somewhat eccentric, critical of others' work, thinking for oneself, working for long periods without getting tired.
- ◆ **Artistry (A)** relates to production of objects, models, paintings, carvings, musical composition, receiving awards or prizes or having exhibits, production of stories, plays, poems and other literary pieces.



- ◆ Creative Perception as measured by **What Kind Of Person Are You? (WKOPAY)** is a creative personality measure based on the rationale that an individual has a psychological self whose structures have incorporated both creative and non-creative ways of behaving.



The factor scores of What Kind Of Person Are You? (Khatena & Torrance, 1998) are:

- ◆ **Acceptance of Authority (AA)** relates to being obedient, courteous, conforming, and accepting of judgments of authorities.
- ◆ **Self-confidence (SC)** relates to being socially well-adjusted, self-confident, energetic, curious, thorough and remembering well.
- ◆ **Inquisitiveness (I)** relates to always asking questions, being self-assertive, feeling strong emotions, being talkative and obedient.



- ◆ **Awareness of Others (AO)** relates to being courteous, socially well-adjusted, popular or well-liked, considerate of others, and preferring to work in a group.
- ◆ **Disciplined Imagination (DI)** relates to being energetic, persistent, thorough, industrious, imaginative, adventurous, never bored, attempting difficult tasks and preferring complex tasks.



- ◆ Students Background information survey was administered to elicit information relating to age, gender and specialization or major.



Results

- ◆ In order to answer the first research question:
 - ◆ a) Are there differences in creative perception between Malaysian and American students? students responses for both subscales were obtained.
 - ◆ *t*-test comparisons of creative perception scores comprising the two subscales and their components were undertaken between Malaysian and American samples.
 - ◆ Table 1 shows the results of these comparisons.

T-test Comparisons of Creative Perception (SAM) between Malaysian (n = 111) and US (n=126) students

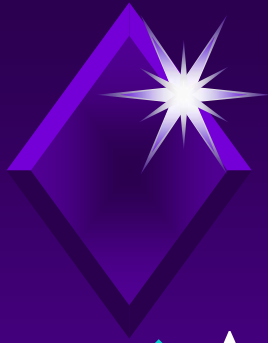
Component	Country	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> < .05
SAM	Msia	34.01	6.06	4.39	Sig
	US	30.44	6.39		
ES	Msia	5.07	1.10	-1.58	NS
	US	5.28	0.90		
IN	Msia	2.53	1.59	5.85	Sig
	US	1.44	1.28		
SS	Msia	6.99	1.62	0.98	NS
	US	6.77	1.81		
IT	Msia	6.44	1.62	2.17	Sig
	US	5.87	2.30		
ID	Msia	4.23	1.12	2.27	Sig
	US	3.87	1.30		
A	Msia	2.61	1.48	0.62	NS
	US	2.49	1.52		

ES= Environmental Sensitivity
 IN – Initiative
 SS – Self-strength

IT – Intellectuality
 ID - Individuality
 A - Artistry



- ◆ The analysis indicate that **Malaysian** students have significantly **higher SAM** scores than the American students ($t = 4.39, p < .05$).
- ◆ This shows that Malaysian students perceive themselves as more creative than American students based on their past creative achievements.
- ◆ The former also perceive themselves as having higher level of creative characteristics relating to the use of creative thinking, and in creative productions than the latter.
- ◆ This shows that there may be cultural differences in creative perception that may impact on the way we perceive ourselves as creative and capable of solving issues relating to learning to live together.



- ◆ As for the component scores of SAM, the **Malaysians** performed significantly **higher** than the Americans on **Initiative** ($t = 5.85, p < .05$), **Intellectuality** ($t = 2.17, p < .05$) and **Individuality** ($t = 2.27, p < .05$) but there were no significant differences on **Environmental Sensitivity, Self-strength and Artistry**.
- ◆ This shows that there may be cultural differences in Initiative, Intellectuality and Individuality but not on Environmental Sensitivity, Self-strength and Artistry.



- ◆ Malaysian's higher level of **Initiative** shows that they prefer producing things and bring about changes in organizations.
- ◆ Their higher level of **Intellectuality** indicates that they are intellectually curious, enjoy challenging tasks and prefer adventure.
- ◆ Their higher level of **Individuality** shows that they prefer work alone rather than in groups, to think for themselves and are self-starters.
- ◆ As such, working with Malaysian students on issues relating to learning to live together, we may need to consider these cultural differences.



- ◆ There are no significant differences on **Environmental Sensitivity, Self-strength and Artistry**. Hence, this shows that there may be some areas of similarity between the two cultures.
- ◆ Both sample of students are open to ideas and sensitive to meaningful relations. They are also resourceful and willing to take risks and excel in their work.
- ◆ As for Artistry, both the Malaysians and Americans tend to be creative in production of things like paintings, music and literary works.



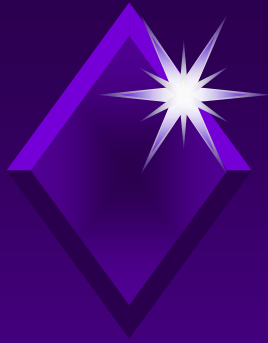
- ◆ T-test comparisons between Malaysian and American students were also undertaken on the subscale **WKOPAY** which measures the perception of oneself as creative based on their **creative personality**.
- ◆ In other words, those high on WKOPAY tend to perceive themselves as creative based on their past experiences relating to their own creative behaviour.
- ◆ Table 2 shows the results of these comparisons. On this subscale, the **Americans** were found to be significantly **higher** than the Malaysians ($t = 2.13, p < .05$).
- ◆ This indicates that there are cultural differences in how one perceives oneself as creative based on their past creative behaviour.

T-test Comparisons of Creative Perception (WKOPAY) between Malaysian (n = 111) and American (n=126) students

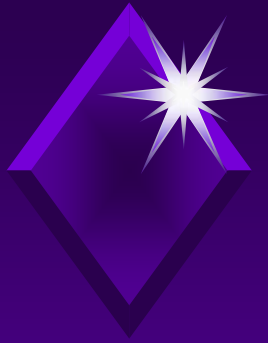
Component	Country	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> < .05
WKOPAY	Msia	22.89	5.84	-2.13	Sig
	US	24.71	7.16		
AA	Msia	3.72	1.57	5.93	Sig
	US	2.51	1.57		
SC	Msia	6.54	2.32	0.99	NS
	US	6.23	2.47		
I	Msia	3.12	1.49	-0.36	NS
	US	3.19	1.67		
AO	Msia	7.13	1.59	2.58	Sig
	US	6.59	1.62		
DI	Msia	3.89	1.91	-0.61	NS
	US	4.06	2.18		

AA = Acceptance of Authority
 I = Inquisitiveness
 DI = Disciplined Imagination

SC = Self-confidence
 AO = Awareness of Others



- ◆ As for the component scores of WKOPAY, **Malaysians** score **higher** on **Acceptance of Authority** ($t = 5.93, p < .05$) and **Awareness of others** ($t = 2.58, p < .05$) than the Americans. This shows that Malaysians tend to have high level of respect for people of authority and tend to accept most of what the authoritative person says. This is not true among Americans.



- ◆ As for **Awareness of others**, the **Malaysian** students obtained significantly **higher** scores than the Americans. The Malaysians are more **courteous** and **considerate of others**. These are also common characteristics among most Asians. These cultural aspects need to be understood if one wishes to **work and live** together.



- ◆ There are **no significant differences** between Malaysian and American students on the other components of WKOPAY, namely, **Self-confidence, Inquisitiveness and Disciplined Imagination**.
- ◆ This indicates that there may not be any cultural differences between Malaysian and American students on their perception of themselves as socially well-adjusted people and prefer attempting difficult and complex tasks.
- ◆ The findings indicate that while Malaysians are highly respectful of their elders and superiors, they do not differ much in terms of other perceptions of themselves and their behaviours from the Americans.



Gender Differences on SAM across Culture

- ◆ To answer the second research question, creative perception among university students were also compared by gender for both the Malaysian and American students.
- ◆ Table 3 shows the results of these comparisons. The results show that among **Malaysian** undergraduates, there were gender differences in the factor scores of Individuality with the **male** students scoring **higher** levels of **individuality**.



- ◆ As for the **American** students, significant gender differences were obtained in the factor scores of **Initiative** and **Intellectuality** with the **male** students obtaining significantly higher scores than their female counterparts on both factors.

Gender Differences on SAM across Culture


T-test Comparisons of Creative Perception (SAM) by Gender among Malaysian (n = 109) and US (n=122) students

Component		Country	Male Mean (SD)	Female Mean (SD)	t	p < .05
SAM		Msia	33.41 (7.11)	34.07 (5.93)	-.40	NS
		US	31.61 (8.51)	29.93(5.81)	1.02	NS
	ES	Msia	4.94 (.90)	5.08 (1.14)	-.46	NS
		US	4.96 (1.29)	5.36 (.75)	-1.55	NS
	IN	Msia	2.59 (1.62)	2.50 (1.61)	.21	NS
		US	2.07 (1.54)	1.26 (1.17)	2.59	Sig
	SS	Msia	6.82 (1.74)	7.01 (1.63)	-.43	NS
		US	6.82 (2.14)	6.74 (1.74)	.19	NS
	IT	Msia	6.18 (1.29)	6.52 (1.67)	-.81	NS
		US	6.82 (2.14)	5.60 (2.17)	2.01	Sig
	ID	Msia	4.82 (.88)	4.10 (1.13)	2.51	Sig
		US	3.79 (1.52)	3.85 (1.24)	-.23	NS
	A	Msia	2.53 (1.55)	2.64 (1.49)	-.28	NS
		US	2.54 (1.67)	2.44 (1.49)	.30	NS



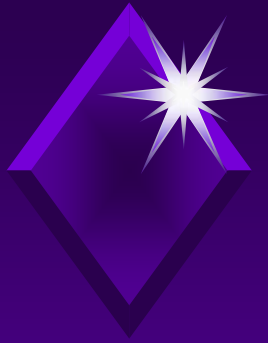
- ◆ The results also show that while there are gender differences in **Initiative** and **Intellectuality** among **American** students, no such differences were found among Malaysian students.
- ◆ While there are gender differences in **Individuality** among **Malaysian** students, no such differences were found among American students.
- ◆ On the other factors scores of SAM there were no gender differences on creative perception between both Malaysian and American students.
- ◆ These findings indicate that gender and culture may play an important role in the differences in creative personality. Hence, one may need to also take gender into account in designing plans for learning to live together.

Gender Differences on WKOPAY across Culture

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- ◆ Similar gender comparisons were also undertaken among Malaysian and American students on **WKOPAY**. Table 4 shows the results of these comparisons.
 - ◆ For the **Malaysian** sample, there are **no significant gender** differences in WKOPAY and its factors scores.
 - ◆ However, for the **American** sample, gender differences were found for the factor scores of **Inquisitiveness** and **Disciplined Imagination**.
 - ◆ **Female** American students were found to be significantly **more Inquisitiveness** than male counterparts whereas **male** students were found to have significantly higher level of **disciplined imagination** than female students.

T-test Comparisons of Creative Perception (WKOPAY) by Gender among Malaysian (n = 109) and US (n=122) students

Component		Country	Male Mean (SD)	Female Mean (SD)	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> < .05
WKOPAY		Msia	22.41 (6.47)	22.91 (5.70)	-.33	NS
		US	25.86 (8.40)	24.31 (6.88)	.99	NS
AA		Msia	3.47 (1.42)	3.77 (1.61)	-.72	NS
		US	2.82 (2.02)	2.45 (1.44)	1.09	NS
SC		Msia	6.65 (2.26)	6.57 (2.34)	.13	NS
		US	5.54 (2.93)	6.53 (2.21)	-1.94	NS
I		Msia	3.06 (1.09)	3.16 (1.55)	-.27	NS
		US	2.43 (1.14)	3.46 (1.74)	-3.68	Sig
AO		Msia	6.29 (2.11)	6.72 (1.45)	-1.75	NS
		US	6.82 (2.14)	5.60 (2.17)	-1.03	NS
DI		Msia	3.47 (2.24)	3.93 (1.85)	.99	NS
		US	5.14 (2.14)	3.77 (2.13)	2.99	Sig



- ◆ Hence, there appears to be gender and cultural differences on creative perception as measured by WKOPAY between Malaysian and American samples on **Inquisitiveness** and **Disciplined Imagination but** not on others.



Conclusion

- ◆ Learning to live together involves **social, political, economical, religious and ethical** challenges that need creative thinking for effective resolution.
- ◆ It also requires **understanding the diversity** among the people in terms of their **personality and behaviour**.



- ◆ This study showed that there are significant differences between Malaysians and Americans (**cultural**) in some areas of creativity which must be taken into consideration when designing initiatives to foster learning to live together.
- ◆ There are also significant **gender** differences on some aspects of creative personality among Malaysian and American sample.
- ◆ Hence, the findings indicate that it is important to take **cultural and gender** differences in creative behaviour when initiating approaches for learning to live together among people from different countries.



Thank You

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