

Differences of Emotional Intelligence Among The Students at Kuala Kangsar Vocational College (KVKK)

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Abstract. *This study aimed to identify the emotional intelligence level of Vocational College (KV) students and its differences on students' demographics which is gender and field of study by using the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale from Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden & Dornheim, (1998). The study was conducted on 269 students in the KVKK. A set of questionnaires was used as a research instrument. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS statistical software version 21. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and mean were used to describe respondents' profiles and students' emotional intelligence levels. Inference statistics such as the Free Sample t-test, One-way ANOVA and Pearson's Correlation were used to test the hypotheses of the study. The results show that students' emotional intelligence at KVKK is at a high level. The study also found that there were no significant differences in students' emotional intelligence on gender and the field of study. The recommendations presented in this study involve the role of parents, Vocational College teachers and Vocational Colleges.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Generally intellectual intelligence or intelligence quotient (IQ) is considered to be the key to a person's academic success. This intellectual intelligence has become a concern for students as well as for the intelligent person (Mohamed, 2005). This scenario is changing because other aspects of intelligence have also been given attention including Emotional Intelligence or EI. The smart and wise people of this decade not only have a high IQ but also a high EQ. The expectation of cognitive intelligence as a symbol of one's intelligence has been considered as less relevant especially in this area of information communication technology (Fletcher, 2007).

In the field of education, emotional intelligence has been emphasized and recognized for its effectiveness. The application of emotional intelligence elements has been applied directly and indirectly to the education system in Malaysia (Zainordin, 2013). Thus, the field of education is the foundation for the development and application of emotional intelligence through the process of teaching and learning. The Ministry of Education Malaysia established a Vocational College in 2013 for the purpose of producing skilled students. The purpose of the establishment of the Vocational College is to fulfill the country's aspiration to produce high skilled workers, have good interpersonal and social skills, business skills (entrepreneurial) and meet the demands of the market (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014a).

Academic success is the ultimate goal of students when they are studying at the primary, secondary or tertiary level. It is a benchmark that determines a student's level of success. According to Mohamad Yunus (2008), success in any field indicates the degree of mastery of knowledge in a given field. Meanwhile, at the Vocational College level, students' academic achievement is determined based on the knowledge learned against the highest CGPA points collected at the end of one semester.

Psychologists have recognized the importance of students' emotional intelligence in their academic achievement. Goleman (1995) explains that a person's greatness does not depend on the level of intellectual intelligence alone but must be balanced with emotional intelligence. Mayer, Caruso & Salovey (2000) stated that individual excellence depends on emotional intelligence. Indirectly a student with good intellectual intelligence becomes better if he has emotional intelligence because intellectual intelligence alone does not guarantee student excellence. Although, with high intellectual intelligence, there are still some students who fail because of emotional factors. Emotional instability and failure to control it cause them to experience many problems (Mohamed, 2005).

Vocational Colleges especially Kuala Kangsar Vocational Colleges (KVKK) should be a great place to cultivate the mastery of emotional intelligence. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the level of emotional intelligence among KVKK students and the difference of emotional intelligence students' towards gender and field of study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of Emotional Awareness by Various Researchers

Emotions are generally defined as feelings or moods about something or someone. Generally, mood is less intense and the duration is longer than feeling (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Salovey and Mayer further explain that emotions usually occur when there is a response to an event, either internal or external, where the emotion has a positive or negative effect on the individual. Smith & Lazarus (1990) defined emotion more specifically as a managed response system that integrates psychology, perception, experimentation, cognitive, and other changes into a coherent experience of mood and feelings such as joy, anger, sadness and shock. Emotional expression is an act that satisfies the individual's satisfaction. It is a condition in which a person's feelings are reflected in the physiological and psychological processes of an individual (Yahaya, Hashim, Nor, & Yahaya, 2007).

Goleman (1996), defines emotional intelligence as one's ability to understand one's own feelings and use them to make effective decisions in daily life. Mayer and Salovey (1997), on the other hand, state that emotional intelligence is the ability to control the emotions of oneself and others, to distinguish between those emotions and to use that understanding to monitor thoughts and actions. According to Fletcher (2007), emotional intelligence is also empathy and knowing how person around us feel. Intelligence is a social skill that enables one to adjust to others and to manage interpersonal relationships well and to persuade and lead others. Seal (2007) defines emotional intelligence as one's ability to identify and manage one's emotions as well as the emotions of others.

Thorndike (1920) further explained that human emotional intelligence is related to the concept of social intelligence. From this definition, emotional intelligence was categorized into two main parts which is the interpersonal part and the intrapersonal part. The interpersonal part is the emotion that relates to others whilst the intrapersonal part, the emotion that relates to the self. Emotional intelligence can also be defined as the ability to monitor one's emotions and other emotions, to distinguish between different emotions and to correctly label them using emotional information to guide their thinking and behavior (Coleman, 2008).

2.2 Previous Study on Emotional Intelligence with Gender

According to Festus's (2012), there are 1160 high school students in Abuja, Nigeria showed significant differences in intelligence by gender. Studies of emotional intelligence on math achievement using the EQ-I (Emotional Quotient Inventory) and MAT (Mathematic Academic Achievement) instruments found that female students had higher emotional intelligence than male students. Meanwhile, Walsh-Portilo (2011) investigated 111 business students at Community College in Florida, the United States which showed that female students have higher emotional intelligence than male students. His research involves 3 phases of assessment which the beginning of the semester, the middle phase and the end of the study. It was found that female students had higher initial scores and higher overall scores during the study.

Based onDitmitrovsky, Spector & Levy-Shiff, (2000) there were differences in emotional intelligence for children of different genders in the study. They find that girls show emotional expression when things are difficult to handle. Meanwhile, Su (2000) did research on 70 male and female level 4 students at SMK Sarikei. The result indicated that that there are differences in emotional intelligence between male and female students. In contrast, the Chong, Mahamud&Yamat, (2013) study of 400 4th-grade students in ten schools in Miri, Sarawak found no significant differences in emotional intelligence for boys and girls. Similarly, Mohmad Rozee's (2013) study of 219 students at the Malacca and Merlimau Polytechnic students showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the levels of emotional intelligence mastery between male and female students. The mean for male students was 4.01 (n = 134) and for female students was 3.99 (n = 87).

2.3 Previous Study on Emotional Intelligence with Field of Study

Hashim (2004) investigated Form 4 students of Tuanku Muhammad Secondary School, Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan with 135 students found significant differences in terms of emotional intelligence based on the field of study. The result showed that students which take literature had higher mean scores with 1.57 than science students with 1.28. Similarly, in Su (2000), an investigation was conducted to 4th grade students consisting of 36 Science students and 34 literary students at Saint Anthony Assistance Secondary School in Sarikei, Sarawak. The results also showed that there were significant differences in emotional intelligence according to the study flow. Meanwhile, Mohamed (2005) did a research towards students in 5 schools at Taiping, Perak found that, there are no significant differences in terms of emotional intelligence. This means that the emotional intelligence of the students of Science and Literature is at the same level.

2.4 Model Salovey & Mayer: Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) & Mayer, Salovey, Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)

The Salovey & Mayer's emotional intelligence model is based on theory of intelligence and meets traditional intelligence criteria (Robert, Zeidner& Mathews, 2001). This model is different from the other models due to its limited scope and not as extensive as Goleman's Model (Boyatzis, Goleman & Rhee, 2000). In addition, the Salovey & Mayer-based intelligence model focuses more on cognitive ability in processing emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) from basic psychological perception to integrated processes of emotion control (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000).

SEIS is a measure of self-report intelligence which based on the concept of emotional intelligence Salovey and Mayer (1990) and one of the most instruments that widely used (Carmeli, 2003; Dimitriades, 2007; Grant & Cavanagh, 2007; Hakanen, 2004 ; Cakan&Altun, 2005). It contains perception and appraisal of emotion as well as reflective regulation of emotions.

The SEIS has scale about 33 items assessing the appraisal and expression of emotion in self and others, regulation of emotion in self and in others, and the utilization of emotion in solving problems. The internal consistency with Alpha Cronbach is within ranged from 0.87 to 0.90, and the retest reliability with 0.78 (Zeng & Miller, 2001).

Meanwhile, MSCEIT (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002) is an objective to measure of emotional intelligence by measuring it emotional perception, emotional understanding, emotional integration, and emotional regulation. MSCEIT contains 141 items and takes between 30-45 minutes to complete. The MSCEIT involves 15 main scores, which are emotional intelligence scores, two area scores, four branch scores, and eight task scores. In addition to these 15 scores, there are three supplemental scores (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002). The value of Cronbach Alpha is between from 0.76 to 0.93 (Zeng & Miller, 2001). The test-retest reliability was 0.86 (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003).

Based on the three models which is the Salovey & Mayer Model (1990), the Goleman Model (1995) and the Bar-On Model (1997), the Salovey & Mayer Model was selected in this study. This is because, only the model shows a significant correlation between emotional and cognitive intelligence. It is compatible with studies of emotional intelligence and academic achievement. In addition, the instrument of Schutte *et al.* (1998) was selected because the SEIS measurement tool has significant correlation with all four branches of emotional intelligence Model Salovey & Mayer, whereas the MSCEIT (2002) instrument found no correlation to the branches of emotion perception that are empirically related to traditional intelligence. The SEIS instrument is simple and easy to understand compared to MSCEIT and does not cause much problems. That's why SEIS is more popular and widely used in emotional intelligence studies.

3. Methodology

This study focuses on specific matters only so that the scope of the study is not too broad. According to MohdZabidi (2007), researchers will not be able to study everything related to the research problem.

The form-based survey method was used in this study. According to Burns & Grove (1993) survey method allows data to be collected not only for descriptive purposes but also to see the variables during the investigation. The study use the survey method for the purpose of deciphering and identifying because respondents were given the opportunity to choose the answer that they felt best suited to their perception.

In this study, the researcher wanted to look at the level of emotional intelligence of students and try to compare emotional intelligence by gender and field of study. All data obtained and collected using questionnaire form distributed to respondents. The questionnaire developed consisted of two sections, part A on the profile of respondents and part B, including items from the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (1998).

3.1 Population and sample

The total population in this study was 507 people comprising KVKK students. However, only the 2nd year 2013 session students of 269 were selected as respondents for this study. The sampling was chosen because the researcher wanted to select the sample to meet the research purpose and purpose. The respondents were then divided into three areas of study: business, technology and hospitality. 61 respondents were from technology studies, 190 were from hospitality and only 18 were from business studies.

3.2 Research instrument

The research instrument selected in the form of a questionnaire was used to gather all the necessary information. The variables of this study are of two types: variables, gender, and field of study. The dependent variable is the emotional intelligence which involves the five dimensions namely self-aware dimensions, self-managing emotion dimensions, negative motivational dimensions, others' emotional empathy (empathy) and relationship control dimensions.

The questionnaire provided is divided into two sections. Section A contains the student demographic information such as gender, field of study and final assessment assessment results. In section B, the self-assessment questionnaire is used as an instrument to identify the emotional intelligence level of the respondents. The questionnaire, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), was developed based on the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale, (SEIS) and the mean rating range adapted from the USM Emotional Intelligence Inventory (USMEQ-i) by Yusoff, Rahim, Mat Pa, May, Ja'afar, & Esa, (2011).

The questionnaire consisted of 33 question items, 30 questionnaire items with positive statements and the remaining 3 questionnaire items negative items namely items 5, 28 and 33. The scores for the negative statement form questionnaire were returned to obtain accurate data of 1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, and 4 = 1. The score scores for items 5, 28, and 33 are reversed to ensure that all items are scored in the same direction (Cakan&Altun, 2005).

The pilot test was conducted on 29 students who had characteristics similar to the actual study sample. The analysis found that Cronbach Alpha values for each dimension of emotional intelligence were 0.601 for recognizing personal emotions, 0.65 for managing emotional emotions, 0.713 for motivating negative emotions, 0.623 for recognizing others' emotions and 0.713 for controlling relationships. For good reliability, the Cronbach Alpha value obtained after the pilot test must be greater than 0.6. It was found that the Cronbach Alpha coefficient values for each dimension and overall were good and appropriate for use in this study.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS software version 21. Based on the guidance of Emotional Weight Scale Schute et al. (SEIS), data from questionnaire items that were negative in nature (Schute et al., 1998) and overall scores were obtained by summing up all item dimension scores (Jonker & Vosloo, 2008). Descriptive analysis was used in terms of percentage, mean, standard deviation, frequency and inference analysis were used in the form of a Free Sample t-test, one-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient. Data is interpreted based on the range interpretation to obtain the mean score. The number of score questions obtained from each dimension is summed and divided by the number of questions given. The total score obtained can be interpreted as in Table 1.

Table 1: Interpretation Value Min (Source:Yusoff *et al.*, 2011)

Min Score Interpretation	Min Score
Low	0.00 - 1.20
Medium	1.21 - 2.80
High	2.81 - 4.00

Based on Table 1 above, the mean score scores are divided into three levels: low emotional intelligence in the range 1.20 and below, moderate emotional intelligence levels in the range of 1.21 to 2.80 and high emotional intelligence in the range 2.81 to 4.00 .

Academic achievement, however, is measured through self-report average grade point average (CGPA) of the 1st semester of 2014. Academic achievement levels are divided into four levels of academic achievement. For CGPA of 1.99 and below or in grades D +, D, D- and E, the level of academic achievement is low, in the failing position. While the CGPA ranges from 2.00 to 2.33 in grades C and C +, the academic achievement level is at a moderate level of graduation. Good positions are in the range of 2.67 to 3.33 which is in good condition with grades B-, B and B +. Excellent academic achievement levels are within the CGPA of 3.67 and above, grades A- and A. Levels of academic achievement are in accordance with the Vocational College CGPA (KVKK, 2014).

4. Results

4.1 Demographic analysis of respondents

Part A of the questionnaire is the demographic of respondents. The respondents' demographic data were categorized by gender, study area and academic achievement in the form of CGPA obtained in semester 1 of 2013. A total of 229 respondents from all three fields were involved in this research. Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents by gender and field of study. The survey found that the majority of the respondents were female students of 151 (66.8%) and 75 men (33.2%).

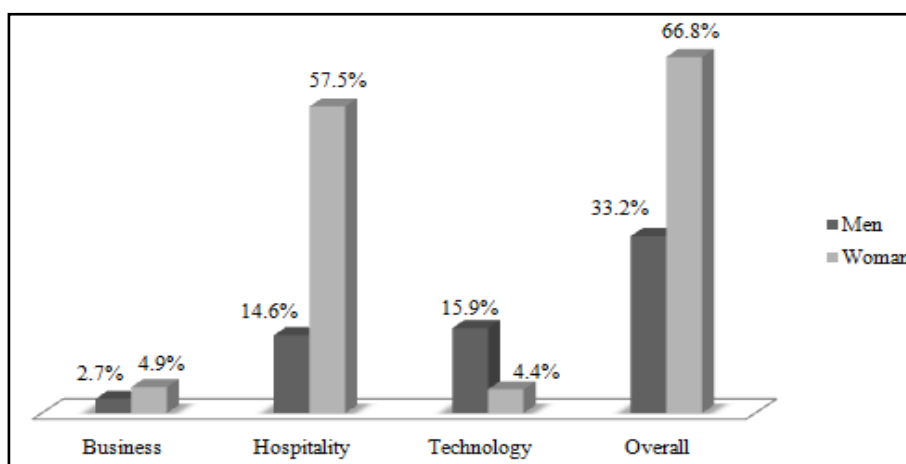


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

More female students than male students. This is because the Hospitality and Business courses offered at KVKK are in high demand among female students. The number of female students over boys in the KVKK explains that the field of hospitality studies is largely comprised of female students who are also the most respondents in this study. Whereas Figure 2 below shows the level of academic achievement of Year 2 KVKK students in the 1st semester of 2013.

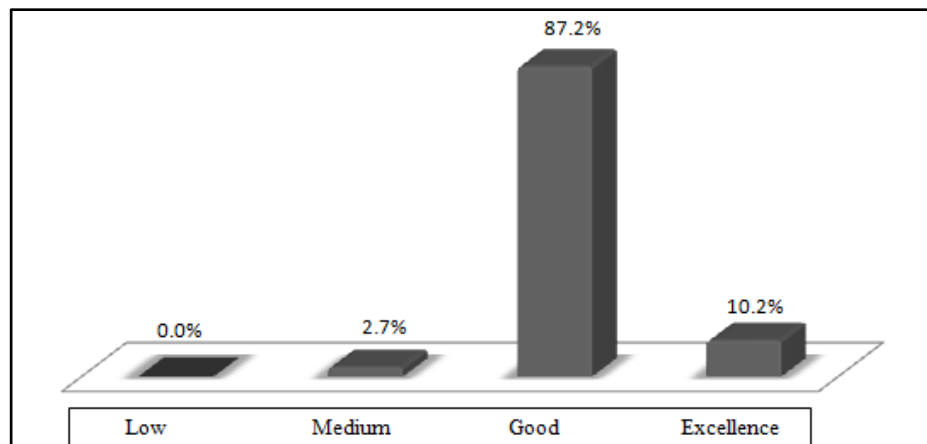


Figure 2: Student Academic Achievement Levels

The findings show that none of the respondents are at the level of low academic achievement in the failing grade. While 2.7% of the respondents were below average achievement and 87.2% of the respondents were in good standing. Only 10.2% of the respondents were in the level of excellence. This indicates that overall the respondents have good academic achievement of a range of CGPA of 2.67 to 3.66.

4.2 Analysis of student's emotional intelligence level

Figure 3 shows the level of emotional intelligence of KVKK students according to the percentage of respondents.

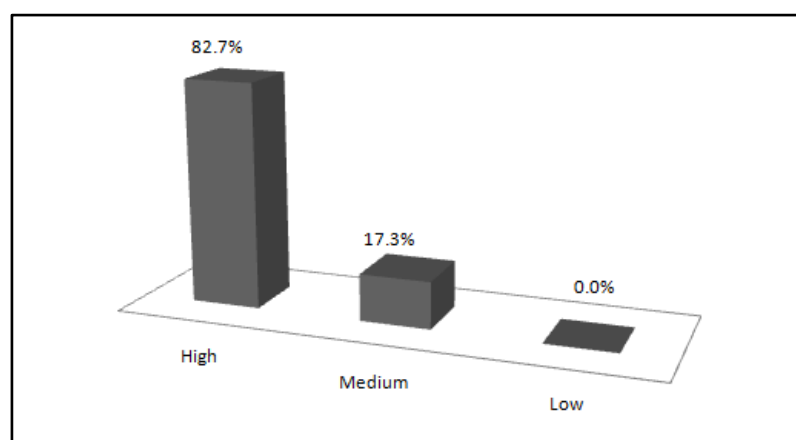


Figure 3: Level of Emotional Intelligence of KVKK Students

Based on the table, the distribution of respondents according to the level of emotional intelligence. The results showed that 82.7% of the respondents had a high level of emotional intelligence and a modest 17.3% of the overall respondents. However, in this study none of the respondents had a low level of intelligence.

5. Findings and Discussions

The results show that overall students' emotional intelligence level is at a high level. However, there is no difference between these five dimensions of emotional intelligence. The findings also show that the dimensions of emotional intelligence in the highest to lowest order are from the dimensions of motivating negative emotions, knowing one's emotions, managing one's emotions, controlling relationships and finally recognizing others' emotions (empathy).

The results of this study showed that the highest mean score obtained was the dimension of motivating negative emotions (mean = 3.25, s.p. = ± 0.372). This illustrates that the students involved in this study have an awareness of overcoming negative emotions within themselves by ensuring that negative emotions can be addressed promptly and wisely. They have strong beliefs and are able to exchange negative emotions and make these emotions a tool for improving their ability to cope with various situations. This in turn makes these negative emotions a source of motivation for them. However, they need to be helped by motivating negative emotions as a tool to develop their ability to plan and deal with them.

This finding is supported by a study by Mohamed (2005) whose results showed a high mean value of 4.00, s.p. = ± 0.515 . Similarly, the study of Ong et al. (2013) found that the mean dimension score motivates negative emotions to be the highest mean score with a value of 3.97, s.p. = ± 0.529 . However, this study is contrary to the study of Mohd Zain (2004) and Yahya et al. (2007) where their study found that the domain with the highest mean was managing self emotion and recognizing the emotions of others with a mean score of 3.69.

Meanwhile, students were found to have the lowest mean scores on the domain of recognizing other people's emotions or empathy, which is mean = 2.94, s.p. = ± 0.365 . This finding is also supported by the findings of Mohamed (2005) where the mean value for the dimensions of knowing one's emotions or empathy is 3.47, s.p. = ± 0.600 . It can be concluded that students have not been able to identify and understand other individuals in depth. Although they have a good relationship and are considered to have a low level of empathy and affect their emotional intelligence level. Indeed, empathy is something that is especially important for students. According to Abdul Hamid (2004), empathy enables a person especially students to recognize and understand situations and situations first before commencing action. Especially the action taken in relation to the teacher, parents, peers and so on. In addition, Mohd Zain's (2004) study contradicts the results of this study in that the dimensions of motivating negative emotions yield the lowest mean. Meanwhile, Ong et al. (2013) in their study found that the dimensions of self-awareness reached the lowest mean score of 3.30, s.p. = ± 0.512 . Similarly, the study of Yahya et al. (2007) in their study found that self-management dimensions of emotion yielded the lowest mean score of 3.38.

In addition, the mean scores are found in all three dimensions namely self-awareness, self-management and high-level relationship management. This finding is in line with studies by Mohd Zain (2004), Mohamed (2005) and Ong et al. (2013) on dimensions in managing one's emotions. Instead, the dimensions of knowing one's emotions and managing their relationships are at a moderate level. While in the study of Yahya et al. (2007) all dimensions recorded mean scores at the simple level except for the self-identifying dimensions of emotion.

This study also details the highest and lowest meanings among the items answered by the students studied. It is found that the highest item is item 10 in the dimension that motivates negative emotions and the lowest mean value is the item in the dimension that recognizes the emotions of others. This finding explains that negative emotions that students face may not influence the opposite but help them be more confident, push and work hard. On the contrary, based on the lowest mean that students are found to be weak in performing activities for others such as teachers, peers and so on. This may be due to feelings of inferiority and lack of association with friends which may adversely affect their relationships.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the above study, it is clear that the level of emotional intelligence of students in KVKK is high. It can also be concluded that emotional intelligence is a vital life skill as well as intellectual intelligence. Recent studies have proven the role of emotional intelligence and its effects and implications on individuals with high emotional intelligence and vice versa. Unstable emotions and failure to manage and control emotions well cause social problems and moral collapse among students. Accordingly, the development of emotional intelligence needs to be implemented early in school and conducted in stages and persistently until they reach adulthood. It requires guidance from parents, teachers in particular to help students improve their emotional intelligence. Without proper guidance, the person being formed will have low emotional intelligence.

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