

Students Perception of the Role of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Achievements

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Abstract

Many factors influencing students' achievement in their academic field. One of them is Emotional Intelligence (EI). The purpose of this research is to examine the role of Emotional Intelligence on academic achievement among business program undergraduate students of President University. A qualitative study is used based on students' perceptions and experiences and how it impacts to academic achievement. A survey was conducted by using purposive sampling technique. Six students were selected to be the participants of this qualitative research. Semi-structured interview were conducted to investigate students' perception in EI and academic achievement. The results of this study showed that 1. In their personal qualities, most students cared about self-awareness and self-management of EI components. 2. Most students realized that their perceived EI has high contribution to their academic achievement. 3. Students controlled themselves in the context of relationship, adaptation, and caring to their environment. In other words, they implemented two components of EI especially in social awareness and relationship management. Finally, all students realized the importance of EI in their university experience especially in self-management and relationship management. The result of this study indicates that EI has an important contribution to students' lived experience and academic achievement in a university.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence (EI), academic achievements, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

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Introduction

Students are assumed as pioneers of tomorrow and are required to perform different jobs with skill and viability. However, universities keep on being seen as spots of chance that are centered around educating and learning of subjects, learning for recreation, learning for particular business, building up the workforce, and giving formative establishment to undergraduate students too.

The issue of Emotional Quotient (EQ) has become more popular than Intelligent Quotient (IQ) as Low and Nelson (2006) argued that EQ is a crucial aspect to determine students' personal life and success in their colleges. In other words, it was claimed that IQ was not enough to predict students' success in their achievement and career. Even, Goleman in his first book explained that the existence of EQ contributes to many areas, not only in education field but also other fields such as in business, human relationship, industrial psychology etc.

Future students' achievement can be predicted by many factors including their past performance, grade point average (GPA), intelligence quotient (IQ) tests, and academic achievement results (Drago, in Ramirez et al, 2016). Meanwhile, Craggs (2005) argued that IQ is not the only predictor of students' academic achievement. In addition, Goleman in his book stated that IQ only contributes 20 % to an individual success. This argument has encouraged researchers and academicians to identify and prove another 80% of an individual success at workplace.

In the context of academic, Maraichelvi and Rajan (2013 and Kolachina (2014) in their studies found that there was a positive relationship between EI and academic achievements. It indicated a need of further understanding of EI in educational setting, especially in relations with student success. In addition, EI may be an important factor of success in higher education and "awareness is growing of the role EI plays in academic achievement" (Kamarinos, 2002; Maizatul, Norhaslinda & Norhafizah, 2013).

Based on the discussion above, it is clear that EI has clear contribution to students' achievement at universities and their career at workplace. It certainly involves lecturers' role in facilitating and supporting students in building their high level of EI. Therefore, this research interest is to explore the lived experience of EI and its influence on academic achievement for business students of undergraduate of President University. The next pages will discuss and describe the investigation about what it was discussed before.

Problem Statement

The future development of the country is in students hands. The future of the university graduate is in employers hands. Hence, it is important for employers to create friendly environment for their workforce in order to achieve effectiveness and productivity by giving the opportunity to develop good and meaningful relationships and also experience a sense of achievement. The role of EI was assumed by several experts to be more and more important to support the sophisticated works in the future. Subsequently, higher instructions or colleges should be serious in building up their students' EI and prosperity

to ensure that colleges or universities stay important in reality as we know it where the fourth industrial revolution unrest requests the mix of physical, digital and natural frameworks and the automation of an expanding number of employments.

Many experts in developed countries have already conducted several studies in the field of EI and its contribution to various fields but there is lack of research in investigating the contribution of EI in academic field especially in developing countries like Indonesia. Meanwhile, the role of EI is very crucial, not only in helping students to learn better but also in determining their career success (Maizatul, Norhaslinda & Norhafizah, 2013).

Considering the important contribution of EI to academic achievement as discussed above, it encourages more studies to investigate their deeper contributions to individuals or students in universities. This study is expected to investigate students' understanding and experience among business program undergraduate students of President University regarding how EI impacts their academic achievement from their perspective or point of view.

The Objectives of the Study

1. To examine students' personal qualities attribute their academic achievement as business undergraduate students
2. To examine to what extent students attribute their academic achievement to EI.
3. To examine how students use EI when they are interacting with others in their daily life
4. To examine how students describe their ways in using EI in their university experience

Research Questions

1. To what personal qualities do students attribute their academic achievement as business undergraduate students?
2. To what extent do students attribute their academic achievement to EI?
3. How do students use EI when they are interacting with others in their daily life?
4. How would students describe their ways in using EI in their overall university experience?

Limitation

This study only explores students perception of role of EI on academic achievement among students of faculty of business who have completed their first two years in their university with GPA 3.00 of 4.00 and passed a proper EI assessment.

Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has still become debatable among experts of psychologist and sociologist since EI was derived from broadly construct of social intelligence (Bar-On, 2000). Then, Kihlstrom & Cantor (2000) stated that experts has attempted to argue in various definition and measure social intelligence over the past eight decades, but these still attempts to remain to be problematic. Several popular experts have conceptualized the EI concepts. Goleman's EI concept (1995), Reuvan Bar-On's model (1999) and Salovey-Mayer's model (1997).

Goleman (1995), a psychologist who popularized the concept of EI, described EI concept as “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships” (p.317). Furthermore, Goleman et al. (2002) conceptualized the four EI concepts into (18) eighteen competencies:

1. “Self-Awareness Domain: Emotional self-awareness, Accurate self-assessment, and Self-confidence.
2. Self-Management Domain: Self-control, Transparency, Adaptability, Achievement, Initiative, and Optimism.
3. Social Awareness Domain: Empathy, Organizational awareness, and Service.
4. Relationship Management Domain: Inspiration, Influence, Developing others, Change catalyst, Conflict management, and Teamwork and Collaboration” (p. 254–256)

While, Bar-On (2005) defined EI as “ability to manage one's emotions, to be able to validate one's feelings and to solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature are important for being academically successful; additionally, academic performance appears to be facilitated by being able to set personal goals as well as to be sufficiently optimistic and self-motivated to accomplish them” (p. 14-15). In addition, according to Bar-On (1997), EI can influence individual's performance in many kinds of aspects including social interaction, and performance and their health physically and psychologically at school and work.

Furthermore, Mayer and Salovey (1997) in their concept defined EI as “the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and / or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (p. 10). They proposed EI model which consists of four domains of abilities namely, perception, use, understanding, and regulation of emotion. Still in the same context, Salovey, Brackett, & Mayer (2004) stated that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is “a typical social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use the information to guide one's own thinking and actions” (p.5).

Among the experts of EI studies, Daniel Goleman was very popular and most accepted with his concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as it is used in this research.

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is one of the most important concepts in education. It could be a measurement of an individuals' achievement in educational system. (Jamali et al., 2013). In other words, the education outcome means how the individuals in educational system have achieved their educational goals. Academic achievement alludes to the degree to which students gain the information, abilities and proficiencies that the educator looks to instruct or relegate. Academic achievement can be measured by using examination or assessment although no any agreement on how to be best tested. Slavia and Ysseldike (2000) called academic achievement as academic intelligence, which consists of general ability and related abilities.

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement among Students.

Several research have been conducted in examining the impact of EI toward academic achievement. The results of the research showed mixed findings depending on the methodologies used and the research targets. Most of the findings showed that EI has a positive influence towards students' academic achievement (Nasir & Masrur, 2010; Natalie et.al, 2012; Maraichelvi, & Rajan, 2013; Maizatul, Norhaslinda & Norhafizah, 2013). Even, Kolachina (2014) in his study found that the level EI also influences the level of the students' motivation in their academic achievement.

Based on the discussion on research findings above, it shows that EI can be predictor of students' academic achievement and it indicates that EI plays an important role in determining students' achievement in their education.

Methodology

Rationale Qualitative Research

Denzin & Lincoln in their book *Handbook of Qualitative Research* defined qualitative research comprehensively:

“Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a

set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3).

This research used qualitative method since the qualitative research enables the scientists an extensive and multifaceted thankfulness and thought of the topic while additionally promising people to confer their encounters so as to have their opinions heard (Creswell, 2007). In addition, qualitative research has primarily potential strength to explore a topic in depth. (Carlsen & Glenton 2011).

Research Design

Many experts argued that methodologies used in qualitative research links to theories. This means that the design qualitative research can be various. Creswell (2007) in explaining qualitative research design, he stated that it depends on research design type and theory varieties. In addition, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) stated that “epistemological, ontological and methodological premises” which lead a researcher. The researcher “approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that he/she examines in specific ways (methodology, analysis)” (p.30-32).

Participants

This study was targeted to twenty five undergraduate business students of President University and six of them were selected as the participants for this study purpose. According to Patton (1990, p. 184, cited in Sobal, 2001), to determine who or how many the participants for the qualitative research will depend on “what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what’s at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility”. This qualitative research used a purposive sampling technique as it enables the researcher to select purposely participants and place to examine or understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2015). Purposive sampling—stresses in-depth investigation. Furthermore, according to Collingridge and Gantt (2008), in selecting the participants for qualitative research should be rationale and it should focus specifically to the research question. So, that is why it is called “purposive”. The selection of the participants of this research was based on researchers’ judgment on students’ success in achieving high GPA which is more than 3.00 of 4.00 scale after two-year study and students’ experience in EI knowledge based on EI assessment results.

Procedure

After identifying and selecting twenty five participants based on their GPA, 3.00 of 4.00 above, the participants were invited to come together for briefing about the purpose of the study. After getting the information, all the participants were asked about their willing to join in the research. After all participants agreed to voluntarily, they started to take a part in the study. Firstly, the Emotional Intelligence Scale is a 33-item self-report scale was delivered to the participants in order to identify and assess their knowledge about EI. The EI assessment was adopted from Goleman model (1998). Through this assessment results, the top six highest scores with the scores 137 to 147 were selected to continue participating in this research. These six students were assumed to have proper knowledge about emotional intelligence and considered to deserve to be followed up to the next step.

Secondly, those students who have achieved the highest score will be proceeded to join interview session personally. Semi-structured interviews were delivered and the results were recorded and transcribed. Creswell (2015) stated semi structured interviews was used to support investigation process which focused on participants' spoken contribution as opposed to the numerical illustrations. The interview materials were derived from the four research questions which were questioned personally to the six students.

In the process of collecting data, students were interviewed personally in 30 to 40 minutes. all interview results in transcripts were coded and classified into themes and categories referring to inductive methodology in order to be analyzed and interpret. The transcripts were analyzed case by case as Smith et al. (2009) stated that all interpretations were described in detail and recorder from individuals.

Result and Discussion

This qualitative phenomenological research was conducted to investigate lived experience of students' business undergraduate in relating to the EI impacts to their academic achievements. In order to investigate the objectives of this research which aimed to explore the impacts of emotional intelligence (EI) to students' achievement, three objectives were formulated which were (1). To examine students' personal qualities attribute their academic achievement as business undergraduate students, (2). To examine to what extent students attribute their academic achievement to EI. (3). To examine how students use EI when they are interacting with others in their daily life, (4). To examine how students describe their ways in using EI in their university experience.

The six interviews were recorded and analyzed by using inductive analysis. The interview results will be presented and discussed step by step based on the questions made in this research. The questions will be discussed in this research including: (1). Describe your recent academic experiences including any academic achievement as a university student; (2). Rundown five important practices and sources of inspiration, which helped you to succeed through the first two years of university; (3). To what personal qualities do you attribute your academic achievement as a business faculty student?; (4). To what extent, do you attribute your academic achievement to your EI?; (5). How do you use EI when you are interacting with others in your daily life?; (6). How would you describe your ways in using EI in your university experience?

Results

This section discusses about responses to the questions which were delivered to the six participants. The all responses of these questions will be coded and categorized in several themes regarding to the topic of this research.

Question 1: Describe your recent academic experiences including any academic achievement as a university student. Most students claimed that they could manage themselves and tried to explore their potentials to control the situation they faced. They also said that they could anticipate any difficulty they faced and built their own

motivation. This indicated that they student could have good self-awareness and self-management.

Question 2: Please Rundown five important practices and sources of inspiration, which helped you to succeed through the first two years of university. Three of the six participants argued that being humble, responsible and adaptation to environment become dominant as sources of motivation for them. These statements reflected that the student considered that to make them success in their first two-years in their universities. This means that component of EI, self-awareness, social awareness and relationship management of the students play an important role in their success in university.

The two questions above were used to support or help the investigators to explore more in collecting information from the participants about the students' perception on emotional intelligence (EI) towards their academic achievement.

Question 3: To what personal qualities do you attribute your academic achievement as a business faculty student? Most students expressed their responses in almost similar context in describing their personal qualities to be successful in their study. Most of them agreed that being conscious or not, self-awareness and self-management had dominantly influence them in their success in university.

Questions 4: To what extent, do you attribute your academic achievement to your EI?

Based on the students' statements, most of them admitted that EI is very important and has contribution to support their success in university. They implicitly expressed that not only Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is not enough but Emotional Quotient or Emotional Intelligence (EI) also takes important role in their academic achievement.

Questions 5: How do you use EI when you are interacting with others in your daily life? The students expressed their EI in the form of controlling themselves in the context of relationship, adaptation, and caring to their environment. In other words, it showed us that they brought their understanding in EI especially in social awareness and relationship management themes,

Question 6: How would you describe your ways in using EI in your university experience?

The students' responses to how they implement their EI to their experience in university. Mostly they talked about how not to be selfish, try to understand and build relationship with other students in their environment. This condition is certainly clear that the students realized the importance of EI in their university experience especially in self-management and relationship management themes.

Discussion

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has become important to investigate, especially in connection with students' academic achievement. The findings above showed that the EI plays an important role in supporting students in adapting with environment, interacting

with other students and achieving academic goals. This reality certainly encourages individuals who got involved in this academic field to pay more attention to the crucial contribution of EI in their environment. Even Goleman (2003) argued that EI is a predictor of performance not only in education but also in industry/organization context as well. Although, Maizatul et al. (2013) found that there is no significant relationship between EI and academic achievement, but however many experts found the results in their studies were in the reverse.

In understanding EI, it may be started from self-awareness as the basic of EI components. It is all about how an individual to realize and understand about his or her emotion and interact with his or her environment (Daft, 2011). By understanding this component of self-awareness, students could have capacity to control or organize their damaging desire and emotion effectively through their self-management. (Daft, 2011). This self-management ability is very important for students in their effective adaptation to their environment.

This research also shows that self-management and relationship management become dominant factors to influence students' EI in their daily life. Most students could make an effort to control their emotion in order to create friendly environment and to be flexible in "adapting to changing situations or overcoming obstacles" (Goleman et al., 2004). In practicing self-management effectively, students tried to be humble, cooperative and avoid conflicts in adapting themselves to their environment. This situation could be easy for them to build togetherness and to be accepted in their environment. Hence, it will help them achieve their goals in their academic achievement.

Howsoever, this research indicates that most students realized that EI contribution is very important in their academic achievement, since all participants were students with GPA higher than 3.00 of 4.00 and most of them stated positive response to the role of EI in their academic achievement in university.

Conclusion

Based on the findings above, several conclusions can be made to answer the research questions of this study as follows:

1. Most students described their personal qualities variously but in conclusion, they can be categorized into their competencies in self-awareness and self-management of EI components.
2. From students' responses, it can be concluded that they realized that their perceived EI has high contribution to their academic achievement.
3. Based on analyzing and interpreting students' responses to the interview, students tried to control themselves in the context of relationship, adaptation, and caring to their environment. In other words, they implemented two components of EI especially in social awareness and relationship management,

4. In order to implement their EI, most students tried to understand one another and build relationship with other students in their environment. The students probably realized the importance of EI in their university experience especially in self-management and relationship management.

Implication of the Study

The result of this study certainly has several implications to university's students, educators and university's policies in curriculum. The students of the President university will have better understanding in the concept of EI and know how the role of EI in order to deal with their environment and have self-motivation to achieve their academic achievement. To educators or lecturers of President university, the result of the finding will inspire them to pay more attention and put elements of EI in modules or curriculum in order to equip and assist students to build and develop their EI during their university experience and it will become an asset for them when they have graduated and then build their career at workplace. Furthermore, Holt and Jones (2005) described that the integration of EI related to training, education, and organizational behavior in order to improve emotional knowledge within academic environment.

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