

The Effects of Employee Quotients on Quality of Life among SMEs in the Klang Valley

Aqilah Kamaludin¹ & Fadilah Puteh^{2*}

^{1,2} Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA,
40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia
fadilahputeh@uitm.edu.my
*Corresponding Author

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Abstract: This study examines the effects of (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, and (v) social quotient on quality of life (QoL) among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Klang Valley. Apart from exploring the impact of these quotients on employees' QoL, this study also aims to identify the key factors influencing QoL within this context. A quantitative methodology was employed to gather data from SME employees in the Klang Valley. The findings revealed positive and significant relationships between all five quotients and QoL among SME employees. However, the study highlights that emotional quotient and social quotient as the most influential factors, serving as the primary predictors of employee QoL. The research objectives were successfully achieved, shedding light on the interplay between emotional quotient, intelligence quotient, adversity quotient, spiritual quotient, social quotient, and QoL among SME employees in the Klang Valley. The outcomes of this study have practical implications for SME employees, providing insights to enhance their QoL by considering the various quotients explored in this study. By focusing on emotional and social quotients, organizations can develop targeted efforts to improve employee well-being and overall QoL. This study contributes to the understanding of factors influencing QoL within the SME sector and offers valuable guidance for enhancing employees' QoL in similar contexts.

Keywords: SMEs employees, employee quotients, quality of life

Introduction

This article presents the effects of (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, and (v) social quotient on quality of life (QoL) among employees in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Klang Valley. Thus, the discussions in the next sections revolve around SMEs, employee quotients, and QoL. The emergence of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the country. In curbing this infectious disease, the Malaysian government took several preventive measures including movement restrictions, curfews, and travel bans. Due to these, many people had lost their jobs and experienced a lack of motivation going to work as some companies had to cut or minimise their salaries due to the severely affected economic level of the country.

At the same time, the ongoing stress, fear, grief, and uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic had weighed heavily on SMEs. According to Hasin et al. (2021), many SME employees had a tough time during that time. This is because many of them had lost their jobs and vital support. Besides that, those who experienced the loss of a loved family member or friend to COVID-19 were at increased risk of mental health challenges and needed special attention and professional counselling in managing their loss and grief.

SMEs are the largest contributing sector in the country, dominating Malaysia's economic growth. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are a crucial component and a driving force in the nation's economy. SMEs in Malaysia make up 98.5% of all firms, which is the highest percentage, and they contribute 37.1% of the nation's GDP and 66% of all jobs (SME Corporation Malaysia, 2020). Since they comprise more business units than large-scale industrial enterprises, SMEs have grown to be a significant component of Malaysia's economic system. Since employees are the most valuable asset to SMEs, there is a need to look into the challenges that they confront both at the workplace and in their daily lives which impact their resilience, happiness, performance, and QoL.

Hence, this paper intends to accomplish the following objectives: **(1)** To discover the relationship between (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, (v) social quotient and QoL among the SME employees in the Klang Valley, **(2)** To examine the effects of (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, and (v) social quotient on QoL among the SME employees in the Klang Valley, and **(3)** To identify the main factor(s) of employee quotients that affects the QoL of SME employees in the Klang Valley. The focus of the study is on SME employees who work in Klang Valley (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Putrajaya). The key concepts of SMEs, Emotional Quotient (EQ), Intelligence Quotient (IQ), Adversity Quotient (AQ), Spiritual Quotient (SPQ), Social Quotient (SQ), and QoL are presented in this article.

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The following subsections discuss the important concepts and variables of the study namely SMEs, QoL, EQ, IQ, AQ, SPQ and SQ. These concepts are explained to give a clear understanding of the links between the study variables as supported by past studies, followed by the development of hypothesis derived from the literature review.

Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and COVID-19

SMEs are organisations with fewer than 200 employees (SME Corp, 2024). This industry is very significant to Malaysian economy and plays the most alluring and significant function in the nation. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2019, the productivity level of SMEs has severely decreased. Many SME employees experienced depression, worry, anxiety, fear, and a loss of motivation. The years 2020 and 2021 were difficult for most SMEs, with prolonged lockdowns causing those who were already operating on very lean margins to have to close shop and let their employees go. Various studies have shown that the pandemic had posed severe impacts on small businesses, with more than half of the existing SMEs faced severe loss of income.

According to a report, a total of 2,713 SMEs went bankrupt in 2020 in Malaysia following the enforcement of the movement control order (MCO) between March and October of that year to curb the spread of COVID-19 (ECDC, 2020). There was a sudden drop of 95.3% in SME sales in the initial period of the COVID-19 pandemic, rendering the urgent call to ensure the survivability of SMEs (Adilla, 2022). Ultimately, COVID-19 has resulted in many SMEs filing for bankruptcy in Malaysia (Hasin et. al., 2021).

Quality of Life (QoL)

Quality of life (QoL) is a concept that refers to how well individuals live and enjoy their daily lives, with each person having their own unique perspective on what it means (Anjum & Swathi, 2017). It includes aspects like fulfilment, happiness, success, wealth, and health, encompassing psychological, social, and physical well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines QoL as individuals' perception of their life in relation to their goals, expectations, and cultural context. Nowadays, improving QoL is crucial for entrepreneurship, particularly in developing countries, aiming for economic growth, prioritising small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). QoL often relates to people's subjective feelings about various aspects of their lives such as work, personal happiness, and overall well-being (Aripin & Puteh, 2017).

Dimensions of Employee Quotients and QoL

There are number of factors that influence or affect the employees' QoL. This study, however, focuses on five (5) quotient dimensions namely (i) Emotional Quotient, (ii) Intelligence Quotient, (iii) Adversity Quotient, (iv) Spiritual Quotient, and (v) Social Quotient and how each dimension affects employee's QoL. The following sub-sections discuss each dimension.

Emotional Quotient (EQ)

Emotional Intelligence (EI) involves understanding and managing one's own emotions and those of others, which can greatly impact success and satisfaction in life (Haji et. al., 2013). It includes self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, and empathy. Individuals with high EI can effectively handle challenges, build positive relationships, and succeed in their careers. Research shows that EI positively influences work engagement, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. High EI individuals tend to be happier and more content, as they can understand and manage emotions well, leading to a better QoL (Haji et al., 2013). EI is essential for creating a supportive and positive environment both in personal and professional settings, contributing to overall success and life satisfaction (Lewis et al., 2019).

Intelligence Quotient (IQ)

Intellectual intelligence involves analytical thinking, problem-solving, and understanding cause-and-effect relationships (Covey, 2021). It encompasses general and specialised cognitive abilities, predicting an individual's performance (Haji et. al., 2013). The examples of indicators include simple count, strong memory, and quick problem-solving. Intelligence, broadly defined, includes reasoning, abstract thinking, language comprehension, and adaptability. It is crucial for tasks like problem-solving and decision-making. Intelligence can also encompass emotional awareness and regulation, contributing to effective leadership and goal achievement. High intelligence is associated with improved performance and QoL, making it valuable for both individuals and organisations in achieving success (Ahuja & Ahuja, 2015).

Adversity Quotient (AQ)

According to Bakare (2015), Adversity Quotient (AQ) is a natural skill that helps individuals turn challenges into opportunities. It measures one's ability to cope with stress and adapt to difficult situations and is becoming increasingly important in today's complex world. AQ is composed of four aspects: Control Origin, Ownership, Reach, and Endurance (CO2RE) (Hema & Gupta, 2015). Enhancing AQ involves social support, education, and various environmental factors. A high AQ, alongside IQ, is essential for success and should be nurtured from an early age. Adversity shapes character and priorities, serving as a catalyst for greatness. Those with high AQ experience better QoL as they manage challenges effectively, leading to positive outcomes in both mental and physical health (Saxena & Rathore, 2024). AQ influences traits like self-esteem, motivation, and optimism, helping individuals overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. Additionally, there is a positive correlation between AQ and QoL, with high AQ, individuals maintain enthusiasm, learn from mistakes, and embrace challenges with a positive outlook, ultimately lead to a fulfilling life (Zakaria, 2012).

Spiritual Quotient (SPQ)

Spiritual Quotient (SPQ) encompasses a deep religious attitude, emphasising connections with the divine over interpersonal relationships (Mufti et al., 2016). SPQ imbues work with meaning and community, facilitating self-transcendence and moral discernment. It fosters a holistic awareness of life's interconnectedness and the ability to navigate moral complexities with love and understanding. Individuals with high SPQ interpret life's challenges with gratitude and devotion, driven by conviction, integrity, and fairness (Haji et. al., 2013). Studies indicate that SPQ significantly enhances QoL, fostering happiness, authenticity, and peace, while reducing psychological discomfort. Moreover, SPQ

aids in problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity, offering valuable support in modern times characterised by lifestyle changes and crises like pandemics (Mufti et al., 2016).

Social Quotient (SQ)

Social Intelligence (SQ) extends beyond Emotional Intelligence, incorporating self-awareness and empathy. It involves understanding others' emotions and non-verbal cues to navigate social interactions effectively (Tony, 2020). SQ is crucial for building and maintaining friendships and networks, particularly in today's world where interpersonal connections are significant. Individuals with high SQ can anticipate social dynamics and adapt appropriately, which is important especially during challenging times like the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies show a positive correlation between SQ and QoL, which is associated with satisfaction, happiness, and healthy emotional connections (Lesani et al., 2021). QoL encompasses various aspects of well-being, including physical health, psychological fulfilment, and social compatibility (Arnout, 2023). Therefore, managing social intelligence is essential for fostering positive relationships and creating a conducive atmosphere in both personal and professional settings.

While the literature review provides a comprehensive overview of the concepts and variables, it could benefit from a deeper analysis of the relationships between these variables and their implications for SMEs and employees' QoL. Providing more critical insights or synthesising findings from multiple studies can enrich the discussion and contribute to the originality of the research. Based on the above-mentioned discussions, several hypotheses were developed and tested to meet the research objectives. The hypotheses are as follows:

- H1:* There is a significant effect of Emotional Quotient on Quality of Life among SME employees in the Klang Valley.
- H2:* There is a significant effect of Intelligence Quotient on Quality of Life among SME employees in the Klang Valley.
- H3:* There is a significant effect of Adversity Quotient on Quality of Life among SME employees in the Klang Valley.
- H4:* There is a significant effect of Spiritual Quotient on Quality of Life among SME employees in the Klang Valley.
- H5:* There is a significant effect of Social Quotient on Quality of Life among SME employees in the Klang Valley.

Figure 1 below depicts the framework of the study. This framework showcases the relationship between the five (5) independent variables (IVs) and dependent variable (DV) of the study.

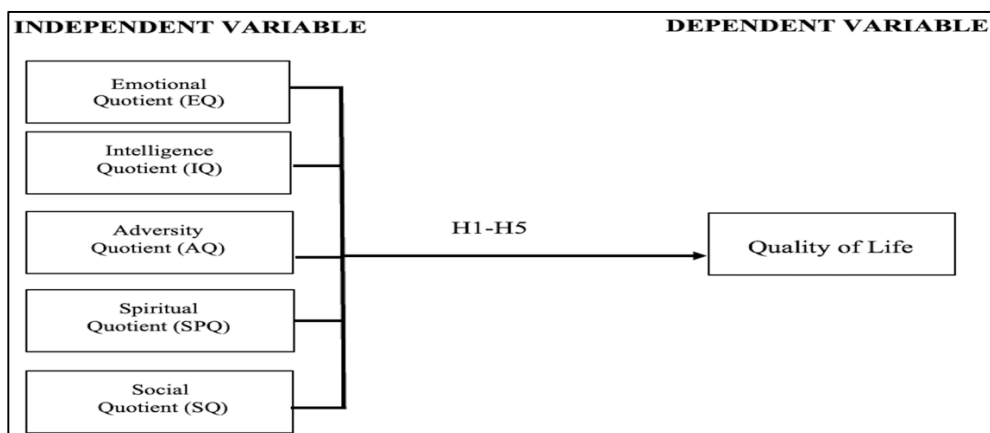


Fig. 1. Framework of the Study

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research method via questionnaires for the purpose of data collection. A questionnaire was constructed based on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire items were adapted from several past studies. Items for QoL were adapted from Aripin and Puteh (2017), EQ (Haji et al., 2013); IQ (Ahuja & Ahuja, 2015); AQ (Hema & Gupta, 2015); SPQ (Mufti et al., 2016;) and SQ (Lesani et al., 2021 & Tony, 2020). This study was approved by the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies Ethics Review Committee for Postgraduate Dissertation dated 21 December 2022 with a reference number of FERC/10/2022 (EMAS737/46). This approval is pertinent to ensure that all research protocols are obeyed and complied with the guidelines and declaration observed by the UiTM Research Committee.

The target population was SME employees located in the Klang Valley areas (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Putrajaya). For study population entails 30,269 SMEs that have been closed down, located in the Klang Valley area (Department of Statistics, 2020). There are about 319,782 number of employees employed by SMEs in the Klang Valley (SME Corp, 2020). The breakdown of the number of employees is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Total Population of the Study

Areas	Kuala Lumpur	Selangor	Putrajaya
No	133703	179271	6808

Source: Department of Statistics, Malaysia (DOSM) (2020)

For the sample size of this study, the Stratified Random Sampling under the probability sampling technique was used, where every variable in the population has a known and non-zero chance of being chosen for the sample (Sekaran & Bougie, 2018). A stratified random sample was obtained by dividing the population elements into mutually exclusive, non-overlapping sample unit groups called strata, and then choosing a simple random sample from each stratum. This study focuses on dividing the population of SME employees employed in Klang Valley (Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, and Putrajaya) against the total population to derive the minimum sample of respondents. As suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) in determining the sample size, 384 respondents were required to reach the minimum sample size for this study as depicted in Table 2 below. All constructs of the study are reliable as shown in Table 3.

Table 2. The Profile of Respondents

Profile	N	Frequency	Percent
Gender	260		
Male		143	55.0
Female		117	45.0
Age	260		
Below 30 years old		49	18.8
31 - 40 years old		121	46.5
41 – 50 years old		78	30.0
Above 50 years old		12	4.6
Race	260		
Malay		191	73.5
Chinese		36	13.8
Indian		25	9.6
Others		8	3.1

Highest Education Level	260		
SPM		17	6.5
Diploma		60	23.1
Bachelor's Degree		156	60.0
Master's Degree		27	10.4
Marital Status	260		
Single		107	41.2
Married		142	54.6
Divorced		5	1.9
Widow or Widower		6	2.3
Working Experience	260		
Less than 1 year		18	6.9
1-5 years		73	28.1
6-10 years		138	53.1
More than 10 years		31	11.9
Monthly Income	260		
Less than RM 1,500		14	5.4
RM 1,501 – RM 4,500		104	40.0
RM 4,501 – RM 10,000		121	46.5
RM 10,001 or more		21	8.1

Table 3. Reliability Construct using Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N. of items	Reliability
Independent Variable			
Emotional Quotient	0.531	3	Acceptable
Intelligence Quotient	0.727	4	Yes
Adversity Quotient	0.767	6	Yes
Spiritual Quotient	0.749	6	Yes
Social Quotient	0.741	5	Yes
Dependent Variable			
Quality of Life	0.650	3	Yes

Findings and Discussion

- (1) *To discover the relationship between (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, (v) social quotient, and Quality of Life (QoL) among the SMEs employees in the Klang Valley.*

In order to discover the relationship between the independent variables of EQ, IQ, AQ, SPQ, SQ and the dependent variable QoL among the SME employees in the Klang Valley, correlation analysis was performed. Cohen (1988) mentions that the scale to the correlation relationship analysis can be identified as small when the r value = 0.10 – 0.29, medium when the r value = 0.30 – 0.49 and large when the r value = 0.50 – 1.00. Table 4 below presents the findings of the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 4. Correlation between Employee Quotients and Quality of Life (n=260)

Variable	Quality of Life	
Emotional Quotient (IV1)	Pearson Correlation	0.456
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
Intelligence Quotient (IV2)	Pearson Correlation	0.669
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
Adversity Quotient (IV3)	Pearson Correlation	0.741
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
Spiritual Quotient (IV4)	Pearson Correlation	0.344
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000
Social Quotient (IV5)	Pearson Correlation	0.371
	Sig (2 tailed)	0.000

***Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level at (2-tailed)

From Table 4 above, it shows that EQ with r value (.456) and significant value (0.000) has a positive significant relationship with the QoL. Next, IQ with r value (.669) and significant value (0.000) has a large positive significant relationship with the QoL. AQ which has the highest r value (.741) and significant value (0.000) has a strong positive relationship with QoL. SPQ has r value (.344) and significant value (0.000). Last but not least, SQ with r value (.371) and significant value (0.000) has a positive relationship with QoL.

According to Schutte et al. (2009), EQ is positively related to QoL. EQ has multiple dimensions and abilities that, if possessed by humans, it would lead people to great success and life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is a crucial aspect towards attaining life quality. An employee with high emotional intelligence can deal efficiently with others as he knows how to properly adapt with his surroundings, manage pressure and problems, regulate his mood, and stay positive. Thus, EQ plays a major role in maintaining work effectiveness and efficiency in any organisation on top of improving QoL.

IQ and QoL may be associated in several ways, primarily on how employees communicate, perform, and commit to their company. According to Schmidt and Hunter (2000), IQ can be used to gauge the performance of employees quite precisely. It has been noted that employee selection based on intelligence leads to significant organisational advancements and added value. Employees with high IQ are typically more intellectual and can improvise fast, leading to improved performance and increased QoL (Ree et al., 2002).

AQ and QoL also have positive relationship, Zakaria (2012) points out that people with high AQ can overcome obstacles by keeping their enthusiasm alive, taking lessons from their mistakes, and not overthinking since such a habit produces unfavourable outcomes. High AQ employees have a cheerful outlook and welcome difficulties (Zakaria, 2012). Resilient people learn from their mistakes and are not readily persuaded when their solution fails. Instead, they continue to look for tools that would enable them to innovate their offerings. People with high levels of AQ will have high levels of QoL as well. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between AQ and QoL.

SPQ has also been indicated to improve a person's QoL. George (2006) asserts that SPQ contributes to the improvement of all facets of QoL rather than just one. According to several research, a person with a high SPQ will perform exceptionally well in terms of workplace compatibility and individual productivity because they are good at solving issues, accomplishing goals, and adapting. Hence, the significant and positive association between SPQ and QoL is substantiated by prior research (Ismail et al., 2021).

Finally, people with high SQ can sense other people's emotions and know instinctively what to say in social settings. Ahuja and Ahuja (2015) found a positive correlation between SQ and QoL. QoL has been linked to employee satisfaction and happiness, which are connected to their sense of self-fulfilment on top of psychological and social compatibility. QoL also plays a pivotal role in the provision of multiple services to the community, and in the strong social relationship between the individual and his environment. In other words, QoL can be defined as the enjoyment of external physical and environmental conditions, a sense of well-being and life satisfaction, as well as understanding of life in addition to positive physical health and compatibility with societal values.

Thus, it is important for individuals to manage their SQ towards maintaining good relationships with others and creating a positive atmosphere. SME employees should hence monitor and manage their EQ, IQ, AQ, SPQ, and SQ well as these elements affect their overall QoL.

- (2) To examine the effects of (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, and (v) social quotient on Quality of Life (QoL) among the SME employees in the Klang Valley.

The second research objective is to examine the effects of (i) emotional quotient, (ii) intelligence quotient, (iii) adversity quotient, (iv) spiritual quotient, and (v) social quotient on Quality of Life (QoL) among the SME employees in Klang Valley. Multiple Regression Analysis was performed to determine the influence of the independent variables of EQ, IQ, AQ, SI, and SQ on the dependent variable of QoL among the SME employees in Klang Valley. Table 5 to Table 7 show the model summary, ANOVA, and coefficient results of the main factors contributing to QoL among SMEs employees in Klang Valley.

Table 5. Model Summary Results

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin Watson
.557	.311	.297	.43741	1.902

Table 6. ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.907	5	4.381	22.900	.000
	Residual	48.597	254	.191		
	Total	70.504	259			

Table 7: Coefficient Results

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.760	.412		1.844	.066		
IV1_EQ	.262	.085	.229	3.088	.002	.494	2.023
IV2_IQ	.131	.094	.117	1.393	.165	.383	2.612
IV3_AQ	.009	.109	.007	.084	.933	.350	2.859
IV4_SPQ	.017	.083	.012	.205	.838	.837	1.195
IV5_SQ	.393	.089	.306	4.430	.000	.570	1.755

a. Dependent Variable: QoL

By referring to the Beta value, the standardised beta coefficient compares the strength of each independent variable's effect on the dependent variable. The stronger the effect, the greater the average value of the beta coefficient. The range is between 0 and 1 or 0 and -1. The closer the number to 1, the stronger the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Hence, based on the Beta value results, the variable with the strongest influence on the QoL is SQ (.306), followed by EQ (.229), IQ (.117), SPQ (.012), and lastly AQ (.007).

The findings of this study concur with that of Bukhari and Ahmad (2022), i.e. that SQ and QoL have a strong positive significant relationship. Past studies also state that SQ plays a major role in building a network of friends and maintaining it over the long period term. Despite differences in opinions and unique ways of looking at things, we as social beings need to interact with one another in

order to grow and survive (Tony, 2020). A survey also revealed that individuals with higher SQ are more likely to experience better QoL (Ismail et al., 2021). The process of interaction teaches SME employees adaptation of skills.

Next, EQ and QoL were also found to have a significant relationship in line with the findings of Indra et al., (2020). EQ is also said to be a primary determinant of QoL (Azmi, 2017). Another survey further revealed that individuals with higher EQ are more likely to experience better QoL (Azmi, 2017). EQ has been noted as a crucial element for maintaining high achievement, retention, and positive behaviour as well as for enhancing life success. Several earlier studies discovered that having a high EQ will result in better QoL (Lewis et al., 2019), whereby people are happier and more content with themselves.

Next, the finding asserts that IQ also influences QoL. This is consistent with Covey (2021) which revealed a significant association between IQ and QoL. Other studies have also indicated the important role of IQ in driving rational thinking and analysis, the ability to determine cause-effect relationships, abstract thought, language usage, and the ability to visualise and understand things. It can be concluded that IQ is the overall ability of a person to act in achieve certain goals by thinking rationally and critically, and to solve problems effectively and efficiently (Cude, et al., 2006). Moreover, IQ has been indicated to strongly affect QoL (Webley & Nyhus, 2022).

SPQ has also been indicated to play a major role in determining QoL (Ahuja & Ahuja, 2015). Individuals with low SPQ have been found to have decreased levels of QoL (Thaler & Shefrin, 2015). Furthermore, Esenvalde (2010) presents empirical evidence that SPQ is favourably associated with QoL, i.e., individuals who possess considerable levels of SPQ experience higher QoL. Anasrulloh (2017) argues that SPQ is a sense of morality, which is the ability to adjust to rigid rules in line with understanding the business terrain and forecasting industry changes. SPQ is the foundation needed for all other forms of intelligence to function effectively.

Finally, AQ and QoL also has a significant relationship. Zakaria (2012) points out that people with high AQ can overcome every obstacle that comes their way by keeping their enthusiasm alive, taking lessons from their mistakes, and continuing on. They avoid overthinking since it produces unfavourable outcomes. Instead, they have a cheerful outlook and welcome difficulties (Zakaria, 2012). People who are resilient, learn from their mistakes and are not readily persuaded when their solution fails. Instead, they continue to look for tools that will enable them to innovate their offerings. People with high levels of AQ will have high levels of QoL as well. To conclude, all the independent variables have a positive significant relationship with the QoL. Hence, SMEs employees should monitor their SQ, EQ, IQ, SPQ, and AQ levels to boost their work productivity and QoL.

(3) To identify the main factors of employee quotients that affects the Quality of Life (QoL) among the SME employees in the Klang Valley.

This research objective intends to identify the main factor(s) of employee quotients that affects the QoL among SME employees in the Klang Valley. Multiple Regression Analysis was employed to determine the most influential factors from the model of the study. Table 8 shows the coefficient result of the main factors contributing to QoL among the SME employees in Klang Valley. The factors were ranked from the highest Standardised Beta value to the lowest Beta value against their significant levels. The standardised beta coefficient compares the strength of each independent variable's effect on the dependent variable. The stronger the effect, the greater the average value of the beta coefficient. The value ranges from 0 to 1 or 0 to -1. The closer the number to 1, the stronger the relationship between the independent and dependent variable.

Based on Table 8 below, the variable with the strongest effect is SQ (.306), followed by EQ (.229), IQ (.117), SPQ (.012), and lastly AQ (.007). The beta values were then cross-checked with the significant value to determine the predictors of QoL. Any variable that has a significant value less than 0.05 is deemed as the predictor of QoL. Hence, it can be concluded that the main determinants of QoL among SME employees in the Klang Valley are SQ ($B=0.306$, $p=0.000$), and EQ ($B=0.229$, $p=0.002$) as both are significant ($p<0.05$). Meanwhile, the other three (3) quotients namely IQ, AQ and SPQ are not significant to QoL.

Table 8. Coefficient Result of Ranked Factors

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.760	.412		1.844	.066		
IV1_EQ	.262	.085	.229	3.088	.002	.494	2.023
IV2_IQ	.131	.094	.117	1.393	.165	.383	2.612
IV3_AQ	.009	.109	.007	.084	.933	.350	2.859
IV4_SPQ	.017	.083	.012	.205	.838	.837	1.195
IV5_SQ	.393	.089	.306	4.430	.000	.570	1.755

The findings of this study are further supported by Ahuja and Ahuja (2015) which indicate that the association between SQ and QoL is strongly positive and significant. Other studies also state that SQ plays a major role in building a network of friends and maintaining it over the long term. Despite differences in opinions and unique ways of looking at things, people are social beings who need to interact with one another in order to grow and survive (Tony, 2020). Another survey revealed that individuals with higher SQ are more likely to experience better QoL (Ismail et al., 2021). This process of interaction teaches SME employees how to adapt to different situations.

Next, the significant relationship between EQ and QoL found in this study is consistent with the finding of Indra et al., (2020), which also states that EQ plays a major role in controlling QoL. EQ has also been identified as the primary determinant of QoL, whereby individuals with high levels of EQ are more likely to experience better QoL (Azmi, 2017). EQ is a crucial element for maintaining high achievement, retention, and positive behaviour as well as for enhancing life success. Several earlier studies also discovered that having a high EQ will result in having a good QoL (Lewis et al., 2019), whereby people will be happier and more content with themselves, others, and life in general.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study has several limitations. As this study employed the quantitative method, future studies could employ both the quantitative and qualitative methods to get a clearer picture of the outcomes. By employing both methods, higher quality, more robust and meaningful findings can be obtained.

Next, this study only focuses on SME employees in Klang Valley. Hence, the evidence is not representative of the entire population of SMEs in Malaysia as the findings may be different in other states and zones. As such, future studies could focus on other states or zones in the country such as in the Northern region (Perak, Kedah, Pulau Pinang and Perlis), eastern Region (Kelantan, Terengganu, and Pahang), Southern region (Johor, Melaka, and Negeri Sembilan), or Borneo region (Sabah and Sarawak) to acquire more meaningful and more comprehensive outcomes.

Furthermore, this study focuses on employees of SMEs. Findings may be different if the employees are from other sectors such as government servants, MNCs, and private sectors are involved. Perhaps, future studies about employee quotients and QoL in public sector, MNCs and public listed companies might yield an interesting and unique finding.

Another limitation is that the independent variables only focus on five (5) employee quotients. Other factors may also affect QoL such as peer support, family support, and other significant factors. The multiple regression results show that the R-square of the model of study only accounts for 31.1% of the factors. Thus, about 68.9% of the factors that influence employee QoL are still remained to be discovered by future studies.

Conclusion

This study discovers that all the five (5) employee quotients examined have a positive and significant relationship with QoL, but only two (2) are very influential and function as the main predictors of QoL namely EQ and SQ. This study provides practical implications that could benefit several stakeholders, most notably SME employees. It provides insights on how to enhance employee QoL by considering the various quotients explored. By focusing on EQ and SQ, organisations can develop targeted efforts to improve their employees' well-being and overall QoL.

From the perspective of the employer, this study can help organisations to maintain and better understand about their employees' wellbeing and QoL in the post-pandemic era. It can help organisations to leverage EQ and SQ towards enhancing employee's satisfaction, productivity, and overall QoL in the workplace while improving the other elements of employee quotients to achieve excellent organisational performance.

Finally, from the perspective of the policy maker, this study offers critical insights for the government especially the MoHR and related agencies in exploring effective mental health strategies tailored to the needs of the workforce including SME employees, considering that they are the greatest asset of the nation.

Co-Author Contribution

The authors confirmed that there is no conflict of interest in this article. Author 1 carried out the fieldwork and prepared the literature review. Author 2 wrote the research methodology and did the statistical analysis and interpretation of the results.

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