

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND PERCEPTION OF STRESS
AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**



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DECEMBER 2017

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to identify the relationships between emotional intelligence with stress and to examine the difference of emotional intelligence and stress scores between male and female university students. A total sample of 440 full-time university students from all programmes from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Sarawak Branch were recruited in this study. The participants were asked to answer the demographic details, a self-reported measure of the Assessing Emotions Scale (AES) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) in order to assess both emotional intelligence and stress levels among the participants in this study. The data were collected after the participants done answering all of the questionnaires. Pearson correlation and independent samples t-test were used to identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived stress and examine the difference of both emotional intelligence and perceived stress scores between genders. The findings shown that there were significant negative relationship between the ability to perceive emotion, the ability to manage own and others' emotion and the ability to utilize emotion with perception of stress among university students. Results also indicated that the ability to manage own emotion as the most prominent dimensions of emotional intelligence in perceiving stress. Male students were found to have higher mean scores on emotional intelligence than females while female students were found to have higher mean scores on perceived stress level than males. However, there were no significant difference on both emotional intelligence and perceived stress between genders. The findings of this study on identifying relationship between emotional intelligence with perception of stress may help in recognizing how university students perceive, manage and utilize emotion with perceived stress in their university lives.

KEYWORDS: *Emotional Intelligence, Perception of Stress, University Students*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Emotion is one of the most important elements within an individual. According to Robbins and Judge (2009), emotions are intense feelings that are directed at someone or something. The researchers also agreed that there are six categories of basic emotions which are anger, fear, sadness, happiness, disgust and surprise. Emotions and moods of an individual can be affected by stress, for example, a person's emotions and moods may get worse which caused by any stressful situations.

Stress can be defined as the demands placed on the body's non-specific response which related to disturbing events in the environment (Ali, Ghasak, Syed & Maung, 2014). As specified by American Psychological Association (2017) , there are three types of stress which are acute stress, episodic acute stress and chronic stress. Within these three types of stress, the most common stress which derives from demands and pressures among individual is acute stress. Furthermore, stress that is not treated well may lead to serious problems which can affect an individual's health. Therefore, Wang and Saudino (2011) suggested that it is important for an individual to cope with stress by regulating emotions wisely can avoid any bad complications in life.

Emotional intelligence (EI) might plays an important role in one's mental health and well-being. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability of an individual 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

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study discussed the research concerning of the relationship between emotional intelligence and perception of stress among university students. This chapter reviewed about previous study that have been conducted based on emotional intelligence and perception of stress.

2.2 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Salovey and Mayer (1990) introduced the term of emotional intelligence as describing abilities like perceiving, managing and utilizing own and others' emotions for guiding thoughts and actions. Emotional intelligence is a series of mental abilities that further enhances general intelligence by helping individuals to process their emotions, and is distinguishable from an independent of general intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1993).

A four dimensions of emotional intelligence was proposed which are perception of emotion, managing own emotion, managing others' emotion and utilization of emotion (Salovey & Mayer, 1997). This enable emotional intelligence can be measured to access people on performing tasks and solving emotional problems during any stressful situations. Goleman (1995) stated that emotional intelligence is vital on one's personal, social and professional lives. The researcher also declared that 80 percents of life success is depending on emotional and social intelligence while the remaining 20 percents contributed by intellectual intelligence.