

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND
COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE:
THE MODERATING ROLES OF
PERSONALITY TRAITS**

NUR ATHIRAH BINTI SUMARDI

Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Business and Management

June 2018

ABSTRACT

Communication is recognized as one of the important criteria in employment whereby, employers tend to look at the job candidates' abilities in expressing themselves through their communication skills. The main purpose of this research was to investigate the moderating effects of personality traits towards the relationship between emotional intelligence and communication competence among final year undergraduate students in four public universities in Klang Valley. The four universities involved in this study were UM, UKM, UPM and UiTM. A correlational study design was applied for this study and data were collected by using quota sampling. Data were obtained through a set of questionnaires comprised of four sections. A pilot study was done prior to the actual data collection process, validating the instruments used. Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted to establish the components under investigation. Besides, the researcher used descriptive, correlational, multiple regression, hierarchical regression analysis to analyze the data obtained. The findings of this study revealed that there was a relationship between emotional intelligence and communication competence among the final year students. Specifically, every dimension of emotional intelligence explained the variance of communication competence. Adaptability was discovered to be the most influential dimension of emotional intelligence towards communication competence, followed by the dimension of emotional mentoring. Through correlational analysis, it was also found that cultural interaction dimension of communication competence had the strongest relationship with students' emotional intelligence. In addition, hierarchical regression analysis discovered that personality traits moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and communication competence. Nonetheless, none of the dimension from personality traits was found to be significantly moderating the relationship between the two variables of emotional intelligence and communication competence. The researcher proposed few suggestions on how to improve adaptability, emotional mentoring and emotional stability. For instance, students were recommended to be an active listener to improve their adaptability, embrace social composure to improve their emotional mentoring and avoid comparisons to others in order to reduce their levels of neuroticism. Additionally, the researcher also suggested that future researches should be conducted in larger population in other settings with better sampling methodologies.

Keyword: Emotional Intelligence, Communication Competence, Personality Traits, Adaptability, Emotional Mentoring, Neuroticism

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Assalamualaikum w.t.b,

Praise to Allah for giving me good health, sufficient time and maturity of mind to complete this study in such a way. I would like to convey my sincere thanks to the following individuals who have generously contributed one way or another to the success for this research project. First of all, I would like to thank Prof. Madya Dr. Narehan Binti Hassan for being such a good supporter, teacher and guider for me through the entire time when I was doing this study. Though, it is quite hard for me to produce this thesis, but she has given me lots of thoughts, advice and opinions on how to do it. Alhamdulillah, I managed to finish it on time. Not forgetting, I would like to say so much thanks to Dr. Rozilah Binti Abdul Aziz for giving me invaluable support, comments, suggestions and guidance in producing a good thesis. Not to mention, I also would like to thank all office representatives of faculties from each public university, who were involved in my data collection for rendering me their fullest cooperation throughout the process. Then, to my beloved and lovely parents who have given me limitless cheers, support and encouragement; thank you so much for being there for me. Not to mention, I also would like to thank all of my close friends for the support, patience, inspiration, passion, and immense unlimited knowledge that they have given me throughout this research.

In fact, I have learnt a lot about relationship, teamwork, cooperation, assistance and commitment through this thesis making. Besides, to those who have helped me directly or indirectly, thank you so much for giving me unwavering support throughout the process of doing this. As final touch, hopefully, everyone who read this study would have full understanding of it and enjoyed reading it. Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|--------------|
| CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS | ii |
| AUTHOR’S DECLARATION | iii |
| ABSTRACT | iv |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | v |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vi |
| LIST OF TABLES | xii |
| LIST OF FIGURES | xv |
| LIST OF SYMBOLS | xvii |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | xviii |
| | |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.2 Background Of Study | 1 |
| 1.3 Problem Statement | 5 |
| 1.4 Research Objectives | 12 |
| 1.5 Research Questions | 12 |
| 1.6 Hypothesis | 13 |
| 1.7 Significance Of Study | 14 |
| 1.7.1 Expectation To Public | 14 |
| 1.7.2 Expectation To University Students | 15 |
| 1.7.3 Expectation To Employers Or Organizations | 15 |
| 1.7.4 Expectation To Ministries And Educational Institution | 16 |
| 1.8 Limitations Of Study | 16 |
| 1.9 Definitions Of Terms | 18 |
| 1.10 Operationalized Definition Of Terms | 22 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 1.11 | Chapter Summary | 22 |
| CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW | | 23 |
| 2.1 | Introduction | 23 |
| 2.2 | History Of Variables | 24 |
| 2.2.1 | Communication Competence | 25 |
| 2.2.2 | Emotional Intelligence | 26 |
| 2.2.3 | Personality Traits | 26 |
| 2.3 | Communication Competence | 27 |
| 2.3.1 | Theory Of Communication Competence (Spitzberg & Cupach's Model) | 28 |
| 2.3.1.1 | Motivation | 28 |
| 2.3.1.2 | Knowledge | 29 |
| 2.3.1.3 | Skills | 29 |
| 2.3.1.4 | Culture | 30 |
| 2.4 | Emotional Intelligence | 31 |
| 2.4.1 | Theory Of Emotional Intelligence (Bar-On's Theory) | 32 |
| 2.4.1.1 | Intrapersonal | 32 |
| 2.4.1.2 | Interpersonal | 33 |
| 2.4.1.3 | Stress Management | 33 |
| 2.4.1.4 | Adaptability | 34 |
| 2.4.1.5 | General Mood | 34 |
| 2.4.1.6 | Emotional Mentoring | 35 |
| 2.5 | Personality Traits | 37 |
| 2.5.1 | Theory Of Personality Traits (Big Five Personality Theory) | 37 |
| 2.5.1.1 | Extraversion | 38 |
| 2.5.1.2 | Agreeableness | 38 |
| 2.5.1.3 | Openness To Experience | 39 |
| 2.5.1.4 | Neuroticism | 39 |