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The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence (EI), Parental Involvement and Academic Performance among University Students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor

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Abstract

University students in Malaysia are constantly confronted with several emotional challenges in coping with their academic performance. Academic performance has always been a concern to educational psychologists as they aim to investigate factors that contribute to academic success. However, there are inconsistency on the findings on the influence of emotional intelligence (EI) and parental involvement towards academic performance. Therefore, this study investigated the relationship between E_I, parental involvement and academic achievement of 124 university students who aged from 18 to 25 years from Kuala Lumpur and Selangor who completed the online self-report questionnaires. A 33-items Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) and 42-items Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS) scale were used in current research. The results reported that there is a significant positive correlation between EI, parental involvement and academic performance. The EI and parental involvement were both appeared to be a strong predictor towards academic performance. Current research implications suggesting the curriculum management of each institution should have organize seminars and workshops relating to EI as well as promoting the active participation of parents in student's academic. The findings concluded that the good performance of student's academic requires EI skills and the active participation of parents.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Parental Involvement, Academic Performance, Academic Achievement, University Students.

Introduction

Academic performance is an important element for future development of an individual in the society (Kapur, 2018). Individuals who succeed academically possess skills and knowledge that could be useful contributions for the society and economic success of the country. Over the years, academic performance was still the leading concern of educational psychologists, they strive to investigate the determinants factors that contribute to the success of the

students' academic performance (Ismail et al., 2018; Kaviyarasi & Balasubramanian, 2018; Helal et al., 2019).

Earlier researchers focused on the cognitive abilities of a student such as reasoning, memory and problem solving as the important contributing factor towards academic success (Bergman Nutley & Söderqvist, 2017; Nesayan et al., 2019; Peng & Kievit, 2020). However, cognitive abilities on academic performance alone were not sufficient to fully determine the outcome of learners, instead researchers also take into consideration the non-cognitive factors such as self-esteem, emotional intelligence, family and peer influence as a potential factor that predict academic success (Tepper & Yourstone, 2018; MacCann et al., 2020).

In regard to that, the non-cognitive factor that appears to be especially crucial was Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Thomas et al., 2017; MacCann et al., 2020; Altwijri et al., 2021). EI is the ability of an individual in understanding, managing and handling their very own emotions and the emotions of others (Drigas & Papoutsis, 2018). Nowadays, university students in Malaysia are constantly confronted with several challenges and stressors in coping with their academic performance and as well as handling their emotional challenges. Emotional challenges and stressors that are faced by university students such as overwhelming loads of assignments and coursework, academic demands, test anxiety, peer relationship issues, financial stress and family problems were all unavoidable (Reddy et al., 2018). EI is an important skill for individuals to better cope and manage their daily hassles. According to the previous findings, there were inconsistencies in the results on the relationship between EI and academic performance (MacCann et al., 2020; Suleman et al., 2019). Moreover, little research has been done in the context of students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor region. Therefore, current research was able to fill up the research gap on the relationship between these variables.

Besides EI, parental involvement was extremely crucial in determining the academic success of the students. University students with involved parents showed to have better grades and performance in academics (Amponsah et al., 2018). However, the findings on the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance was found to be inconsistent and vary in different countries, cultures and populations (Boonk et al., 2018).

Parental involvement refers to parents are directly engaged in their children's education progress, they involve themselves and are participated by the school and teachers in their children's learning process, and they fulfil their responsibilities as parents by ensuring that the learner is assisted in the learning process as committed as possible (Byrne & Paseka, 2019; Otto & Karbach, 2020).

Parental involvement which can affect their children's educational outcomes could be varied across culture, as the meaning of involvement could be interchangeably with the meaning of high attention in the development of the children, especially in the academic achievement of the adolescents (Bedford & Yeh, 2019; Choi et al., 2013; Fu & Markus, 2014; Liu, McMahon & Watson, 2015; Lui & Rollock, 2013), but little is known about how parental involvement meaning could be different among adolescence period in the Asian context.

In addition, little research has been done in the Malaysian context regarding both variables. Malaysia is regarded one of the multiracial contexts which may bring different insight in the meaning of the parental involvement. Hence, current research was able to extend the

literature to examine the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance among university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. Relevant data and information were obtained for the benefits of improving the educational sector respectively and as well as filling up the research gap.

Current Study

While acknowledging the importance of ongoing research, it is necessary to examine the ever-changing variables of EI and parental involvement as they relate to specific situations from time to time. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between EI and parental involvement towards academic performance of university students. By conducting this research, we are able to find out whether these study variables contribute to academic success of university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

Objective of the Study

- I. To investigate the relationship between EI and academic performance of university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.
- II. To assess the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.
- III. To determine what factors (i.e. EI and parental involvement) that contribute to academic performance of university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

Hypothesis of the study:

H_{A1}: Students with higher EI will perceive higher academic performance.

H_{A2}: Students with higher parental involvement will perceive higher academic performance.

H_{A3}: EI and parental involvement are contributing factors of academic performance among university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

Methods

A quantitative research design with correlational approach was utilized in the current study to obtain a deductive testing of the theories (Mehrad & Tahriri, 2019). This approach enables researchers to examine the extent of relations between two or more variables in the population (Apuke, 2017).

The total of 124 Malaysian university students ages ranging from 18-25 years old were participated in this study. The respondents were currently studying in a tertiary institution in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor region. The respondent was selected using convenience sampling techniques based on inclusive criteria of current study: i) University student age range between 18-25 years old; ii) Male or female; and iii) Study in any university in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor region. The adjusted total sample size of current research will be 98 university students.

As shown in Table 1, out of the 124 respondents, 26 respondents (21.0%) were males and the 98 of them were females (79.0%). The average age of the respondents was calculated to 20.87 (SD = 1.420). Among the respondents, 78.2% (n = 97) of respondents were Chinese, 4.8% (n = 6) were Indians and 2.4% (n = 3) were Malays. The remaining 14.5% (n = 18) were other races which included Sikh and Bidayuh.

Table 1 *The characteristics of the respondents (n=124).*

Variable	n	%
Age (Years)		
18 - 20	51	41.1
21 - 23	69	55.7
24 - 25	4	3.2
Mean	20.87	
Sd.	1.420	
Min.	18	
Max	25	
Sex		
Male	26	21.0
Female	98	79.0
Race		
Malay	3	2.4
Chinese	97	78.2
Indian	6	4.8
Others	18	14.5

Note. **Sd.**= Standard deviation, **Min.**= Minimum, **Max.**= Maximum

The research data were gathered using the online self-report questionnaires. Informed consents were sought before the respondents fill up the questionnaire. Then, the data that have been collected were further analysed through a statistical software known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using Pearson correlation coefficient (r) and Multiple Regression (F). Therefore, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r), Multiple regression (F), and the significant p and β values were analysed by conducting this statistical tests.

The instruments that were used to carry out current research were The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) and Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS):

I. *The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)*: SSEIT was a 33-items self-report scale that measure 4-subcales: (1) Appraisal and perception of emotion (items 5, 9, 15, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 32, 33); (2) Managing own emotions (items 2, 3, 10, 12, 14, 21, 23, 28, 31); (3) Managing others emotions (items 1, 4, 11, 13, 16, 24, 26, 30), and (4) Utilization of emotion (items 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 27) (Archer and Gong, 2021). Participants rated themselves on the five-point likert scale: from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Total score was calculated by summing up all the items with reverse items 5, 28 and 33. Higher scores indicate higher emotional intelligence level (Musonda et al., 2019). The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .90 (Schutte et al., 1998)

II. *Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS)*: This scale was a 42-items (21-items for mothers and 21-items for fathers) self-report questionnaire that was developed by Grolnick et al. (1997). POPS scale measured based on the 6-subcales: 1) mother involvement; 2) mother warmth; 3) mother autonomy support; 4) father involvement; 5) father warmth; and 6) father autonomy support. Participants rated based on a 7-point Likert scale: range from (1) not at all true to (7) very true. The Cronbach's alpha of this scale was .87 (Livinți & Iliescu, 2019).

Results

The results of current study is presented in the following tables:

Based on the results shown in Table 2, there is a positive correlation between EI and academic performance with the r-value of 0.882** ($p < 0.01$). Correlation coefficient of $r = 0.882$ indicated that the correlation strength between EI and academic performance is positively strong (Cohen, 1988). This finding is aligned with the past literature which reported that there was a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance (Ranasinghe et al., 2017; MacCann et al., 2020; Ali, 2020; Estrada et al., 2021). Current findings were able to affirm and support the past literature on the positive correlation relationship between these two variables. Not only that, it also extends the literature in Malaysian context.

Table 2: Correlation of Emotional Intelligence and academic performance

Variable	Academic Performance	
	r	P
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	0.882**	<0.01

*Note. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Based on the results shown in Table 3, there is a positive correlation between parental involvement and academic performance with the r-value of 0.851** ($p < 0.01$). Correlation coefficient of $r = 0.851$ indicated that the correlation strength between EI and academic performance is positively strong (Cohen, 1988). The current research findings resonated with the past studies on the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance (Amponsah et al., 2018; Singh & Mahajan, 2021). This claim was certain and supported by Omar et al (2017) as he also pointed out that the involvement of parents will motivate students on their learning; thus, leads to better academic performance.

Table 3: Correlation of parental involvement and academic performance

Variable	Academic Performance	
	r	P
Perceived of Parental Scales	0.851**	<0.01

*Note. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$*

Multiple linear regression was carried out to determine the influence of Emotional Intelligence, and Parental Involvement of the participants on the academic performance (CGPA). As shown in Table 4, the results were statistically significant model ($F(2, 121) = 451.09$, $p < 0.001$). The adjusted R^2 indicated that 88% of the variance in CGPA can be explained by variances in the predictor variables. The analysis suggested that Emotional Intelligence ($\beta = 0.56$) was the most influential predictor in the model follow by Parental Involvement ($\beta = 0.46$) in the model. Emotional Intelligence ($t = 12.697$, $p < 0.001$) and Parental Involvement ($t = 10.302$, $p < 0.001$) were shown to be statistically significant predictors of academic performance of the university students. Students with higher emotional intelligence and parental involvement will demonstrate better academic performance (CGPA). Therefore, the third hypothesis which claimed that the EI and parental involvement are contributing factors of academic performance among university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor of was supported.

The findings of current study were aligned with the past studies results, suggesting that EI and parental involvement were a predictor towards academic performance among university students (MacCann et al., 2020; Estrada et al., 2021; Farooq & Asim, 2020; Omar et al., 2017).

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis for academic performance.

Variable	B	SEB	β	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	-0.290	0.173			
Emotional Intelligence	0.023	0.002	0.561***	0.501	1.996
Parental Involvement	0.005	>0.001	0.455***	0.501	1.996

Note. $R^2 = 0.882$; **Adj. $R^2 = 0.880$** ; $F = 451.09$; $p < 0.001$

*** $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$**

Discussion

The Relationship between EI and Academic Performance of University Students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor

The main objective of current research is to investigate the relationship between EI and parental involvement towards academic performance of university students.

The findings indicates that there is a strong linear relationship between EI and academic performance among the university students. This result is aligned with the past studies which showed positively correlated relationship between EI and academic performance (MacCann et al., 2020; Ali, 2020; Estrada et al., 2021). Similarly, Ranasinghe et al (2017) also reported a significant relationship between EI and academic performance. This suggested that high EI determine a better outcome in student's academic performance. This claim was supported by the studies of Tyagi and Gautam (2017), which claimed that higher EI promotes understanding on the effect of negative emotions and acquire better skills in managing stressful life events. This is because, students who possessed higher EI are more aware of their emotional stressors, and they will not easily get affected by their negative emotions which might disrupt their performance in academic (Thomas et al., 2017). This can be explained by the benefits of acquiring EI skills which will increase student's self-awareness. Self-awareness is important especially for university students who needs to juggle between different responsibilities and tasks at hands. The ability to be aware of your feelings and emotions as well as the emotions of others, it would allow students to take charge of their learning proactively, thus lead to better performance in academic.

In fact, those with higher EI they are skilful in managing and dealing with their emotional challenges such as better cope with overwhelming loads of assignments and coursework, academic demands, test anxiety and more. EI creates a stronghold for students whenever they face stressors in life, it creates the ability for students to understand the source of their stressors and utilize their resources to cope with the stress that they are experiencing. Therefore, this could explain why EI skills were important in university students in order for them to score well in their academic performance.

Current research findings stretched out the importance of acquiring higher EI among university students which likely results to a better academic performance. It is vital for university students to achieve better academic performance by equipping them with EI skills.

The reason is because EI is an ability to handle emotional challenges and daily stressors that students would commonly face in their university life (Reddy et al., 2018). This skill can help them to better cope with emotional stressors and thus, leads to better performance in their studies.

The Relationship between Parental Involvement and Academic Performance of University Students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor

Aside from EI, parental involvement is positively correlated towards academic performance among university students as well. This finding are supported by past studies (Amponsah et al., 2018; Hussain et al., 2018; Assefa & Sintayehu, 2019; Singh and Mahajan, 2021) showing a significant positive correlation between parental involvement and academic performance. Current findings resonated with past studies and concluded that the involvement of parents is indeed important for university students to excel in their academics. This is because, the role of parents in parental involvement provides students with three important components for them to achieve self-determination (SDT) which are: autonomy, competence and relatedness or connection (Ryan & Deci, 2020). SDT is important to be attained by students to motivate and increase their interest in learning and achieving better performance in their academics.

Involved parents provides students with enough support and foster growth on their self-determination; this will stimulate the students a sense of interest and motivations on their academic performance. This claim is certain and supported by Omar et al (2017) as the study pointed out that the involvement of parents will motivate students on their learning; thus, leads to better academic performance. Moreover, parental involvement is not just essential for better development of a student's performance in academics, but it also provides lots of benefits to students and educators in terms of decreasing absenteeism, increasing student's class engagement, stimulating student's motivation in learning and acquiring better grades in academics.

Parental involvement is crucial in any age of the students. Although, it might appear to be less important when students' progress in age or transits from high schools to universities, due to the sense of adulthood responsibilities to take charge of their own life; however, parents should not assume that their involvement to be less significant towards university students, this is because current findings has affirmed that parental involvement is still essential to help university student to excel in their academic. Never deny the fact that parent's roles are important and still make a difference towards students' lives.

EI and parental involvement are uniquely contributed to academic performance of university students in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor

According to the overall findings of the current research, it concluded that EI and parental involvement is one of the contributing factors towards the academic performance of university students. This finding is shown to be consistent with other past studies (MacCann et al., 2020; Zhoc et al., 2020; Wang & Cai, 2017). Certainly, as it resonates with current findings have shown that higher EI and parental involvement were able to predict better outcomes of a student's academic performance.

Current results showed that EI is a stronger predictor as compared to parental involvement towards academic performance. This could be explained with the meaning of EI which refers to the ability of an individual in understanding, managing, and handling their very own emotions and others (Drigas & Papoutsi, 2018). In the context of current research, university students with higher EI, can handle their emotions, stress level and daily workloads in the university. Not only that, but they are also capable of managing their time and resources given, in doing revision and able to fully concentrate during lecture; thus, it leads to better performance in their academics.

On the other hand, the findings also found that parental involvement is a strong predictor of academic performance. It was consonant with the findings of Amponsah et al (2018); Naite (2020) which claimed that the positive impact of parental involvement toward academic performance. Singh & Mahajan (2021) also found that parental involvement is a determinant factor towards academic performance. Hence, parents who are highly involved in a student's academics by providing them necessary support including autonomy, warmth, and emotional support; it will lead to a huge impact towards students' academic performance.

Conclusion

Never deny the fact that cognitive intelligence is important when come to the outcome of student's academic. However, current research highlights the other important factors which is the EI and parental involvement that may improve students' academic performance. Having the EI skills helps student to better manage their daily hassles and cope with the university stressors. The ability to understand, perceived, use and manage the emotions of oneself and others, allows students to succeed in academic and as well as other aspects of life. Besides EI, the involvement of parents also shows remarkable influence on the performance of students in academic.

The implications that can be drawn from the findings were first, *teachers* and *educators* can observe and identify students that are having low academic performance in class. Then, improve students' EI skills by instil class activities that could strengthen their EI. Besides that, curriculum management could develop seminars and workshops that focus on improving and enhancing students' EI. For example, in terms of seminars, the curricular management can organize a seminar that talks about types of emotions and ways to handle all the positive and negative emotions. It is important to identify and recognize our emotions before we can manage it in a healthy manner. Oftentimes, students are unaware of their true emotions. Without identifying your true emotions and feelings, it is very difficult to manage and better handle your emotions and stress. Apart from that, *university management* can also develop parent involvement programs that could encourage active participation of parents in student's education. For example, organize a parent-university partnership; every start of a semester can invite parents to come to have a briefing together on the course's syllabus and learning materials that the university has prepared. By having this, the parents are aware of their children's learning and progress in the university.

In conclusion, attention should be given to the development of student's EI and active participation of parents in any institutions to improve student's learning and performance.

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