



**Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development**

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY ON THE EFFECT  
OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TOWARD STUDENTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL  
WELL-BEING IN UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK (UNIMAS)**

**Nurul Farrahin Binti Rahim**

**Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)**

**2021**

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

Grade: A-

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Final Year Project Report  
Masters

PhD

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I NURUL FARRAHIN BINTI RAHIM, 67363, Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development hereby declare that the work entitled, Impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study on the effect of Emotional Intelligence toward students' Psychological Well-Being in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) is my original work. I have not copied from any other students' work or from any other sources except where due reference or acknowledgement is made explicitly in the text, nor has any part been written for me by another person.

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NURUL FARRAHIN BINTI RAHIM

This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a  
Bachelor of Psychology with Honours

Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK  
(2021)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With the completion of this research, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to all of those who had helped me a lot in completing this project with all the support, guidance, and encouragement.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my beloved supervisor, Dr. Kartini Abd Ghani for guiding and supervise me to find a suitable topic until I was finally able to come out with a full research project entitled 'Impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study on the effect of Emotional Intelligence toward students' Psychological Well-Being in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)'. Without her consistency in supporting me, encouraging me, and inspiring me, I would not be able to gather motivation in completing this project. Besides, she always gives her time to supervise us despite of her busy schedule.

I also would like to thank my evaluator, Encik Mohamad Azhari Bin Abu Bakar. Without the feedback and comment given by him based on my final year project presentation, I would not be able to notice any mistakes I have done during the completion of the project. With all the feedback and comment I can try my best to improve this research to ensure that this project will benefit others. Aside from that, I also want to thanks all of my Psychology coursemates for always supporting and helping me by giving and sharing a lot of information and knowledge in completing this final year project.

Also, I would love to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to my beloved family for keep on encouraging me throughout this year since the learning setting has been shifted to online distance learning, it has been hard for me to organize my schedule properly especially in finding time to complete this final year project. Without their cooperation, understanding, and continuously supporting me financially, physically, and mentally along the process of completing this project, I would not be able to complete this project successfully.

Lastly, I would like to express my appreciation to all 320 participants who are willing to take part in this research. Without their cooperation and participation, I would not be able to complete my final year project.

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## ABSTRACT

Online distance learning is one of the changes that has been implemented in Malaysia to overcome the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These changes have led to a social restriction which mainly causes students to experienced isolation, arises worries, and also causes distress. Emotional intelligence is a part of cognitive processing which involves the awareness of own emotions and other and also the ability to facilitate and manage own emotions. Having a good degree of emotional intelligence will enable the participants to facilitate, manage and aware of their own emotions during this pandemic, also it can help and encourage students to practice a good and healthy lifestyle which will result in a good and healthy psychological well-being. A cross-sectional study has been conducted to study the correlation between emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being of the students due to the impact of COVID-19. This study involves 320 undergraduate students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Kota Samarahan, Sarawak. The measurement instrument used to conduct this research are the English version of the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24, and also the EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being. The hypotheses have been tested by using a Pearson Correlation Coefficient, and the result has shown that there is a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being of students. This indicates, the participants experienced a higher level of emotional intelligence during this pandemic, and it directly affects the students' psychological well-being which also recorded a high level. To further improve this study, future researchers were suggested to conduct a study with a large population in order to generalize the data among students in higher institutions.

**Keywords:** *Pandemic COVID-19, Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Well-Being*

## ABSTRAK

*Pembelajaran jarak jauh dalam talian adalah salah satu perubahan yang telah dilaksanakan di Malaysia untuk mengatasi penyebaran virus COVID-19. Perubahan ini telah menyebabkan pembatasan sosial yang menyebabkan pelajar mengalami pengasingan, timbul kebimbangan, dan juga menyebabkan kesukaran. Kecerdasan emosi adalah bahagian dari pemprosesan kognitif yang melibatkan kesedaran emosi terhadap diri dan orang lain dan juga kemampuan untuk memfasilitasi dan mengurus emosi sendiri. Mempunyai tahap kecerdasan emosi yang baik akan membolehkan para peserta memfasilitasi, mengurus dan menyedari emosi mereka sendiri semasa wabak ini, juga dapat membantu dan mendorong pelajar untuk mengamalkan gaya hidup yang baik dan sihat yang akan menghasilkan kesejahteraan psikologi yang baik dan sihat. Satu kajian keratan rentas telah dilakukan untuk mengkaji hubungan antara kecerdasan emosi dan kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar kerana kesan COVID-19. Kajian ini melibatkan 320 pelajar sarjana dari Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Kota Samarahan, Sarawak. Instrumen pengukuran yang digunakan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan ini adalah Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 versi bahasa Inggeris, dan juga EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being. Hipotesis telah diuji dengan menggunakan Pekali Korelasi Pearson, dan hasilnya menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan positif yang kuat antara kecerdasan emosi dan kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar. Ini menunjukkan, para peserta mengalami tahap kecerdasan emosi yang tinggi semasa wabak ini, dan secara langsung mempengaruhi kesejahteraan psikologi pelajar yang juga mencatatkan tahap yang tinggi. Untuk meningkatkan lagi kajian ini, para penyelidik masa depan disarankan untuk melakukan kajian dengan populasi yang besar untuk menggeneralisasikan data di kalangan pelajar di institusi tinggi.*

**Kata kunci:** *Pandemik COVID-19, Kecerdasan Emosi, Kesejahteraan Psikologi*

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the research preliminary elements were discussed. The background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research objectives include both general and specific objectives in this study. Also, research questions, research hypotheses, the conceptual framework, the definition of terms used in this study, the significance of the study, and the limitations of the study are all included in this chapter.

### 1.1 Background of the study

Recently we were shocked by an epidemic that is spreading across the country. The disease COVID-19 caused the severe acute respiratory syndrome. This illness was started in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China (CDC, 2019), and had an outbreak in other countries. On the 30th of January 2020, WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a global health emergency as a result of the pandemic (Gallegos, 2020). This disease had spread to the rest of the world and have a lot of impacts on society. Malaysia is one of the countries affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation not only causes economic turmoil but also the education sector of the country is also affected. This situation causes new norms to be practiced. Among them, the education system is turning to online learning. As a result of the pandemic, people are also affected mentally and physically especially among workers, students, and entrepreneurs.

This research primarily focused on students' development in terms of students' level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during the pandemic period. The major goal of this research is to look at students' emotional intelligence and psychological well-being as a result of COVID-19's impact on higher education. The researcher wants to identify does the students' emotional intelligence affects psychological well-being during this pandemic COVID-19. Emotional intelligence generally referred to as emotional quotient (EQ), is the capacity to recognise, use, and control one's own emotions and others in a productive way. Thus, a good level of emotional intelligence can ensure a good level of psychological well-being.

Apart from that, the way we perceive things may give an impact on our well-being. Besides, there is an interrelation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Through this study, the researcher wants to identify the correlation between emotional intelligence as well as students' psychological well-being during this pandemic. Does the increase in emotional intelligence ensure a good state of psychological well-being among students during this pandemic as has been proven by study conducted by Samaei and Sepahmansour (2015). Hence, this study was conducted to identify whether the pandemic COVID-19 has an impact on students in higher institutions in terms of the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of students.

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Slightly over half of the Malaysian students were affected due to the pandemic COVID-19. The pandemic COVID-19 causes new norms to be implemented and adapted, among them is the online learning setting. Recently, the learning setting has been shifted to an online learning setting to avoid the spread of COVID-19. Students in higher education are affected by the changes in their well-being, lifestyle, and functioning. Reducing and restricting physical contact meetings is an attempt to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These situations have consequences for the efficiency of the learning process in higher education (Irawan et al., 2020). This situation is very impactful toward students in higher education. It arise worries, anxiety among students, thus this study focusing on how students' emotional intelligence affects students' psychological well-being during this pandemic COVID-19.

Many studies have shown the interrelation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. For instance, research carried out by Samaei and Sepahmansour (2015), found that there is a positive association between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. This study implies, increase in emotional intelligence is positively associated with an increase in psychological well-being. Moreover, research on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among rural students in Sabah. This study has proven almost half of the rural students in Sabah have a poor level of well-being. Based on the findings, rural poor students encounter numerous difficulties in life, such as financial problems, learning, relationships with others, and social pressures, which eventually led to a moderate or

low level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. (Rathakrishnan et al., 2019). However, it only focused on a specific population and cannot be generalized to all populations.

Therefore, the researcher finds other indicators that may contribute and give an impact on the student well-being during this current pandemic such as emotional intelligence. Also, only fewer studies are focusing on the pandemic since the pandemic is a recent global issue. Thus, this study intends to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being during this pandemic. The researcher aimed to examine the impact of COVID-19 on higher education specifically on students' emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Hence, this study needs to prove does a good level of emotional intelligence ensures a good and healthy psychological well-being among students in higher education during this pandemic COVID-19.

### **1.3 The objective of the study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

To investigate the relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being due to the impact of COVID-19.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objective**

1. To determine the demographic attributes among the participants.
2. To investigate the relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

### **1.4 Research question and hypotheses**

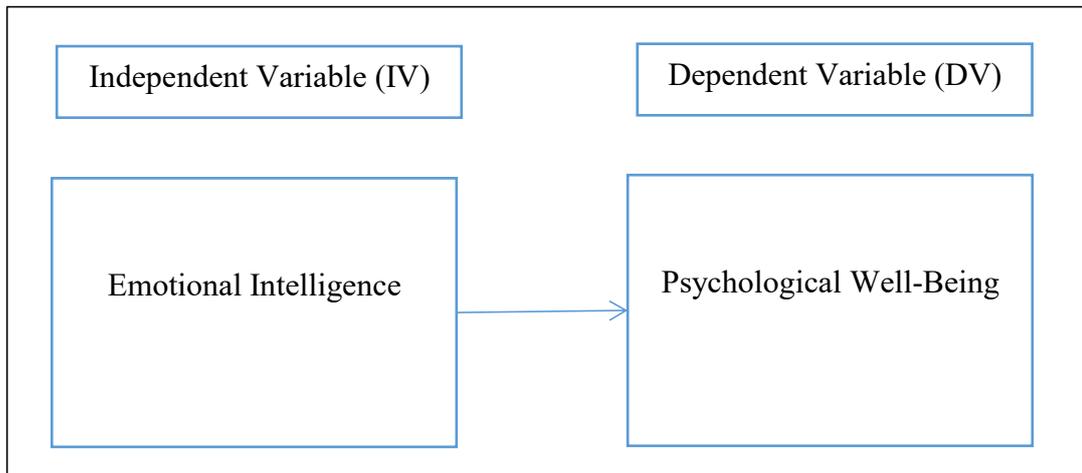
#### **1.4.1 Research questions**

1. What are the demographic attributes of the participants?
2. Is there any relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being?

#### **1.4.2 Research hypotheses**

1. There is no significant relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

## 1.5 Conceptual Framework



*Figure 1.5: Conceptual Framework*

This study aimed to assess the effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being throughout the pandemic COVID-19 period. Figure 1.5 illustrates the conceptual framework for this study. Emotional intelligence is the independent variable in this study, while psychological well-being is the dependent variable.

## 1.6 Significance of the study

The researcher wants to highlight the positive psychology research in this study. Other than that, this study will show the demographic attributes among the participants. Aside from that, this research will be able to help the participants gain insight and awareness on their level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic. The findings of this research also show the correlation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in higher education during this pandemic. In addition, this research will give an advantage for both researcher and participants as the researcher can gain insight and explore the broad terms of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of students during this pandemic. The participants also have the chance to participate and reflect on their emotional intelligence and level of psychological well-being during this pandemic.

### **1.7 Limitations of the study**

In this research, there is some limitation which researcher cannot ignore and it may threaten the validity of the result from this research. Firstly, the time constraint for the researcher to gain the participants. In this case, with the help of the internet, it will be much easier to distribute the questionnaire and to obtain the data from the participants. Other than that, the researcher only focused on UNIMAS undergraduate students. Therefore, this research cannot be generalized to all institutions of higher education. Besides, only a particular institution that allows the researcher to run the study only can implicate the findings.

### **1.8 Definition of terms**

There are two types of definitions of terms used in this study which are the conceptual definition and operational definition.

#### **Emotional Intelligence (EI)**

Conceptually, Emotional Intelligence (EI) can be defined as the ability to understand the way people feel and react and to use this skill to make good judgments and to avoid or solve problems (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

Operationally, the measure of emotional intelligence in this study currently using the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 in the English version. The purpose is to measure the students' emotional intelligence during this pandemic. This questionnaire develops by Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, and Turvey (1995).

#### **Psychological Well-Being**

Conceptually, psychological well-being can be defined as the combination of positive affective states such as happiness and being able to function well with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

Operationally, students' psychological well-being can be measured by using The EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being (Andhini, 2017). This questionnaire develops by Seligman based on the Seligmans' PERMA Model.

## **1.9 Summary**

To sum up, this chapter explains the introductory details of this study, consist of the background of the study, conceptual framework, research objectives, research hypotheses, research questions. Besides, the definitions of terms, the significance of the study, and also the limitation of the study have been discussed in this chapter. Although COVID-19 is the current issue that arises in Malaysia and affects almost all of the countries, this study intends to find out does the pandemic COVID-19 impacts higher education specifically on students' emotional intelligence and students' psychological well-being during this pandemic period. Mainly it focuses on how students perceive this pandemic based on their emotional intelligence affects the students' psychological well-being.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will explain the literature review and theory related to this study. Since the topic focuses on the effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being due to the impact of COVID-19, the researcher divided the review chapter comprise of emergency remote learning as the impact of COVID-19 on higher education. Emotional intelligence and psychological well-being as the variables in this study. Also, the effect of emotional intelligence on psychological well-being was derived from a previous study.

#### 2.1 Emergency Remote Learning

COVID-19 is a worldwide issue that arises in Malaysia recently. COVID-19 is an abbreviated form for Corona virus disease 2019. Pandemic is defined by The World Health Organization (WHO) as the spread of the disease that affects large numbers of people around the world or across international borders (Kelly, 2011). The name has been used to avoid stigmatizing individuals, geographical or animal associations with the origin of the virus (David Cennimo et. al, 2020). On the 25th of January 2020, the first case of COVID-19 was discovered in Malaysia, with three Chinese citizens reported to have had close contact with the case in Singapore (Borneo Post Online, 2020). While on 4th February 2020 the first Malaysian has been confirmed to get infected by COVID-19 (Bernama, 2020). After that, the number of COVID-19 cases in Malaysia started to rise slowly. A couple of weeks after a religious event in Seri Petaling, Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia had recorded the most number of COVID-19 and holds the top position within the South Asia country (Barker, 2020).

As a result, the Malaysian government has taken action by implementing a Movement Control Order (MCO). This order led to the closure of some economic, business, and institutions temporarily. But, for the essential service such as banking, foods, water, security and defense, healthcare services and more was still open as unusual with the guideline of Standard Operation Procedure (SOP). This COVID-19 also changes the lifestyle of work people and also the students. The minister of

education decides to shut down all the schools and higher institutions and change the learning style to online learning. Higher education has been affected worldwide as a result of measures taken to combat the COVID-19 epidemic, such as the shift to online learning (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020). However, this online learning has its positive and negative side of it. But, mostly it was found that conducting online learning was a very challenging task for students and have an effect on the students mentally and physically. According to Kim Hellemans et., al. (2020), the pandemic COVID-19 had affected the mental health of younger populations aged between 18 to 25 years old which is the age category under the high school and higher institution students. For instance, in the United Kingdom, more than half of students reported a mental health downward trend due to the COVID-19 epidemic (The Guardian, 2020).

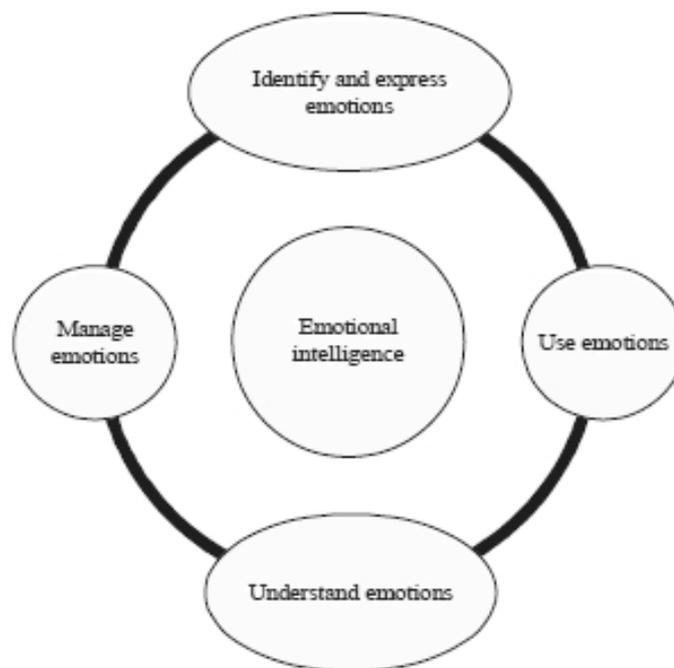
Slightly over half of the Malaysian students were affected due to the pandemic. The pandemic COVID-19 also give an impact on both the physical and emotional state of the people. The online learning setting is one of the changes that has been practiced in Malaysia in order to overcome the spread of COVID-19. These changes have give an impact mainly on the students' emotional and psychological well-being. According to Killan (2020), students reported feeling isolated from society and their social networks as a result of quarantining at home during COVID-19 and the closure of educational facilities. Due to unfavourable familial situations, some students had bad experiences while going home during the pandemic.

Active Minds conducted an online survey toward 2086 college students mainly to determine the impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health. Mental health is one of the components to ensure a good level of psychological well-being. This survey briefly describes the impact of COVID-19 on students' mental health. The online survey reported that one over five college students stated that their mental health has drastically worsened during the pandemic COVID-19 and there has been reported that COVID-19 has had a negative effect on the mental health of 80 percent of college students. There are some factors that caused the COVID-19 has negatively impacted students' mental health, which include 91 percent stress or anxiety, 81 percent disappointment or sadness, and 80 percent loneliness and isolation. Thus, the online survey indicates that COVID-19 has a negative impact on student's mental health, which can also have an impact on students' emotional and psychological well-being (*Covid-19 Impact on College*, 2020).

## 2.2 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional and intelligence are two different terms that have been combined to work as subjective terms. Emotional intelligence is known as the capability to facilitate and manage emotions of self and others. The below approach is one of the models that the researcher has been referring to while completing this research, to gain a better understanding and explore the term “Emotional Intelligence” in this study. The four-branch model of Emotional Intelligence (EI) abilities emphasizes the major elements of cognitive processing in emotion-related abilities.

### **Mayer and Salovey four-branch model of Emotional Intelligence (EI) abilities:**



*Figure 2.2: The Mayer and Salovey (1997) four-branch model of Emotional Intelligence (EI) abilities*

This model sets out four fundamental emotional-related abilities. The perception of emotion, the use of emotion to facilitate thinking, the understanding of emotion, and the management of emotion in oneself and others are among the mental abilities involved as shown in figure 2.2. This model was espoused by Mayer and Salovey (Fiori & Vesely-Maillefer, 2018).

Emotions are one of the cognitive processing. The cognitive abilities to accurately identify and interpret emotions through attentiveness and detection are the focus of this approach. This ability includes recognising emotions in one's own physical and psychological conditions, as well as sensitivity and awareness of others. Then followed by the use of emotions to facilitate thinking. The third element is understanding emotions. This section emphasises the capability to comprehend the relationships between various emotions as well as how emotions vary over time and in different settings.

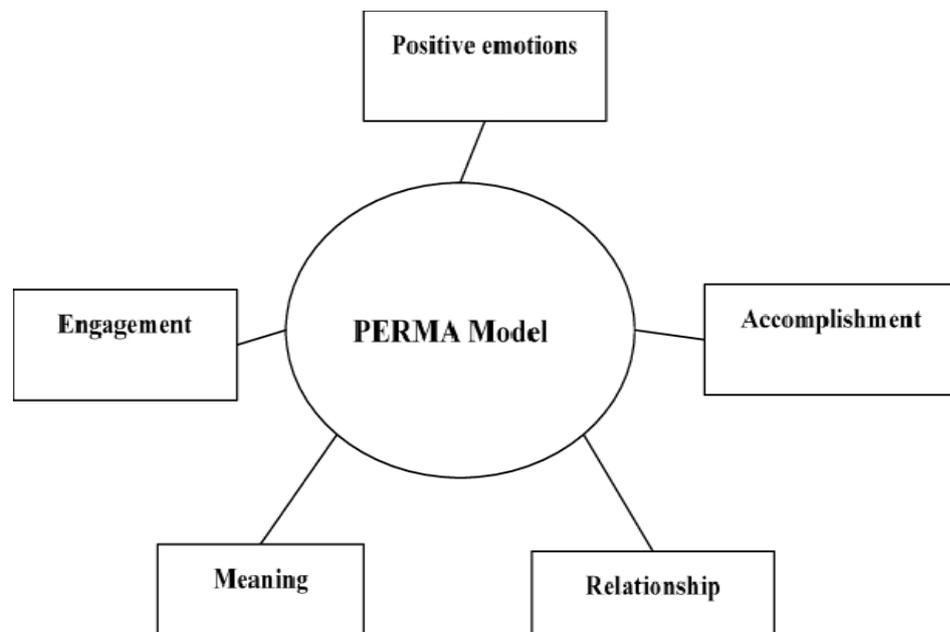
Lastly, manage emotions which describe the ability to regulate one's own and others' emotions accurately. The researcher refers to this model to explore the broad and subjective term of emotional intelligence deeply on the specific elements which help the researcher to define the emotional intelligence in this study.

The recent COVID-19 has had an impact on the physical and mental of all people around the world. Thus, exploring the way the participants perceive, facilitate, understand and manage their own emotions during this pandemic might bring an impact on the students' psychological well-being.

### 2.3 Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being in this study is described as a combination of positive emotional experiences such as happiness and the ability to perform effectively and efficiently in both personal and social life during the pandemic period. The researcher aims to assess the students' psychological well-being as a result of the COVID-19's adjustments. Undoubtedly, COVID-19 has had a negative impact on people's mental health. To define psychological well-being in this study, the researcher used Seligman's Perma Model, which contains five main components to attain a positive state of mind.

#### Seligman's PERMA Model:



*Figure 2.3: The Seligman's PERMA model*

PERMA model is a scientific theory of happiness. Martin Seligman proposed this framework, which stressed five important factors for obtaining psychological well-being and happiness (Abdul, 2019). PERMA is an abbreviation for the five key components in obtaining psychological well-being and happiness in life as shown in figure 2.3. This model explores the broad term of psychological well-being from five broad components comprise of positive emotions, engagement, relationship, meaning,

and accomplishment. This theory described how an individual can achieve psychological well-being and happiness in life.

The first component is positive emotions. Positive emotions are also known as an important key component to achieving psychological well-being. Individuals with a high emotional quotient (EQ) are more aware of their feelings and have greater emotional control. Individual engagement, or participation in daily activities such as attending classes and socialising with others, will result from this good sensation. The happiness of one's life will then be fueled by a healthy engagement.

A positive relationship is the third component. Positive feeling, or emotional intelligence, will aid in the development of a person's interpersonal relationships. This is due to the fact that EQ includes the capacity to detect others' emotions and to apply that knowledge to one's own emotions, thoughts, and behaviours.

After an individual's emotional, engagement and relationship needs are fulfilled, an individual will search for their life's purpose and attempt to achieve it. Having a life goal and putting in the effort to accomplish it is critical to success and happiness. Achievements aid in the development and maintenance of self-esteem. Achievements also provide satisfaction and have an indirect impact on happiness and well-being.

As a result, the researcher uses this theory as a guide to examine the terms "psychological well-being" in particular in order to conduct this research and develop an appropriate measurement to address the participants' degree of psychological well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **2.4 Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Psychological Well-Being**

Many studies have been conducted to determine the correlation also to investigate the effect of emotional intelligence on psychological well-being. According to studies conducted during the COVID-19 period, found that students worldwide were severely impacted due to the travel restrictions, exclusion, isolation, and quarantine, as well as dormitory and order closures (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2020). These changes influenced students' goals and priorities, as well as their willingness to take online classes. The majority of the students experienced minor psychological and physical anxiety, as well as moderate levels of perceived stress (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020).

The primary problems experienced by most students during this epidemic were a lack of space at home, a distraction from family, and having several assignments during the lockdown. Furthermore, while some students expressed satisfaction with their online lessons, others expressed a lack of motivation and enthusiasm as a result of the impact of educational institution closures on their lifestyles and negative attitudes towards learning online (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2020).

According to Guerra-Bustamante et al., (2019), there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. A study conducted to examine the relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence (attention, clarity, and repair) and the different levels of perceived happiness (low, medium, and high) in adolescents, happiness increases as the ability to understand and regulate emotional intelligence improves. A total of 646 secondary school students constitute up the sample, and the instruments used in this study were the Spanish version of the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 Questionnaire to measure perceived emotional intelligence and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire.

Furthermore, Rathakrishnan, Sanu, Yahaya, Singh, and Kamaluddin (2019) analyzed the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. The results also found that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. The study of the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of poor rural students has shown that the level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of poor rural students in Sabah is moderate and low. This indicates that these rural students have low emotional intelligence, which might be due to some factors such as social pressure and financial problems. This study has shown the interrelation between students'

emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. This also indicates that the perceived emotional intelligence may impact students' psychological well-being. However, the study only focused on a particular population, thus cannot be generalized to all populations, situations, and circumstances.

Aside from that, Samaie and Sepahmansour (2015) also found that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Besides, the study carried out by Mehmood and Gulzar (2014), has found that emotional intelligence and psychological well-being have a negative association with depression and a good relationship with self-esteem among Pakistani teens. This suggests that a person with high emotional intelligence has a positive attitude toward self and others. They know what they need and how to get it without intruding on others' rights.

Even though numerous research has been conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being, there are still fewer studies focusing on the global concerns that continue to arise presently, such as the pandemic COVID-19 issue. Hence, the researcher wants to assess the impact of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being, particularly during this epidemic, based on relevant concerns and findings from a prior study on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

## **2.5 Summary**

Although, it is clear that much research on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. However, there is only fewer study concerning the impact of COVID-19 on higher education. Therefore, this study wants to investigate does this topic is relevant and applicable to higher education in Malaysia or not. Also, the researcher wants to identify how does COVID-19 brings an impact on students' emotional intelligence and affects the students' psychological well-being.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the methodology of this study. The subtopic of this chapter includes the research design used in this study, population, sample focused on this study, and the sampling procedure used in this study. Aside from that, this chapter will explain the instruments used, conduct pilot study, the validity and reliability, the ethics of the study, the data collection, and the data analysis procedure.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The research design used in this research is a quantitative cross-sectional research design. By using a quantitative approach, this study focused more on the measurement that is objective and supported with statistical analysis or numerical data (Creemers, Kyriakides, & Sammons, n.d.). To obtain the data, a quantitative approach was used meanwhile descriptive analysis was used to find the frequency and percentage for the respondents demographic and inferential analysis was used to study the relationship between independent variables; Emotional Intelligence and the Psychological Well-Being as the dependent variable. The aim is to identify the positive or negative correlation between students' emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during the pandemic period.

#### **3.2 Population, sample, and sampling procedure**

##### **3.2.1 Population**

This study will involve UNIMAS students which only involves undergraduate students from all faculty. The total population is 14000.

##### **3.2.2 Sample**

Referring to the Sample size table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), based on the number of populations which is 14000, 370 participants are needed to

participate in this study. The sample size includes both male and female undergraduate students from UNIMAS. In this research, the researcher uses a random sampling procedure to collect data. Then, the researcher will analyze the data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

### **3.3 Instrument**

This study used a questionnaire that consists of a few sets of questions that are related to this study. There are three sections where Section A is to identify the demographic attributes of the participants. Meanwhile, Section B focused on survey questions which consist of 24 questions regarding emotional intelligence to measure the emotional intelligence of students during this pandemic. Section C is a questionnaire related to psychological well-being which consists of 20 questions. The purpose is to measure the students' psychological well-being during this pandemic COVID-19. Section B and C is currently using a Likert scale question.

#### **3.3.1 Section A (Demographics)**

This section is to identify the demographic attributes of the participants. This section consists of four closed questions; gender, age, year of study, and faculty.

#### **3.3.2 Section B (Trait Meta Mood Scale-24)**

This section consists of 24 questions concerning emotional intelligence. This section intends to measure the level of emotional intelligence of the participants. This section is also a self-regulate question on the Likert scale, which needs the participants to indicate which statement reflects best during this pandemic. The researcher reuses the questionnaire from past research related to the Mayer and Salovey four-branch model of Emotional Intelligence (EI) abilities. The researcher wants to determine the participants' level of emotional intelligence during this pandemic on how the pandemic being impactful among higher education.

#### **3.3.3 Section C (The EPOCH Measure of Adolescence Well-Being)**

This section consists of 20 questions related to psychological well-being. The researcher intends to measure the psychological well-being of the participants

based on the survey questions. This section is on the Likert scale. In this section, the participants need to indicate which statement describes best during this pandemic COVID-19 period. The researcher adapts and adopts the questionnaire from past research related to Seligman's PERMA Model concerning psychological well-being.

### 3.4 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted by the researcher to assess the study's usability and reliability, as well as to test the measurement instrument. The purpose is to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaires utilised in this study. It is important to make sure that the questionnaire constructed is appropriate and suitable for the research.

As a result, in order to perform a proper pilot study, the researcher distributes the questionnaire to the students. A total of 30 students took part in the pilot research. After the data has been gathered, it will be entered into SPSS to determine the validity and reliability.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.914	24

*Table 3.4.1: Cronbach's Alpha for Section B*

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.926	20

*Table 3.4.2: Cronbach's Alpha for Section C*

### **3.5 Validity & reliability**

Reliability is concerned with the consistency of the measurement during the validity test with the accuracy of the measurements. An instrument considers valid and reliable if the values of alpha,  $\alpha$ , and beta,  $\beta$  are greater than 0.7 (Ursachi et al., 2015). The Cronbach's Alpha value must execute for each section in the questionnaire.

As referred to in Table 3.4.1 and Table 3.4.2, both Cronbach's Alpha values recorded greater than 0.7, which respectively recorded 0.914 for Section B and 0.926 for Section C. Thus, the measurement instrument used in this study are considered valid and reliable.

### **3.6 Ethics of the study**

In concern of the rules and regulations during the process of conducting research, permission to conduct, confidentiality, and privacy of the participants and also voluntary participation has taken out.

### **3.7 Data collection procedure**

A total of 48 questions in the questionnaire is used to study this research. The researcher then distributes the questionnaire to the participants by using a Google form survey as it is easier to distribute and easier to analyze the data collected. In this context, due to remote online learning, the researcher finds another alternative by expanding the distribution of google form questionnaire through social media such as the WhatsApp application. The researcher distributes the google form questionnaire to official WhatsApp groups that consist of UNIMAS undergraduate students, such as Programme official WhatsApp group, College clubs official WhatsApp group, and other course officials WhatsApp group. There is about 25 WhatsApp group in total, and the range of participant is between 50 to 200 students. Thus, the researcher distributes the google form questionnaire along with a formal announcement, a brief description of the questionnaire, informed consent, and also the google form link for participation.

### **3.8 Data analysis procedure**

Data collected for this research then will be key into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS will automatically calculate the statistical analysis. The researcher uses Pearson Correlation Coefficient to find out the relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic. The correlations study between variables will help the researcher identify the direct effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being during this pandemic period.

### **3.9 Summary**

To summarise, this chapter explains the methodology used in this study. Also, explain the type of study, measurements used to measure the independent variable; emotional intelligence and dependent variable; psychological well-being in this study. To highlight, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient has been used to test the research hypotheses in this study. Besides, the results will show the direct effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being due to the impact of COVID-19 on higher institutions.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDING AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter will discover the findings of the study conducted by the researcher as referred to the problem statement of the study, the research objective, the research hypotheses, and the research questions. This study only managed to gather data from 320 respondents due to the limitations of the study. This indicate that the researcher could not reach the targeted sample size by referring to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table. Also, this chapter will present the research findings which are the descriptive statistics comprise of the respondent background consists of the gender, age, year of study, and faculty. Meanwhile, the inferential statistics discussed the statistical analysis using the Pearson Correlation Coefficient to test the research hypotheses and to determine the correlation between the variables of study (independent variable; emotional intelligence and dependent variable; psychological well-being). Besides, this chapter will briefly explain the discussion part based on the research findings.

#### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics: Respondent Demographics

**Objective 1:** To determine the demographic attributes among the participants.

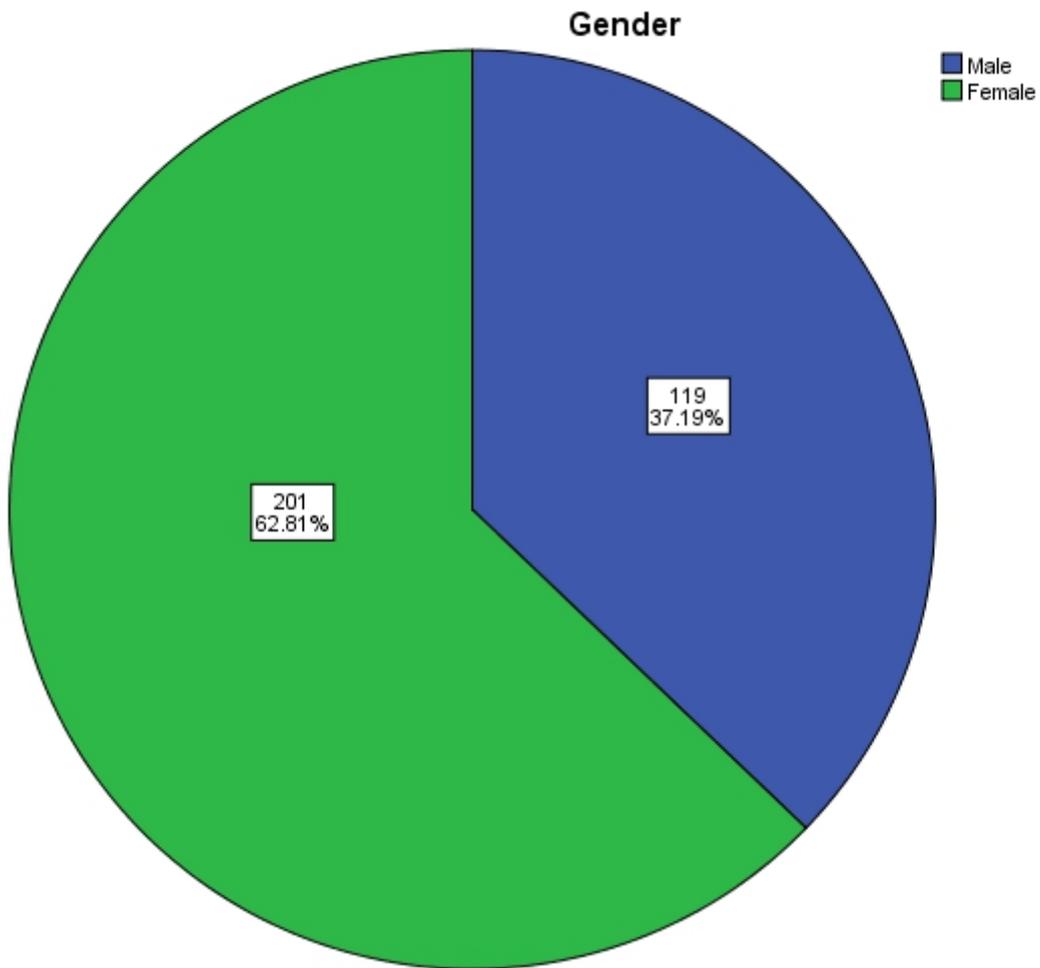
		Statistics			
		Gender	Age	Year of study	Faculty
N	Valid	320	320	320	320
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean			1.18	2.35	
Std. Deviation			.420	.700	
Minimum			1	1	
Maximum			3	4	

*Table 4.1: Overall Descriptive Statistics*

### 4.1.1 Gender

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	119	37.2	37.2	37.2
	Female	201	62.8	62.8	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.1.1: Descriptive Statistics of Gender*



*Figure 4.1.1: Pie Chart of Gender*

### 4.1.2 Age

		Age			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	18-23	269	84.1	84.1	84.1
	24-29	46	14.4	14.4	98.4
	30 and above	5	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total		320	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.2: Descriptive Statistics of Age

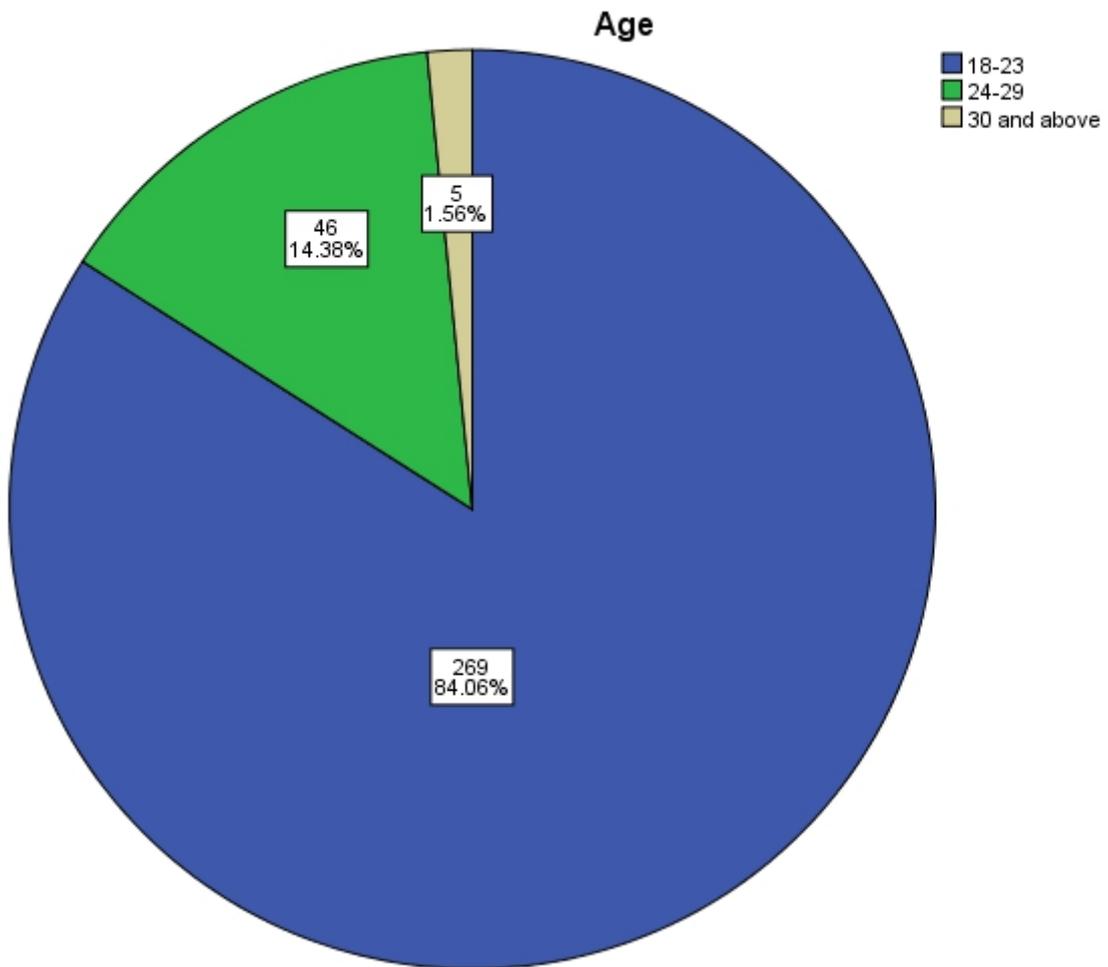


Figure 4.1.2: Pie Chart of Age

### 4.1.3 Year of Study

		Year of study			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	1	34	10.6	10.6	10.6
	2	149	46.6	46.6	57.2
	3	129	40.3	40.3	97.5
	4 and above	8	2.5	2.5	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.3: Descriptive Statistics of Year of Study

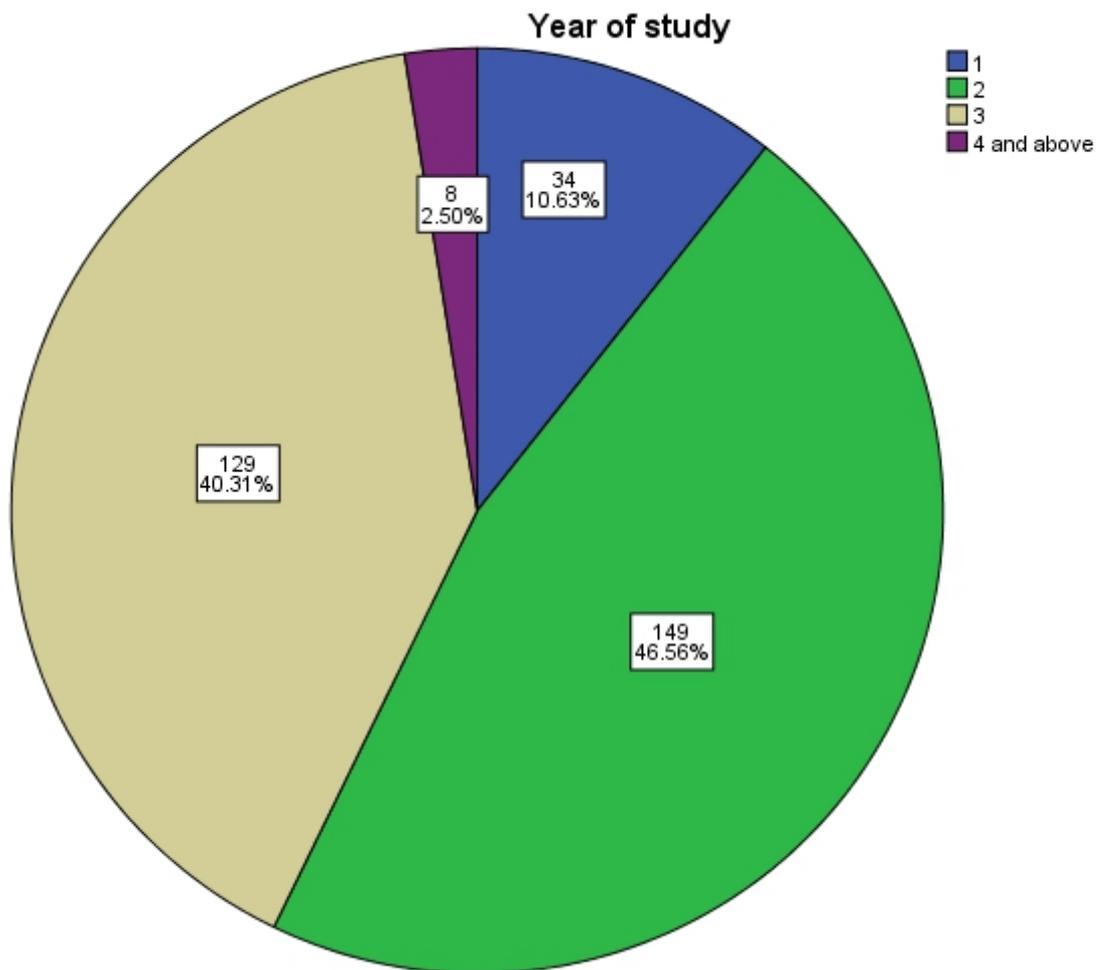
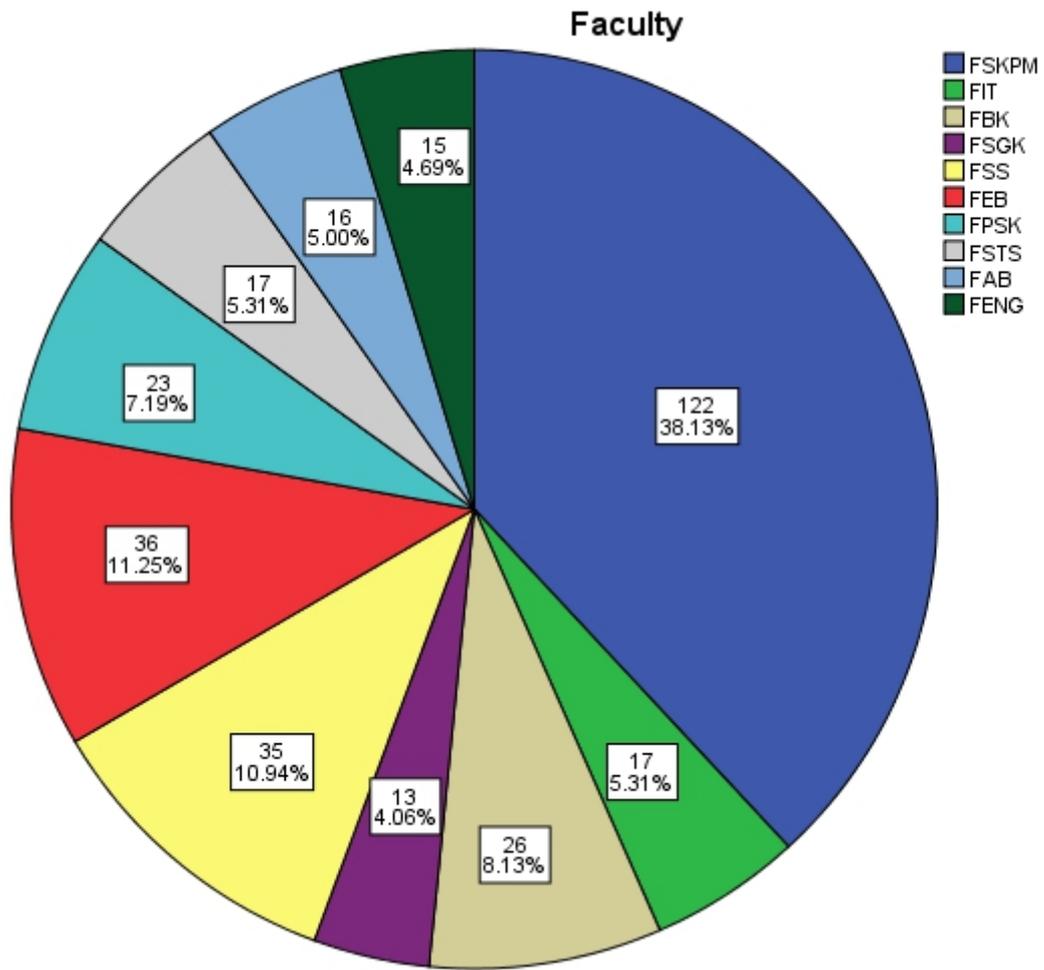


Figure 4.1.3: Pie Chart of Year of Study

#### 4.1.4 Faculty

		Faculty			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FSKPM	122	38.1	38.1	38.1
	FIT	17	5.3	5.3	43.4
	FBK	26	8.1	8.1	51.6
	FSGK	13	4.1	4.1	55.6
	FSS	35	10.9	10.9	66.6
	FEB	36	11.3	11.3	77.8
	FPSK	23	7.2	7.2	85.0
	FSTS	17	5.3	5.3	90.3
	FAB	16	5.0	5.0	95.3
	FENG	15	4.7	4.7	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.1.4: Descriptive Statistics of Faculty*



*Figure 4.1.4: Pie Chart of Faculty*

Table 4.1 shows the overall descriptive statistics, which involve 320 respondents among UNIMAS undergraduate students from all faculty. To be specific, the Section A of the questionnaire only included four closed questions which include gender, age, year of study, and faculty as respondent demographic data.

Table 4.1.1 and Figure 4.1.1 summarizes the data for the descriptive statistics of gender. The table shows that majority of the respondents are female respondents with 201 participation which is equal to 62.8 percent. Meanwhile, the male respondent recorded only 119 participation which is equivalent to 37.2 percent.

While Table 4.1.2 and Figure 4.1.2 represent the range of age of the respondents which involves 18 to 23 years old, 24 to 29 years old, and 30 years old and above. Overall, the majority of the respondents' age is in the range of 18 to 23 years old with 269 respondents which are equal to 84.1 percent. Meanwhile, the minority age of the respondent is in the range of 30 years old and above which recorded with 5 participation equal to 1.6 percent. The rest represent by the respondents' age in the range 24 to 29 years old, recorded 46 respondents with 14.4 percent.

As referred to Table 4.1.3 and Figure 4.1.3, shows the respondent demographic based on the year of study which involves UNIMAS undergraduate students from the first year, second year, third year, and fourth year and above. The majority of the respondent is from the second year with 149 respondent which equivalent with 46.6 percent. Next are from the third year, recorded 129 participation with 40.3 percent. Meanwhile, the rest of the respondents are from the first year with 34 participation equal to 10.6 percent and fourth year and above with 8 participation which equal to 2.5 percent.

Meanwhile, Table 4.1.4 and Figure 4.1.4 summarizes the data recorded based on faculty. The majority of respondents are from FSKPM recorded 122 participation with 38.1 percent. The minority respondent is from FSGK and recorded only 13 participation with 4.1 percent. The rest of the respondent are from FEB (36, 11.3%), FSS (35, 10.9%), FBK (26, 8.1%), FPSK (23, 7.2%), FSTS and FIT (17, 5.3%), FAB (16, 5.0%) and from FENG (15, 4.7%).

## 4.2 Inferential Statistics

### 4.2.1 Pearson Correlation Coefficient

**Objective 2:** To investigate the relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Emotional Intelligence	3.1517	.59739	320
Psychological Well-Being	3.3014	.64508	320

*Table 4.2.1: Descriptive Statistics on Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being*

Correlations			
		Emotional Intelligence	Psychological Well-Being
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.631**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	320	320
Psychological Well-Being	Pearson Correlation	.631**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	320	320

*Table 4.2.2: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being*

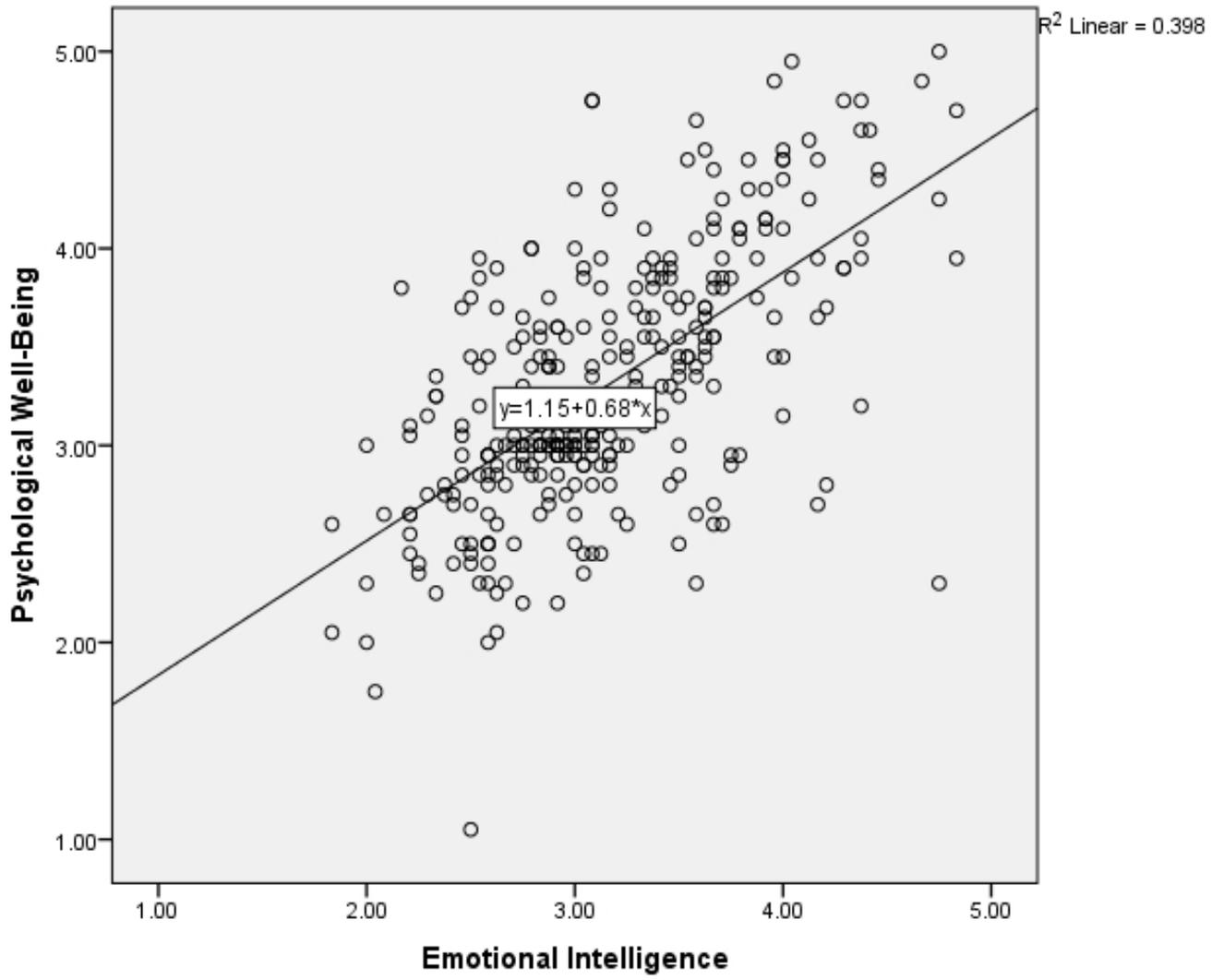


Figure 4.2.1: Scatter plot between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. As referred to Table 4.2.1, shows the Mean and Standard Deviation for Psychological Well-Being (M=3.3014, SD=0.64508) is higher than the Mean and SD for Emotional Intelligence (M=3.1517, SD=0.59739). This indicates the students are experiencing a higher level of Psychological Well-Being than in Emotional Intelligence during this pandemic.

Table 4.2.2 shows the result of the study of the correlation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. The results recorded the P-value was 0.000, which is less than the level of significance ( $P > 0.05$ ). Thus, the null hypotheses have been rejected. These indicate that there is a significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being.

Based on Figure 4.2.1 summarises the relationship which shown that there is a strong positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being. An increase in Emotional Intelligence also increases the level of Psychological Well-Being. This stated that a good emotional intelligence can lead to better psychological well-being which relatively proves that UNIMAS undergraduate students are experiencing a good level of psychological well-being during this pandemic COVID-19.

### 4.3 Summary of finding

No.	Null Hypotheses	Statistical Testing	Result
1.	There is no significant relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being.	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Reject null hypotheses (P=0.000). Strong positive correlation

*Table 4.3: The Summary of the Result of Hypotheses Testing*

Table 4.3 summarise the result of the hypotheses testing conducted by the researcher. The hypotheses argument, the statistical methods used to analyse the data, and the final result are the specifics. The null hypotheses have been rejected since the P-value is less than the level of significance, as referred to in the above table. This implies that emotional intelligence and psychological well-being have a positive association. Based on the result, there is a direct influence of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being during this pandemic period, as both variables are reported to have a direct linear relation. An increase in emotional intelligence is correlated with increases in students' psychological well-being.

#### 4.4 Discussion

The researcher conducts a Pearson Correlation Coefficient to test the research hypotheses to answer the research question in this study, is there any relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. By identifying the relationship between variables, thus it will help the researcher to examine the direct impact of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being during this pandemic COVID-19 period.

As referred to in the research findings, the p-value is  $P= 0.000$ , which is less than the level of significance. Therefore, the researcher rejects the null hypotheses and there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Besides, there are strong correlations between both variables which indicates an increase in the level of emotional intelligence is positively correlated in the increase on the students' psychological well-being.

The research findings prove that a good level of emotional intelligence can ensure good and healthy psychological well-being. On the other hand, if the level of emotional intelligence is recorded low it will affect the level of psychological well-being experienced by students during this pandemic. Hence, maintaining the level of emotional intelligence is essential especially during this current pandemic.

Awareness and management of emotions are two elements that the researcher focused on in measuring the student's level of emotional intelligence during this pandemic. The researcher measures the students' level of emotional intelligence by using the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 which only focuses on the students' awareness of emotions and management of emotions during this pandemic. A good level of emotional intelligence can help students to be able to act productively throughout the day.

Meanwhile, the psychological well-being in this study is concerned with a good emotional state, such as happiness, and the ability to perform well and effectively in both personal and social life. In this study, the researcher uses the EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being to measure the perceived psychological well-being experienced among UNIMAS undergraduate students during the pandemic period. A high level of psychological well-being relatively is a result of a good level of emotional intelligence.

The rising number of COVID-19 cases, the implementation of Movement Control Order (MCO), and Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) that has been applied nowadays bring both positive and negative sides of it. As for the positive side, the spread of COVID-19 viruses can be controlled and managed. In contrast, this situation has affected many sectors including the higher education sector. Implementation of online distance learning causes students as well as educators to struggle to ensure the learning process can be delivered smoothly without any interruption such as technical issues, student's motivation in attending online classes, and pressures and a lot of circumstances that may affect the learning process.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, researchers discovered that students throughout the world were severely impacted by the epidemic, with travel restrictions, physical separation, isolation, and quarantine, as well as dormitory and order closures (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2020). Students reported feeling disconnected from the world and their social networks as a result of being quarantined at home during COVID-19 and the closure of educational institutions, according to Killan (2020). Furthermore, while some students stated that they were enjoying their online lessons, others expressed a lack of enthusiasm and unfavourable attitudes about studying online as a result of the impact of educational institution closures on their lifestyles (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2020).

According to Kim Hellemans et al., (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the mental health of young people aged 18 to 25, which is the age range of high school and higher education students. According to an online survey, one out of five college students claimed that their mental health had significantly decreased during the pandemic COVID-19 and that COVID-19 had an adverse impact on the mental health of 80% of college students (*Covid-19 Impact on College*, 2020). Aside from that, during the pandemic COVID-19 period, most students experienced moderate levels of perceived stress and minor psychological and physical distress, according to Duraku and Hoxha (2020). As a consequence, this is a minor symptom that might contribute to the mental health slump that is occurring during this pandemic. Moreover, Malaysia has recorded an increase in suicide attempt cases during the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) to address and control the increase in COVID-19 cases.

This situation affects most of the students. As it influences the students' priority, unable to act productively, need to adapt to the new norm, new learning setting, an

unpleasant environment, and it may cause students to experience distress and arise worries among students. These conditions cannot be taken lightly, as they can probably lead students to experience stress, depression, and anxiety. As daily cases increase and online distance learning settings have been implemented, adapt, and faced by students for nearly two years, the students may experience mental and physical exhaustion. Besides, these conditions also can result in a low level of psychological well-being during this pandemic. Thus, it is important to maintain and practice a good level of emotional intelligence, as it will help a person to experience a positive state of mind.

Referring to the research finding shows that UNIMAS undergraduate students experience a high degree in both emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Although the pandemic period is the hard phase experiencing by all Malaysian, the result of the findings states that the students have the ability and are well-aware of their own emotions and the combinations between the students' positive emotional state help them to perform productively and effectively during the pandemic period. As referred to in Figure 4.2.1, the scatter plot shows as the emotional improves, it also correlated with the increase in students' psychological well-being.

The research findings are supported by a study conducted by Samaie and Sepahmansour (2015), which also found a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Besides, studies conducted to examine the relationship between a dimension in emotional intelligence (attention, repair, and repair) with different levels of perceived happiness (low, medium, and high) also found that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being (Guerra-Bustamante et al., 2019). The study found that as an individual's abilities to perceive and manage emotional intelligence improves, so does an individual's happiness. Furthermore, emotional intelligence and Psychological Well-Being have a negative association with depression and a good relationship with self-esteem, according to Mehmood and Gulzar (2014). This indicates that by enabling and controlling one's own emotions, someone with a high level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being may avoid being depressed throughout the pandemic.

To conclude, this study proves that emotional intelligence is part of the contributor that can either cause an individual to have a good level of psychological well-being or not especially during this pandemic. It has been tough for almost two

years for Malaysia to be colonized by this invisible virus. The same goes for other countries that are still combating the pandemic COVID-19. Therefore, emotional intelligence is necessary to sustain mental health, particularly among students in higher institutions during this pandemic period. This can also assist students in achieving a healthy psychological state.

#### **4.5 Summary**

To sum up, this chapter has covered the whole analysis of the data gathered throughout the research. There were two types of statistical analysis performed; descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to identify the demographic attribute of the respondents, and inferential analysis was performed to determine the relationship that exists between the variables; independent variable: emotional intelligence, and dependent variable: psychological well-being. In this study, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis was used for analytical purposes. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis findings were analysed for correlation and significance. This chapter also includes a discussion of the findings. The outcomes of this chapter will be included in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on three major elements that summarise the whole research, including recommendations, and reached the conclusion that the research was well-presented. The research summary, implications, and recommendations were all included in this chapter.

#### 5.1 Research Summary

To summarise, this study was conducted to determine the effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being due to the impact of COVID-19 on the higher institution. The recent global issues have caused new norms to be implemented. The education sector especially the higher institution need to adapt with the new learning setting. Since the closures of the higher institution are part of the initiatives run by the government to overcome the spread of the COVID-19 viruses. These changes have come to numerous considerations, and it also has the negative and positive impact of it especially toward the educators as well as the students.

As referred to the conceptual framework in this study, as discussed in the previous chapter, emotional intelligence stand for the independent variable, whereas psychological well-being is the dependent variable. Emotional intelligence is known as the capacity to perceive how people feel and act and to apply this knowledge to make wise decisions and avoid or solve issues. Meanwhile, the psychological well-being in this study was defined as a combination of emotional experiences such as happiness and the capability to perform successfully and productively in both personal and social life.

Although many studies have shown the interrelation between both variables, there is only a few research concerning the impact of COVID-19. COVID-19 is the recent global issue that arises and affected Malaysia and other countries as well. Based on the problem statement in this study, the researcher needs to prove either there is an

effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being throughout the pandemic period.

Thus, this study was conducted among UNIMAS undergraduate students. A total population of 14000, needs the researcher to gain data from 370 respondents by referring to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table. Unfortunately, the researcher only managed to gather data from 320 participants. This study is a quantitative cross-sectional design and the researcher uses the Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 and the EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being respectively to measure the students' level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic. The research objective mainly focusing to investigate the relationship between student's emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic period. To test the hypotheses in this study, the researcher conducts statistical analysis to study the correlation between both variables.

The research findings have shown that there is an interrelation between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Referring to the result of the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, the P-value is less than the level of significance, and this indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Hence, this study proves that increases in emotional intelligence are correlated to an increase in psychological well-being.

Moreover, the research findings are supported by a couple of previous research on emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. For instance, a study conducted by Samaei and Sepahmansour (2015), stated that there is a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Aside from that, a study carried out to examine the relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the different levels of perceived happiness also found a positive association between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being (Guerra-Bustamante et al., 2019).

To conclude, the study conducted by the researcher has reached the goal of the problem statement. As shown based on the research findings stated that an increase in emotional intelligence also increases students' psychological well-being. Thus, this indicates that a good level of emotional intelligence can ensure a good level of

psychological well-being among higher institutions students during this pandemic COVID-19.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study found that there is a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. An increase in emotional intelligence is positively correlates with an increase in psychological well-being. Thus, a good level of emotional intelligence ensures a good level of psychological well-being, as the ability to recognise and regulate emotional intelligence improves, it will also increase the students' psychological well-being. Although the pandemic give an impact on both the emotional and psychological well-being of students, based on the research findings, the students recorded a high level in both emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. This indicates the students are aware and able to manage their emotions during this pandemic COVID-19. As students recorded a high level of emotional and psychological well-being, hence, there is no serious negative impact of COVID-19 on student's emotional and psychological well-being during this pandemic. The research findings prove that the increase in emotional intelligence ensures a good state of psychological well-being among students during this pandemic. Hence, it is a must for maintaining a good level of emotional intelligence to ensure a good state of psychological well-being.

## **5.3 Implications**

There are three implications of this research which are the theoretical implications, policy implications, and also practical implications.

### **5.3.1 Theoretical implication**

The research findings only focusing on awareness and management of emotions as an element in emotional intelligence based on the four-branch model of EI abilities developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997). The four-branch model of EI abilities comprises four fundamental elements concerning emotion-related

abilities. This model describes the ability of emotional intelligence in ensuring human well-being. Thus it is a must to focus on this theory which emphasises the importance of emotional intelligence, especially during this current pandemic. To relatively help ourselves and others to gain insight and awareness on the importance of maintaining and practicing a good level of emotional intelligence.

### **5.3.2 Policy implication**

The rising number of mental health cases and suicide attempts due to the Movement Control Order (MCO) need preliminary action by the minister, government, mental health organization, and also society to combat this issue. Stigmatizing COVID-19 in implementing the new norms is the result of travel restriction, isolation, and social distancing as a part Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) that has been implemented in Malaysia. Away from family, lack of face-to-face social communication, feel less of self-belonging, feel distressed, arise anxiety may cause one over four Malaysian to develop suicidal thoughts or result in a mental health slump. In this matter, students are among those who are also affected due to the impact of COVID-19 on higher institutions. Thus, these issues cannot be taken lightly and the researcher highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in facilitating and managing own and other's emotions which are crucial to study. Emotional intelligence is essential on daily basis to ensure a good mental state and healthy and positive psychological well-being to be able to act productively despite the current pandemic COVID-19 situations.

### **5.3.3 Practical implication**

This study is not solely conducted to complete the study requirement, but this research wants to help the participants to gain insight and awareness on their level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic. Since COVID-19 is a recent global issue and it is almost two years Malaysia is still in an effort to overcome this issue, as well as other countries that are also affected. Of course, this issue causes stress, increases anxiety and it can also cause mental health slump among Malaysians. Hence, this study is designed to

also help the participants to aware and reflect on their level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic because a low level of emotional intelligence can affect the psychological well-being of students.

Besides, the research findings cannot be generalized to other populations, and only a particular population can implicate the findings. Thus, it is crucial to learn the students' emotional intelligence and psychological well-being during this pandemic, as it helps to overcome the mental health slump during this pandemic and other unwanted issues arise due to the impact of COVID-19 on higher institutions. There is a need for further actions and research on these elements which highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence to ensure positive psychological well-being and to be able to generalize to all populations especially on the higher institutions.

Also, this study will benefit the educators, psychologist, mental health organization and future researcher to take any action in addressing the issue concerning COVID-19 that affect student emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. This study provides a piece of information on the importance to study the effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being during the pandemic COVID-19 period.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

This study highlights positive psychology research. The findings show UNIMAS undergraduate students reported a high level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. However, the education minister, educator, psychologist, mental health organization, and society, need to be aware that the issues of a pandemic caused distress and students may experience burnout while completing the learning requirement. Although the findings show a positive level of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being experienced by students during the pandemic period, there has been reported a rising number of suicide attempts and mental health slump among students in Malaysia during this pandemic. Also, it has been suggested that there is a fundamental need for mental health awareness to promote insight into the importance of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in order to reduce the impact of the mental health slump during this pandemic period. Hence, mental health organizations need to take into account

concerning this issue. As there is a need for further actions in handling emotional and psychological related issues due to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **5.4.1 Future research**

The researcher comes out with several recommendations which can be applied and benefit the future researcher. Firstly, since this study only focused on a particular population. Thus, the future researcher can conduct research with a specific population to gather information and generalize findings on a certain population.

Besides, future researchers are encouraged to conduct a similar study by involving a large sample size which includes a large population that consists of higher institutions in Malaysia to ensure the findings of the study can be generalized and implicate to all populations especially among the students of higher institutions.

Aside from that, the future researcher can expand the variables and not strictly focused only on two variables as presented in this study. As there are many major contributors to ensure good psychological well-being during this pandemic. Thus, future researchers are encouraged and recommended to conduct a study on any variables as a contributor to psychological well-being. The future researcher can also study emotional intelligence and psychological well-being based on the elements stated on the four-branch emotional intelligence (EI) abilities model.

Also, the future researcher can use any suitable research design to be able to gather detailed data and information from the respondents. For instance, the future researcher can conduct a mixed research design that involves qualitative and quantitative research design. By doing so, the future researcher can conduct surveys, interviews, observations and can collect data based on the previous study to summarize the findings. In this context, the future researcher can come out with a solid conclusion based on the research findings.

## 5.5 Limitations

Several constraints were discovered throughout the process of conducting this research. One of the limitations was that this study only focused on a particular population which restricted among UNIMAS undergraduate students, thus this study cannot be generalized to all populations, and only a particular population can apply the research findings.

Aside from that, the researcher limits the variables which only focused on emotional intelligence as the independent variable and psychological well-being as the dependent variable. In this context, the emotional intelligence in this study only focuses on awareness and management of emotions as the two elements described on the four-branch emotional intelligence (EI) abilities model developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997).

Also, a quantitative method is used in this study to gather data from the targeted sample size by using a questionnaire with closed-ended questions. As a result, the data obtained for this study was not extensive. Furthermore, the surveys use the self-regulatory approach, which implies that the information gathered from respondents is based on their honesty.

Besides, this study only managed to collect data from 320 respondents, which means the researcher could not reach the targeted sample size as referred to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table which require the researcher to gain data from 370 respondents.

## **5.6 Summary**

To conclude, this chapter explains the entire research conducted by the researcher, including the three major elements which comprise the conclusion from the study, implications of the study, and also some of the recommendations based on this study. Hence, the researcher highly hopes that this research will benefit others since the researcher highlighted this study as positive psychology research which focuses on human well-being in the aspect of emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Since this study is specifically focused on the effect of emotional intelligence on students' psychological well-being due to the impact of pandemic COVID-19, thus the researcher wants the readers to gain advantages and learn their degree of emotional intelligence to maintain a healthy and positive psychological well-being, particularly during this pandemic, as it has already been a difficult period for all Malaysians and other countries impacted by the COVID-19's spread.

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## APPENDIX



**UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK**

**Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development**

**BACHELOR OF PSYCHOLOGY WITH HONOURS**

**TITLE OF TOPIC: Impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study on the effect of Emotional Intelligence on Students' Psychological Well-Being in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).**

Greetings,

My name is Nurul Farrahin Binti Rahim, a third year Psychology student in Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). I am currently conducting a survey to collect the data for my Final Year Project entitled "Impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study on the effect of Emotional Intelligence on Students' Psychological Well-Being in UNIMAS". This survey consist of three (3) sections and will take a few minutes to answers. You are required to answer all questions in each section. Your information will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes only. I would appreciate it if you could spend your time to help me fill out this questionnaire. Your cooperation is highly appreciated. Thank you for participating.



IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON HIGHER EDUCATION: A STUDY ON THE  
EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TOWARD STUDENTS'  
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK  
(UNIMAS)

**Section A**

**Demographics**

- a. Gender : Male  Female
- b. Age : 18-23yrs  24-29yrs   
30 and above
- c. Year of Study :  2  4 and  e
- d. Faculty : FBI  FSKPM  FSGK   
FSS F  FP   
FSTS  FI   
 FIT

## Section B

### Trait Meta Mood Scale-24 Questionnaire

Instruction: Please indicate which statement describes best on you during this pandemic.

1= Almost Never                      2= Sometimes                      3= Often  
4= Very Often                      5= Almost Always

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I pay a lot of attention to my feelings.					
2.	I am usually very conscious of what I feel.					
3.	I usually spend time thinking about my emotions.					
4.	I think my emotions and state of mind deserve to be paid attention to.					
5.	I allow my feelings to affect my thoughts.					
6.	I constantly think about my state of mind.					
7.	I often think about my feelings.					
8.	I pay a lot of attention to the way I feel.					
9.	My feelings are clear to me.					
10.	I can usually define my feelings.					
11.	I nearly always know how I feel.					
12.	I usually know how I feel about people.					
13.	I often become aware of my feelings in different situations.					
14.	I can always say how I feel.					
15.	I can sometimes say which emotions I am experiencing.					
16.	I can manage to understand my feelings.					
17.	I usually have an optimistic outlook, although I sometimes feel sad.					
18.	Even when I feel sad, I try to think about pleasant things.					
19.	When I am sad, I think about all life's pleasures.					
20.	I try to have positive thoughts even when I feel bad.					
21.	If I think about things too much and end up complicating them, I try to calm myself down.					
22.	I am concerned about having a good state of mind.					
23.	I have a lot of energy when I feel happy.					
24.	When I am angry, I try to change my state of mind.					

## Section C

### The EPOCH Measure of Adolescent Well-Being Questionnaire

Instruction: Please indicates which statement related on you during this pandemic.

1=Almost never/Not at all like me      2=Sometimes/A little like me

3=Often/Somewhat like me      4=Very Often/Mostly like me

5=Almost Always/Very much like me

No.	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	When something good happens to me, I have people who I like to share the good news with.					
2.	I finish whatever I begin.					
3.	I am optimistic about my future.					
4.	I feel happy.					
5.	When I do an activity, I enjoy it so much that I lose track of time.					
6.	I have a lot of fun.					
7.	I get completely absorbed in what I am doing.					
8.	I love life.					
9.	I keep at my assignments until I am done with it.					
10.	When I have a problem, I have someone who will be there for me.					
11.	I get so involved in activities that I forget about everything else.					
12.	When I am learning something new, I lose track of how much time has passed.					
13.	In uncertain times, I expect the best.					
14.	There are people in my life who really care about me.					
15.	I think good things are going to happen to me.					
16.	I have friends that I really care about.					
17.	Once I make a plan to get something done, I stick to it.					
18.	I believe that things will work out, no matter how difficult they seem.					
19.	I am a hard worker.					
20.	I am a cheerful person.					