

Distance Learning: Emotional Intelligence and Academic Motivation among University Students

Ain Syatur Rodhiah Idros, Ross Azura Zahit & Sheilla Lim Omar Lim
Fakulti Sains Kognitif dan Pembangunan Manusia
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
ainsyahrodhiah@gmail.com

Abstract

The COVID-19 outbreak has changed the way students learn. During the lockdown period, students have to attend online classes and complete continuous assessments via an online platform. Attending long-term open distance learning (ODL) requires high self-motivation and good emotional stability to sustain the learning spirit throughout the semester. Emotional intelligence (EQ) is essential for students to adapt to ODL as the number of psychological distress cases among students shows an alarming rate. Hence, the objective of this study is to determine the emotional intelligence between gender and its relationship with academic motivation among undergraduate students during ODL. A total of 67 undergraduate students participated in this study. The results revealed that there is no difference between emotional intelligence ($p=0.637$), academic motivation ($p=0.240$) and gender differences. However, there is a **significant relationship between emotional intelligence and academic motivation ($p=0.00$) among undergraduate students**. This study proves that EQ plays an important role in a student's academic motivation, especially during this challenging time.

Keywords: academic motivation, emotional intelligence, open distance learning

Background

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is as important as intelligence quotient (IQ). Emotional intelligence (EQ) plays a crucial role in an individual's overall success including health, wellness, and happiness (Cherry, 2020), especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A study by Hashim et al. (2020) on the relationship between self-efficacy, learning motivation and performance in open and distance learning (ODL) activities indicates that MCO imposed challenges among students in higher education institutions. The findings demonstrate that current circumstances affect students' motivation, and hence they were not able to excel and eventually felt left behind in studies.

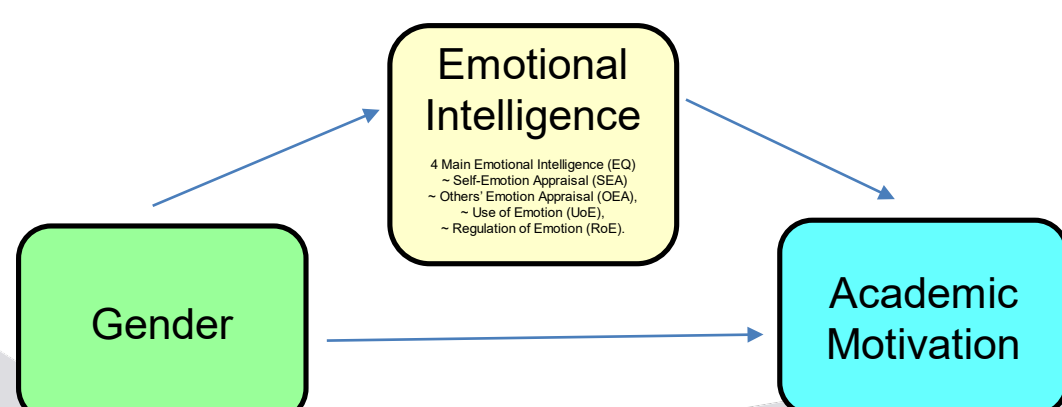
Problem Statement

Students exhibited a low sense of academic motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is due to the lack of structure, drastic change in environment, lack of communication factors, disorganization from the teacher or self, and lack of in-person contact (Nell, Hood & Graff, 2020).

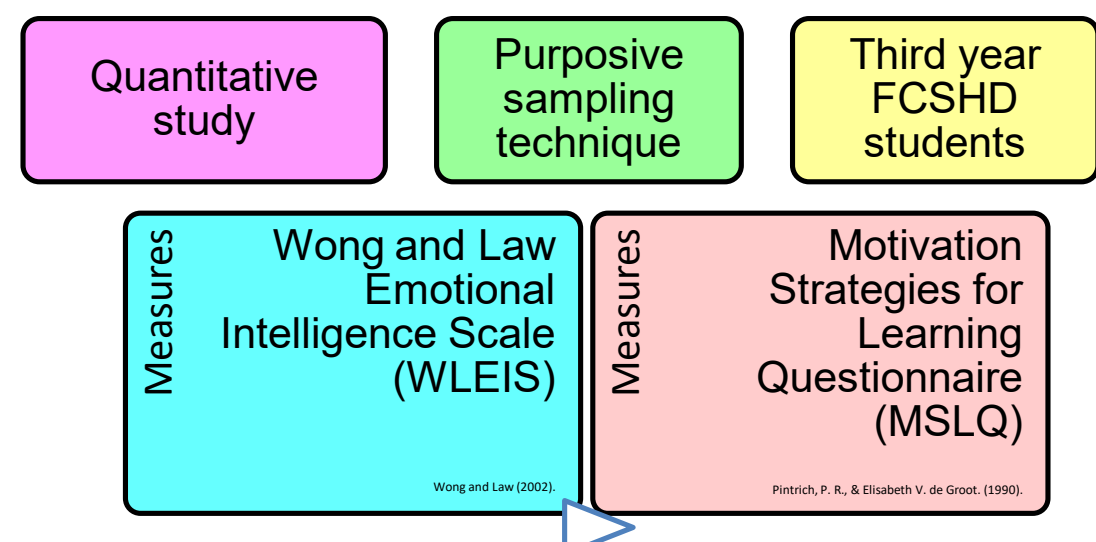
Therefore, this study is aimed to understand undergraduate students' emotional intelligence (EQ) and academic motivation experiencing open and distance learning (ODL) during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Objectives

To determine the emotional intelligence between gender and its relationship with academic motivation among undergraduate students during ODL.



Methodology



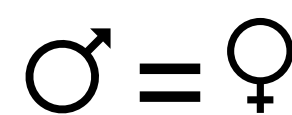
Results

Demographics	n	%
Gender		
Male	50	45.9
Female	59	54.1
Undergraduate Program		
Cognitive Science	45	41.3
Human Resource Development	17	15.6
Psychology	1	0.9
Counselling	16	14.7

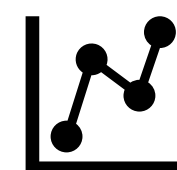
1. No difference between gender and emotional intelligence



2. No difference between gender and academic motivation



3. There is a **significant relationship** between emotional intelligence and academic motivation



Conclusion

Students' emotional intelligence (EQ) may be degraded due to task overload, yet very limited time to complete the tasks. This may impact their academic motivation, hence affecting their overall achievement. This study proves that EQ plays an important role in students' academic motivation, especially during this challenging time.