



Analysis of the Correlation between Gratitude and Emotional Intelligence among University Students

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Abstract

People with a high level of emotional intelligence can keep their feelings under control, both towards other people and towards themselves. As a result, it has been discovered that practicing gratitude can help students improve their emotional intelligence. This research aimed to investigate the connection between being grateful and having high levels of emotional intelligence among students. The investigation utilized a quantitative method and a design based on correlation. This research was carried out with the participation of 91 total students. Two scales were used in the data collection: a 15-item Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Development and Validation of the Islamic Gratitude Scale (IGS-10), created by Ahmad Rusdi in 2021 to measure thankfulness. The analysis of the data showed that gratitude and emotional quotient are positively correlated with one another. This suggests that greater levels of gratitude are connected with greater levels of emotional intelligence; hence, this demonstrates that gratitude can increase students' emotional intelligence and should be emphasized in educational settings.

Keywords: Gratitude, Emotional Intelligence, Students

Introduction

It is not an easy task to be a student because students are expected to fulfill the responsibilities that come along with their role as active learners. At the same time, they are enrolled in a college or university. They begin by going to class, then move on to listening to the content presented by lecturers, completing various assignments, and even following goals set by organizations both on and off campus. Some students' personal lives may be affected as a result of this, as they may gain a great deal of new experience in the academic world due to participating in these activities (Fatmala & Sari, 2022). However, there are times when students begin to experience exhaustion, difficulty maintaining focus, lack of motivation, and emotions that are tough to manage and explode if minor issues cause discomfort, resulting in stress and

even depression because of the numerous circumstances they experienced (Prabowo & Laksmiwati, 2020).

These symptoms can be attributed to the fact that students endure life in various environments that are not ideal for their well-being. This could have an effect on the standard of someone's daily behaviors. At the same time, one is a student at a university, where one indirectly has goals and even demands to satisfy to earn excellent marks and live up to expectations, both for oneself and others, to develop into an intelligent and well-educated person (Prabowo & Laksmiwati, 2020). The conditions those students go through are brought on by a lack of emotional intelligence, which in turn causes disturbances that can potentially affect the activities these students participate in (Nindyati, 2020). According to Difa (2016), it is shown that a person experiences a high level of emotional intelligence if they are able to control their feelings effectively, are able to cope with stress, have a sense of optimism, and refuse to give up despite the prospect of failure or struggles.

Therefore, the greater a student's emotional intelligence level, the less academic stress they will experience. The claims made in the two sources that have been discussed so far may assist in demonstrating how the situations that certain students struggle with might be attributed to having low emotional intelligence. The ability to control the emotions one experiences in regard to both oneself and one's interactions with other people is referred to as emotional intelligence (EQ) (Nindyati, 2020). The sensation of discomfort being alluded to here is an emotion that substantially impacts an individual's ability to process information clearly. For instance, when people are furious, it will disrupt their focus to the point where it can interfere with the decision-making process, which will then be affected by the interference (Takdir, 2017).

Additionally, according to Lestari (2021), emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability of a person to respond to and comprehend the feelings of others. This interpretation of emotional intelligence is based on the research of Sundararajan and Gopichandran. This comprehension can serve as the foundation for a person's thoughts as well as their behaviors. Besides, several factors can have an effect on an individual's emotional intelligence. These factors include the environment of the family, as the family is the person an individual is most likely to become acquainted with and learn emotional management from, as well as factors that are not related to the family, such as those related to society and the educational system (Fauz, 2017).

Students with excellent intelligence and academic abilities yet struggle because of a lack of emotional intelligence may not be uncommon; in fact, it is rather usual to encounter such students. On the basis of this statement, in order for researchers to identify the growth and development of emotions in students, they utilize an emotional intelligence scale constructed by Daniel Goleman. This scale can be measured in several different aspects, including components of acknowledging self-emotions, aspects of managing emotions, aspects of motivating oneself, aspects of controlling other people's emotions, and aspects of building relationships. Based on this statement, researchers use an emotional intelligence scale designed by Daniel Goleman (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

The five components contain indicators such as recognizing and comprehending the emotions one experiences, keeping a person's emotions under control, maintaining a positive outlook, actively listening to the concerns of others, and cooperating with others. According to

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Islam, an individual's level of emotional intelligence is impacted by their level of thankfulness. Both gratitude and emotional intelligence are of tremendous importance to Muslims, and their relationship with one another is integral to forming a Muslim's character and behavior (Karimulloh et al., 2021).

Gratitude, for instance, has been shown to boost emotional intelligence by helping people better manage both good and negative emotions. This is because Islam teaches its followers to control their emotions and act calmly in whatever circumstances arise. This includes coping with unpleasant feelings such as rage or despair as well as regulating pleasant emotions such as being thankful (Karimulloh et al., 2021). Then, as self-control is a necessary component of emotional intelligence, gratitude will assist individuals in overseeing negative feelings such as envy, jealousy, and dissatisfaction because they will feel pleased with what Allah has granted them. Lastly, since empathy is essential to emotional intelligence, gratitude will help individuals connect and empathize with others (Rusdi et al., 2021).

According to the classifications used in Islamic and Western psychology, gratitude can be understood in two different ways. Psychology Within the framework of Islam, the idea of gratitude can be broken down into two types: vertical and horizontal. On the other hand, in Western psychology, thankfulness is typically interpreted in terms of the horizontal dimension (Batoool et al., 2022). As opposed to the Western understanding of gratitude, which mainly focuses on humanist rewards, whereas the Islamic concept of gratitude involves acts of worship and obedience. As a form of religion, gratitude involves expressing "thank you" to people, which may take both formal and social forms. Gratitude may also be demonstrated through acts of service. This is the basis of the concept of gratitude in the Islamic tradition, which can be indicated through sentences (al-shukr bi al-lisan) and practical acts (al-shukr bi al-arkan) (Rusdi et al., 2021).

Furthermore, gratitude is an emotional response and serves as an attitude, a habit, a personality feature, and a noble moral that influences how a person responds or reacts to particular moments. It is undeniable that in Islam, gratitude and emotional intelligence are compatible and reinforce one another (Andeslan & Uyun, 2023). Emotional intelligence can be improved by practicing thankfulness, and practicing gratitude can help one build healthy emotional intelligence, which in turn helps one practice gratitude in daily life and engage with one's social environment in a thoughtful and considerate manner (Dewi & Munirah, 2022). According to the Qur'an, a student of Islam who cultivates an attitude of feelings of gratitude will benefit from a number of benefits, which are outlined in the following verses:

قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي ءَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ

Meaning: "The one who had knowledge of the Book1 said, 'I will bring it to you in the twinkling of an eye.' So when he saw it set near him, he said, 'This is by the grace of my Lord, to test me if I will give thanks or be ungrateful. And whoever gives thanks gives thanks only for his own sake. And whoever is ungrateful [should know that] my Lord is indeed all-sufficient, all-generous.'" (QS. An-Naml: 40)

And,

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

Meaning: “And when your Lord proclaimed, ‘If you are grateful, I will surely enhance you [in blessing], but if you are ungrateful, My punishment is indeed severe.’” (QS. Ibrahim: 7)

Literature Review

According to Kistianingsih and Purwandari (2020), gratitude plays an integral part in a variety of facets of human life, especially the emotional aspect. Having a grateful attitude can help one cultivate pleasant feelings, maintain strong social interactions, and improve their overall well-being. Individuals are able to communicate their joy and appreciation for how they are feeling through the practice of thankfulness (Lestari, 2021). Moreover, persons with high levels of appreciation can better manage their emotions when confronted with disputes and dealings with their surroundings and other people in close proximity (Putri & Rachmawati, 2022). As a result, thankfulness is an effective distraction from unpleasant feelings such as frustration, animosity, and unhappiness.

Research Method

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether or not there is a correlation between the amount of gratitude that people feel and their level of emotional intelligence. A quantitative method and a design based on correlation were both employed in the conduct of this study. This research was carried out with the participation of ninety-one different college students from Universitas Islam Indonesia. A questionnaire was used to collect data, and it consisted of two scales: the Islamic thankfulness Scale Development and Validation (IGS-10), which was designed by Rusdi (2021) to assess the level of thankfulness, and the emotional intelligence scale, which consisted of 15 items. After obtaining the data, they were analyzed using the statistical tools contained within the Jamovi program. These methods included testing for normality and correlation with the help of Spearman's correlation coefficient. The intent of this was to analyze the link that exists between emotional intelligence and gratitude.

Results and Discussion

This research study uses the correlational method to investigate whether or not the two variables under investigation share a meaningful connection. The testing of the hypothesis was accomplished by employing correlation strategies and making use of the Jamovi program. If the value of significance (Sig.) is less than 0.05, this implies a relevant correlation; on the other hand, if the value is greater than 0.05, it is impossible to draw the conclusion that there is a relevant connection.

Table 1: Normality Test

	Gratitude	Emotional intelligence*
N	91	91
Missing	0	0

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Mean	52.5	57.8
Median	52	58
Standard deviation	3.75	5.79
Minimum	43	43
Maximum	60	69
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.975	0.983
Shapiro-Wilk p	0.077	0.278

Based on the findings presented in data table 1 about the normality test, it is possible to conclude that the normality assumption test on the gratitude variable reveals a p-value of 0.077 ($p > 0.05$). As a result, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the data distribution of gratitude items is normal. On the other hand, the normality assumption test performed on the emotional intelligence variable yielded the result of a p-value of 0.278 ($p > 0.05$), demonstrating that the data distribution of emotional intelligence items appears to be normal based on the criteria utilized. Because the p-value of the Shapiro-Wilk test exceeds 0.05, the data associated with these two variables should be considered to be on average.

Table 2: Correlation Test

		Gratitude	Emotional intelligence*
Gratitude	Pearson's r	—	
	df	—	
	p-value	—	
Emotional intelligence*	Pearson's r	0.306	—
	df	89	—
	p-value	0.002	—

Note. H_a is a positive correlation.

The research findings are summarized in Table 2, demonstrating that the Pearson correlation coefficient between gratefulness and emotional intelligence is 0.306. For the purpose of putting the hypothesis to the test, a reference point known as the significance value (Sig.) has been assigned a value of 0.002. It is possible to conclude that there is a significant association between gratitude and emotional intelligence, given that the value of the significance test is less than 0.05. That is, the study's theory has been validated. These findings support an earlier research concept that hypothesized a connection between thankfulness and

emotional quotient, which states that there is a correlation between them. With a correlation power of 0.306, this association indicates a moderately favorable trend, which indicates that a high degree of thankfulness seems to be associated with a substantial degree of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, a lack of gratitude is associated with lower levels of emotional intelligence.

Discussion

This research aims to investigate whether or not there is a connection between gratefulness and emotional intelligence in college students. There is a positive association between the variable of gratitude and the variable of emotional intelligence in students, according to the results of statistical data (both the H_a hypothesis and the H_o hypothesis were accepted), which means that both hypotheses were correct. This demonstrates an essential and beneficial connection between gratitude and emotional intelligence. A student will have a high level of emotional intelligence when they have a high amount of gratitude, and vice versa. According to the findings of the normality test, both variables follow a normal distribution, and there is a statistically significant connection between the two variables. Consequently, there is a considerable positive association between the trait of appreciation and students' emotional intelligence.

The findings of this research are comparable to those of prior research. For example, in a study carried out by Batool (2022), the researchers found that the results demonstrated a highly significant positive association between appreciation and emotional intelligence among medical students attending Nishter Medical College. Another study by Szcześniak (2020) revealed a positive and statistically significant correlation between the extent of one's appreciation and their level of emotional intelligence in a total of 712 participants from the Polish population. The base of emotional intelligence is gratitude, which is empathy. Gratitude derives from the basis of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a talent that is capable of being obtained and strengthened via the process of learning and gaining experience (Nindyati, 2020). It requires a precise and efficient processing of emotional information on the part of the individual. Because of this, the connection between thankfulness and emotional intelligence may be comprehended straightforwardly (Prabowo & Laksmiwati, 2020).

Those with a higher emotional intelligence have a greater capacity, on average, to experience gratitude. As a result, thankfulness is a satisfying emotion that constitutes a crucial component of one's emotional intelligence. Gratitude's role as a mediator can significantly influence the connection between emotional intelligence and happiness (Putri & Rachmawati, 2022). Also, an attitude of thankfulness can lessen the adverse effects of potentially dangerous settings and provide individuals with an essential layer of protection. In accordance with the concept of extending and constructing feelings, it has the potential to enlarge one's perspective as well as serve as the foundation of life. According to Batool (2022), people who show thankfulness tend to receive superior cognitive and emotional support. Besides, feeling grateful can also boost one's drive to act in a manner that is congruent with community, cultural, and social expectations (Szcześniak et al., 2020)

Conclusion

Following an analysis of the available data, it was discovered that there is a significant

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connection between being grateful and having high levels of emotional intelligence. A correlation coefficient 0.306 indicates that this relationship is trending in a positive but not overly so direction. According to the findings of this study, a high degree of thankfulness has been found to have a strong correlation with a high level of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, a lack of gratitude is typically connected with lower levels of emotional intelligence. This research offers empirical evidence to substantiate the relationship, significantly affecting our knowledge of the elements that influence emotional intelligence. The findings can also serve as a foundation for developing interventions or programs that aim to promote thankfulness and emotional intelligence in relevant circumstances. As a result, this study would inspire students to develop a more profound sense of gratitude for the help and support they have received throughout their lives.

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