Resilience and Emotional Intelligence Among Students in Two Schools at Klang Valley Area

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence among high school students and to determine whether there is a significant difference between the level of resilience and emotional intelligence based on demographic factors. The sample was chosen by using random sampling and consisted of 100 students in form four studies from two different secondary schools. Two instruments were used in this study: Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) to determine the level of resilience and The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREIT) to determine the level of emotional intelligence. Cronbach Alpha (α) for CD-RISC and SSREIT were .87 and .76, respectively. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Pearson-r was used to see the relationships, whereas t-test examined the differences of emotional intelligence between boys and girls. The findings showed that students have a moderate level of resilience and emotional intelligence. Besides that, no significant differences in resilience and emotional intelligence were found in terms of school location, gender and streams. However, result showed that there was a significant difference in emotional intelligence among male and female student, \( p =.004 \). There was a significant relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence, \( r = .669, \ p =.001 \). The information from this study can be used by the Ministry of Education, school administration, Guidance and Counseling teachers and parents in order to achieve the nation’s aim to increase human capital development.

Keywords— adolescent; emotional intelligence; Klang Valley; resilience; students

1. Introduction

Adolescents are the most precious asset in the country. However, the involvement of adolescents in misbehavior especially delinquency is often published in the news (Rahman, Ishak, Mahmud, & Amir, 2008). Therefore, by focusing on resilience and emotional intelligence, this study was conducted to see the level of emotional intelligence and endurance of high school students, until enabling them to be involved in the symptoms of misconduct.

According to Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), the rate of adolescents running away from their home is increasing to 4,097 in 2010 (Nazim, Sham, & Hamjah, 2013). Studies show that the incidence is caused by two main factors; the push and pull factor. Rahman and colleagues (2008) mentioned that the adolescents themselves, family and environment form the three major contributing factors to the occurrence of running away from home while the pull factors are divided into two, namely the influence of peers and the community environment (Alavi, Nen, Mohamad, Saron, Ibrahim, & Hoesni, 2014). Based on the previous studies, this study was conducted to test the psychological level of teenage through examining the relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence.

A. Emotional Intelligence

In general, intelligence is defined as the perfection of the mind to think and understand, in other words, defined as cleverness, resourcefulness and ingenuity (Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2015). Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to control the emotions of self and others, to distinguish between the emotions and to use that understanding to monitor the thoughts and actions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008). Therefore, this study defines emotional intelligence as the ability to self-regulate emotions, understand it, try to understand the emotions of others and then use that understanding to control self-thoughts and self-behavior.
The first model produced is Goleman's model (1995), which examines the model of individual emotional intelligence, competencies in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills. According to Goleman (1995) emotional intelligence requires ability, skill or competence in two aspects: personal and social. Four constructs important in emotional intelligence forwarded by him are self-control, motivation or self-awareness, emotional management and social skills. Most constructs focus on person-centered which is more to interpersonal skills.

In contrast, the model proposed by Bar-On (2000) was developed to test cognitive skills but not to predict success in life. The components of this model are intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood state. Each of these areas is further divided to present fifteen specific skills of emotional intelligence (Sulaiman, 2014).

The new model proposed by Mayer and colleagues (2008), also known as Four Branches Model (Four Branch Emotional Intelligence) has been changed to the word of skills abilities. According to Mayer and colleagues (2008), emotional intelligence can be divided into four branches namely identifying or feeling the emotion, the emotions, understanding emotions and emotional management. This model forms the emotional intelligence hierarchy in which a person shall meet the basic level in advance of identifying emotions before managing emotions effectively.

Based on the above three models, it was found that the model proposed by Mayer and colleagues (2008) was more systematic and organized. This is because it has a hierarchy to be mastered at a basic level in advance to ensuring a person's emotional intelligence that can be applied in everyday life. This model also has advantages over the two earlier models as it focusses the development of emotional self and the effectiveness of it interacting with other people rather than on the emotional development of self and others (Ferguson & Austin, 2010).

### B. Resilience

Endurance is defined as one's ability to overcome the negative elements of the environment and the individual's ability to bounce back after facing hardship in life.

According to Perez, Espinoza, Ramos, Coronado, and Cortes (2009), resilience is a process to overcome the negative effects when the environment poses a risk, the ability to deal with traumatic experiences and avoid the negative effects of stress experienced. Thus, this is the definition that will be used by researchers in this study, namely that endurance is the ability of individuals to overcome barriers of negative external factors and the ability for a person to regain its footing after going through a painful experience.

Resilience theory provides a conceptual framework for considering the strength-based approach to understanding the child and adolescent development. In this theory, the concept of scaffolding is emphasized in order to understand and learn how teenagers grow into mentally healthy adults even when exposed to a risky environment (Masten, Cutuli, Herbers, & Reed, 2007). This theory includes several models that explain how the factors can be overcome, protect or prevent adolescents from the negative effects of risk (Luth, 2006; Masten et al., 2007). According to Fregus and Zimmerman (2005), there are three general classes, namely compensation model, protection and challenges.

### 2. Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach where questionnaires were administered to obtain primary data in the study. Quantitative methods were used in carrying out this study in order to obtain the data from 100 secondary students as respondents. The data were collected using sampling methods from some of the students in two different schools in Klang Valley. Participants had to be 16 years old, in form four and a full-time student at the school.

The instrument being used in this study is an instrument that was modified from the set of The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREIT: Ng, Wang, Kim, & Bodenhorn, 2010) and Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC: Dong, Nelson, Shah- Haque Khan, and Ablah, 2013). Both sets of questions were combined to form a new set of questionnaires that were used to collect research data.

The researchers conducted a pilot study with a number of students in various schools, involving 30 people to look at the appropriateness of the set of questions with the age of students and the appropriateness of the language used. This pilot study shows high values of Cronbach’s Alpha for the resilience (α = .87) and emotional intelligence (α = .76) as shown in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data obtained were then analyzed by computer using SPSS version 20.0 Windows. Percentage and frequency were used to describe the location of the school, gender, and race. Descriptive analysis, t-test and correlation were computed to see the relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence of students.

### 3. Results

Table 2 shows the number and percentage distribution of the sample according to the location of the school, gender, race and academic streams. Overall, the number of
respondents was represented by 50 students from each school made up of 48 boys and 52 girls.

Table 2. The sample distribution by School Location, Gender, Academic stream, and the Race (N = 100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Suburbs area</th>
<th>Urban area</th>
<th>Total n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic stream</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the level of resilience and emotional intelligence of students in the two schools studied. Results showed that the mean of the resilience of students in urban school (M = 3.95, SD = .46) higher than the mean indicated for students in suburbs school (M = 3.81, SD = .50). Even though urban school have a higher mean value than the suburb’s school, both schools still at the medium level of resilience and emotional intelligence.

Table 3. Level of Resilience and Emotional Intelligence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Rural area</th>
<th>Urban area</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-tests were used to see whether there were any significant differences by school location, gender and academic stream. Based on the results obtained, it was found that there was no significant difference in mean scores of resistances by school location, gender and academic stream, all ps > 0.05.

In contrast, mean scores for emotional intelligence of males (M = 3.71, SD = .51) was lower than female students (M = 3.87, SD = .37). The t-test results showed that the mean score are differs significantly (t (98) = 1.74, p = .004), with a mean difference of 0.16. This shows there is a significant difference between emotional intelligence scores of male and female. These findings can be seen more clearly in Table 4.

Table 4. The mean scores for Resilience and Emotional Intelligence by School Location, Gender, and the Academic stream

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>School location</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Suburbs</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation between resilience and emotional intelligence was significant at .669, p<.001. This shows that the resilience and emotional intelligence has a strong positive significant relationship. This is also illustrated in Figure 1. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that the resilience will affect a person’s emotional intelligence. Therefore, if the person has high resilience, then they will also have high emotional intelligence.

Table 5. Correlation between Resilience and Emotional Intelligence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Resilience</th>
<th>Emotional intelligence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>.669**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>.669**</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *significant at level 0.01

Figure 1. Resilience and Emotional Intelligence Scatter plot

4. Discussion

The results showed that students in both schools have a medium level of resilience and emotional intelligence. Only a small number of students have low resilience and emotional intelligence level. Medium level of resilience and emotional intelligence for the student at both schools reflects that student in these school are able to avoid negative elements, besides being able to bounce back when faced with challenges and obstacles. This result is
similar to that of Fleming and Ledogar (2008) who said that people taking the challenge as an impetus to do something new have high resilience and are able to rise again if there is a hitch.

Since the value of \( p = .15 \) greater than 0.05, the results showed no significant difference in resilience between males (M = 3.86) and females (M = 3.91). Both groups of students showed similar mean scores which are at a moderate level. A study conducted by Jowkar and Noorafshan (2011) with 700 secondary school students consisting of 353 female students and 347 male students also found the similar results. It would appear that gender is not a factor in determining the degree of resilience of youth but other factors especially environment give a huge effect in individual resilience. According to Jowkar and Noorafshan (2011), the resilience will increase if students have strong protective factors. A protective factor in a family member or a role model, which affected directly and indirectly to increase resilience (Parinyaphol & Chongrucks, 2008).

The t-test results showed that the mean emotional intelligence score of men and women differ significantly (t (98) = 1.74, p = .004), with a mean difference of 0.16. The results showed that there are significant differences in the mean scores of emotional intelligence between male and female students. The study found that girls' emotional intelligence level higher than male students. This finding is contrary to a study conducted by Hamidah Sulaiman (2013) to over 998 students in eight schools in Malaysia, including 402 boys and 596 girls found that there were no significant differences in emotional intelligence by gender.

Similarly, a study by Petrides and Furnham (2000) with teenagers in a British University found that males and females did not differ in their level of emotional intelligence. This finding is also consistent with the findings of other studies such as Chong, Zamri Mahmood and Hamidah Yamat (2013) and Roshaiza Abdul Wahab, (2002). The findings showed that there is no difference on emotional intelligence between boys and girls.

According to Chong and colleagues (2013), the level of emotional intelligence of a student is determined by the family upbringing and this will give positive impact on welfare and behavior of a child while in school. This statement was also supported by a study conducted by Hamidah Sulaiman (2013), which showed that the style of upbringing parents will influence the level of emotional intelligence of their children. So, we can conclude here that girls are likely to have higher levels of emotional intelligence than boys due to their closeness with their family member. For that reason, the female students have a higher sense of empathy and understanding than male students.

The study found that there was no difference in the level of resilience and emotional intelligence among students at the two schools studied. This may be because the two schools are located in a developing area which has a conducive setting and good infrastructure facilities.

According to Hamidah Sulaiman (2013), schools that are equipped with facilities and therapeutic environment are important to develop student potential from every aspect such as cognitive and affective.

Similarly, Mohd Anuar Abdul Rahman and Norshabri Abdul Hamid (2011) in their study of a group of students at the Faculty of Education, found that the environment influenced the psychology of students in the sense that even comfortable environment can also shape students' character. Therefore, to ensure the resilience and emotional intelligence of students remained at a high level, the administration needs to provide a complete infrastructure to be accompanied by a conducive environment so that students can build resilience and their emotional intelligence.

The study found that resilience has a significant relationship with emotional intelligence. The findings indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence. In another study, Dady Sugiaro (2013) also found that emotional intelligence was related to the resilience of students.

Similarly, Foumany and Salehi (2015) found that the resilience had a positive relationship with emotional intelligence. This finding is also consistent with the results of a study conducted by Keshetegar and Jenaabadi (2015), with a total number of 188 female students, while another 166 men in Zabol University.

According to Mayer and colleagues (2008), emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor and control their own feelings and others, and use those feelings to control your thoughts and actions. So, if an individual has a high emotional intelligence, they will be able to overcome various problems or opposition that appears in their life. This will indirectly increase resilience in a person. Therefore, it is not surprising that this study has a positive relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence as two aspects of the interplay between each other.

5. Conclusions

This research studied resilience and emotional intelligence among students and sought to examine the relationship between two constructs. This study shows that there is a relationship between resilience and emotional intelligence and the level of resilience and emotional intelligence of students is at the moderate level. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the harmonious environment greatly influences the development of resilience and emotional intelligence of adolescents.

This study can help parent to improve their parenting skills and become a good role model to their children to build up resilience and emotional intelligence among their children. Moreover, it also provided opportunities for teachers and counselors in schools to consider programs to enhance the resilience and emotional intelligence involving students. From this study, teachers can build intervention and modules that are appropriate to the needs.
of students to help them to improve their resilience and emotional intelligence. In addition, the school administration can also make the school environment as an attractive place to build self-esteem among students. A conducive and comfortable school environment helps students to build their immunity and their emotional intelligence.

This study was carried out in 2016 only and form three and form five students could not be directly involved in any research collecting data because they will sit for the public examination at the end of the year. Samples were randomly selected from two secondary schools in the Klang Valley which are insufficient to represent the overall emotional intelligence and resilience of youth in Malaysia.

Therefore, the researchers suggest that future studies involving a greater number of respondents accounting for various types of school, district, county and state so that a more accurate picture of endurance and overall emotional intelligence of students and young people, in particular, can be identified. The location may be extended to urban, suburban and rural areas to see whether there are differences in the level of resilience and emotional intelligence.

Next, the researchers suggested that further research be carried out to look at the role of parents and in order improve the level of resilience and emotional intelligence of students. Further studies can also be conducted using other methods such as qualitative and quantitative methods or mixed models method to strengthen the findings in order to obtain valid and accurate results.

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References


