

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

The objective of this report was to see if there was a correlation between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension achievement among the eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Kayugung. A correlational research design was utilized. Purposive sampling was applied to choose 140 students for the study. A questionnaire was utilized to check students' emotional intelligence and a writing test in the form of multiple-choice about recount text was employed to measure students' reading achievement. Before administering the test to the samples, the validity and reliability of the test were assessed on non-sample students at SMPN 2 Kayugung. The Pearson Product Moment was used to examine the data. The correlation coefficient was found to be 0.240 based on the results at a p-value of 0.05. It was found that r-obtained (0.240) was higher than r-table (0.166). It meant that students' emotional intelligence and reading comprehension had a positive relationship. Students who had good emotional intelligence had better reading achievement.

Keywords: *correlation, emotional intelligence, reading comprehension, correlation*

INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence (EI) influences the success of life and education; as a result, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is used to increase language competency in educational institutions. Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been used in various disciplines, including education, according to Farooq (2014: 6). Emotional intelligence is being used in school for linguistic competence in foreign language learning. Emotional Intelligence (EI) aids in the development of understanding skills when learning a language. Emotional Intelligence (EI) corresponds with comprehension proficiency, according to Fani (2015: 46) since studying a language is a conversational job in world, and the capability to speak and delve a speech, as well as observing and controlling emotions, plays a vital role.

Jannah, Susanti, and Benni (2016: 34) state that learners that excel in school have good scores since they are usually attentive and attend throughout class hours. Students who can effectively regulate their Emotional Intelligence (EI) will be successful to acquire and reaching advance success (Erasmus, 2013: 13). The reason of these learners is a manifestation of their high Emotional Intelligence (EI). In short, Emotional Intelligence (EI) promotes students' capability to control their emotions, which is linked to excellent students' analyzing an understanding.

Furthermore, a learner with high Emotional Intelligence (EI) can manage their affects and analyze the text effectively. The positive emotions influence learning by affecting students' attention, motivation, the use of learning strategies and self-regulation of learning including in reading comprehension which involves emotional processing (Bryant, 2017: 6-7). In other words, many potential aspects applied during reading activities can be explored and enhanced if the readers are able to positively optimize their emotions. As the result, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is important in reading because it brings together the fields of emotions and intelligence by viewing emotions as useful sources of information that help one to make sense (Grewal, 2015: 281). In short, Emotional Intelligence (EI) represents abilities that combine intelligence and emotion to enhance thought and reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension, according to Kirby (2014: 1), is the practice of a talent that originated from previous goals (hearing or speech comprehensive) to a new kind of information. It means that the reader should carefully study the text, take into account the concepts, goals, evaluative description, and a method of comprehension to extract ideas from the text based on the writer's context.

When it comes to reading comprehension and Emotional Intelligence (EI), certain studies demonstrate that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has a link to students' reading comprehension achievement. Firdaus (2017: 26) discovered an absolute significant link between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and reading comprehension, indicating Emotional Intelligence (EI) is beneficial in studying English, particularly reading comprehension. Sari, Suwarno, and Sofyan (2018: 28) also add that students' emotional intelligence scores and their English achievement scores had correlated. It can be clarified that EI contributes to learners' better performance of reading comprehension achievement. This could be progressed regarding the psychological records of the way toward understanding perception, which considers it as including both lower level and higher level. Higher level processing deals with a reader's ability in assembling clause-level information into a text model of their own understanding and is related to their potential to build an interpretation of the text that is consistent with their goals, attitudes, and background knowledge (Firdaus, 2017: 55). Thus, it is very expected for learners to reach their higher level of emotional intelligence so that they can grasp the meaning, concepts, or other general/specific information they need to have from the text they read. Moreover, Emotional Intelligence has a correlation with comprehension proficiency because learning a language is a communicative task in nature, and the ability to communicate and learn a language, knowing emotions, and being able to control them plays a significant role (Fani, 2015: 63). It can be stated that the student with a superior degree of emotional intelligence is likely to improve their reading comprehension. In other words, those with greater levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to be enthusiastic about learning a second language.

As a whole, it is necessary to know a link between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension for helping students to improve their academic achievement. Here, the correlation of EI and reading comprehension were further investigated in the field of English language education at junior high school context especially in learning one of English text genres namely recount text. Recount text describes events in a chronological order, to describe the events words which link events in time can be used, such as next, later, when, then, after, before, first (Suwarni, Eripuddin, & Niati, 2016: 5). The aim of the text is retell the past event or to tell someone's experience in chronological order. The text is used to inform or to entertain the reader by telling the writer's experiences or events in the past.

Afterall, this research was intended to find the correlation between emotional intelligence and reading comprehension achievement among eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Kayugung.

METHODOLOGY

The correlation study was applied in this research. Correlational studies, according to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012: 331), look at the possibility of links between only two variables, despite the fact that investigations of more than two variables are widespread. The variables in this study was students' Emotional Intelligence and students' Reading Comprehension Achievement.

The participants involved were SMPN 2 Kayugung eighth-grade students. The purposive sampling method was employed. As a result, some sample criteria were developed, such as an average English class score of 80 and the usage of a mobile phone to access the test. As a result, five of the six classes were chosen as the study's sample since they satisfied the criteria. A questionnaire and reading comprehension test were employed to gain data. The questionnaire was first used as a tool to collect information on emotional intelligence. The questionnaire was developed from Yusoff, et al. (2010) and consisted of 46 statements with five alternative responses: "Not like me" (number 0), "A little like me" (number 1), "Quite like me" (number 2), "A lot like me" (number 3), and "Totally like me" (number 4). (number 4). Second, a reading test was given to students to obtain their reading score.

This study used a correlational research strategy to discover the answer to the study's objectives. The 'Likert Scale' was used to assess learners' emotional intelligence. Meanwhile, a percentage analysis was used to assess the reading test. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was utilized to check a relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their reading comprehension achievement. To check correlation strength, the index of correlation suggested by Sugiyono (2015: 257) was applied. See Table 1.

Table 1. Index of Correlation

The <i>r</i> score scale	Interpretation of <i>r</i> score
0.20 - 0.399	Low
0.00 - 0.199	Very low
0.40 - 0.599	Medium
0.60 - 0.799	Strong
0.80 – 1.000	Very strong

RESULT/ FINDINGS

1. The Result of Questionnaire

The eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kayuagung from five classes were given a questionnaire. The USMEQ-i questionnaire had 46 items and was as per seven domains of emotional intelligence and the faking index (which analyzes respondents' inclination to overrate themselves). The student's emotional intelligence had the greatest score of 0.61 and the lowest score of 0.14. See Table 2.

Table.2. Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
USMEQ-i	140	.47	.14	.61	44.20	.31
Valid N	140					

According to the descriptive statistics above, USMEQ-i had a range score of 0.47, a minimum score of 0.14, and a maximum score of 0.61. Meanwhile, the students' emotional intelligence score as a whole was 44.20, with a mean of 0.31. The eighth-grade learners' emotional intelligence was low, as demonstrated by their mean score (0.31). In addition, all students had low emotional intelligence; 0 -1.20. It implied that there were no students in the high and ordinary emotional intelligence categories.

2. The Result of Reading Comprehension Test

Students' reading comprehension score ranged from 100 to 4, with 100 being the highest and 4 being the lowest. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Reading Comprehension Test

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Reading Test	140	96	4	100	38.97
Valid N	140				

Table 3 shows that the reading comprehension score range was 96, with a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 100. In the meantime, the average reading

comprehension score was 38.97. The average score (38.97) revealed that the eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Kayuagung had poor reading comprehension.

In terms of students' score distribution, it was found that 2 (1%) students were in the very good category, 4 (3%) students were in a good category, 5 (4%) students were in the average category, and 129 (92%) students were in a low category.

3. The Statistical Analysis

The result showed that r -obtained was 0.240, r -table 0.166, and the level of probability (p) significance was 0.004. Since r -obtained was higher than r -table at $p < 0.05$, it indicated a significant correlation between students' emotional intelligence and their reading comprehension. See Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation between Students' Emotional Intelligence and their Reading Comprehension

		Emotional Intelligence	Reading Score
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson	1	.240**
	CorrelationSig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	140	140
Reading Score	Pearson	.240**	1
	CorrelationSig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	140	140

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

From the questionnaire, it was known that all eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Kayuagung had low emotional intelligence. It could be seen from a total of 140 students, 140 students (100%) have a low category of emotional intelligence. Students who had a low level of emotional intelligence were less able to accept, assess, and manage their emotions towards their surroundings. People usually with emotional intelligence have difficulty concentrating and lack the confidence to display their ability which is in line with Mehrad, Halimatussadiah, Redzuan, and Abdullah (2015: 12). In fact, the lack or low level of emotional intelligence aspects gives a bad influence on someone's attitude and response at education system and decreases the quantity of its output. The availability of this emotion is thought as a basis motivator that conducts person action, reaction, attitude, and relationship (Bahadori, 2012: 81).

The result indicated that emotional intelligence correlated with reading comprehension of the eighth graders of SMPN 2 Kayuagung ($r = 0.04$ at $p < 0.05$). The correlation was significant which probably signified grade of students' emotional

intelligence tended to improve when students' reading comprehension score improve. It was concluded that students' emotional intelligence had a link to how they performed on the reading comprehension test, such as how they built interest, promoted motivation, and activated there was to finish the test even though their abilities were insufficient.

Furthermore, the index of correlation was examined using the *r*-value score scale. The index of correlation was regarded poor because the resulting *r*-value was 0.240 and was placed at a score scale ranging from 0.20 to 0.399. It was discovered that there was a substantial correlation between eighth-grade students' emotional intelligence and reading comprehension achievement at SMP Negeri 2 Kayuagung.

CONCLUSION

The findings showed *r*-obtained (0.240) was higher than *r*-table (0.166) at the significant level of $p < 0.05$ that indicated a significant correlation between students' emotional intelligence and their reading comprehension. Students who had low emotional intelligence were less confident and had difficulties in making decisions, according to the findings. Academic success would increase and social interaction would improve for students with high emotional intelligence. Consequently, students who have upper degrees of emotional intelligence showed a better predisposition for sympathetic perspective-taking, cooperating with others, building affectionate and more fulfilling relationships, and overall social skills.

The research findings could give fruitful contributions for English teachers, learners, and other researchers. First, by knowing the correlation between EI and reading comprehension, English teachers could create some classroom reading activities in order to optimize students' Emotional Intelligence that would lead to a success of achieving the goals of teaching and learning. Next, the learners would realize to foster their emotional intelligence while experiencing reading activities during the class. As the consequences, they would be more aware, explore, and improve their emotional intelligence in the English learning process to obtain better achievements. Eventually, for other researchers; this research would be one of the sources of information and reference for further researches to improve the quality of learning. Besides, high emotional intelligence could affect success in learning and life.

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