

The Differences in Emotional Competence Between Local Students and Migrant Students

Fitria Erma Megawati
University of Muhammadiyah Malang
Fitria.megawati.fe@gmail.com

Ika Wulandari
University of Muhammadiyah Malang
Ikawulandari167@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The relation between local students and migrant students often results in prejudice and segregation caused by a lack of understanding of each other's emotions. This study aims to compare the emotional competence of adolescents with the status of local and migrants' students in the city of Malang, Indonesia. Sixty local students and forty-eight migrant students in undergraduate programs aged between 18-22 years old were recruited using non-probability sampling techniques. The study found that there were no differences in emotional competence between local students and migrant students ($sig. > .05$) from the results of the TWO-WAY-ANOVA test. The results were obtained due to cultural factors, where most of the migrant students had the same cultural background as local students, which is Javanese culture. Further research is recommended to investigate student emotional competencies associated with acculturation or participant adaptability.*

Keywords: *emotional competence, local students, migrant students*

Introduction

Population mobility in Indonesia is increasing every year. Migration to other regions is divided into two separate categories, lifetime migrants and resistant migrants. In accordance with the 2017 population and labor mobility statistics survey (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2017), about 562,672 people become inter-island resident migrants who migrated to Java. The quality of education is one of the reasons for Indonesians to move within or between islands. As a consequence, it increases the number of first-year students by 1.032.245 in state and private universities in Java (Ristekdikti, 2018).

Concurrently, the Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education (Ristekdikti) (2018) conducted a survey with detailed findings. It was found that the number of freshmen in East Java (228.702) was lower than Jakarta 286.205. However, it was higher than Yogyakarta, West Java, Central Java, and Banten. The various regional background of freshmen in Java, not only brings knowledge from the previous education level but also the original cultural background. The acculturation of culture has several implications for the freshmen.

In terms of age, the majority of freshmen are adolescents. They are required to adjust to new norms, especially how to communicate and how to behave. It makes them prone to culture shock. According to Saarni (2007), the emotional competence concept assumes that emotional development is influenced by interactions between humans and ethno-psychological ecology (culture and social world). Emotional competence is a social construct that encompasses two aspects, different meanings and different cultures (Saarni, 1999). It has three different concepts, namely knowledge, ability, and trait (Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcaldy, & Thomé, 2000). Emotional competence is

also considered as intrapersonal and interpersonal information about social affection (Brasseur, Grégoire, Bourdu, & Mikolajczak, 2013).

Emotional competence is an important aspect to understand the emotion itself and other people related to the social environment. According to Lau and Wu (2012), individuals can interpret several emotional stimuli through various stages of development. Lack of emotional competence may bring difficulties in intra culture and/or inter culture communication (Moreno-Manso, García-Baamonde, Guerrero-Barona, & Pozueco-Romero, 2017). Adolescents are exposed to their own cultures and other cultures (Lau & Wu, 2012). Individuals who have emotional competence can affect the quality of intercultural relations (Min & Takai, 2018).

Adolescents are aware of the variety of situations that evoke emotions and try to respond to them properly (Lau & Wu, 2012). They also learn how to develop desirable coping strategies by increasing maturity and the influence of wider social interactions. Although, their well-being tends to decrease in early to middle adolescence and reach the lowest point at the age of 16 (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003). Referring to this phenomenon, emotional competence is a good predictor of subjective well-being (Zeidner & Olnick-Shemesh, 2010).

Individuals with high emotional awareness have a higher probability of having a valuable sense of subjective well-being. Zeidner & Olnick-Shemesh (2010) summarizes four reasons: first, individuals who understand their emotions more are able to control and contribute to higher levels of well-being. Second, individuals who have emotional competence are assumed to have wider social networks and are able to show better-coping strategies. Third, the interpretation of information generated by emotion and environment lead to valuable subjective well-being.

Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcaldy, and Thomé (2000) found three consequences of emotional competence in adolescents, such as the ability to manage their own emotions, subjective well-being, and adaptive endurance although their well-being tends to decrease in early to middle adolescence and reach its lowest point at the age of 16 (Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter, 2003). Emotional competence can predict the subjective well-being of individuals (Zeidner & Olnick-Shemesh, 2010). When facing challenges in understanding emotional change (Garner, 2010), individuals are required to raise their awareness based on consideration of cultural and social norms (Lau & Wu, 2012).

Cross-cultural research conducted by Min, Islam, Wang, & Takai (2018) combined various cultures into one, namely eastern culture. Its distinguishing characteristics are the individuals are more independent, especially in emotional competence. From a cross-cultural perspective, emotional competence influences basic interpersonal relations between Asian countries such as Myanmar, Japan, China, and Bangladesh. Cultural differences in emotional competence include the quality of relationships, such as friendships, romantic partners, and family members. Inglehart-Welzel from World Values Survey found that Japan is the only country that has high secular-relational and self-expression values among Asian countries. Individuals who live in Southeast Asia tend to be more collective than individuals in East Asia.

Individuals have different emotional competencies. These differences give the uniqueness among individuals. Emotional competence has three concepts: knowledge, ability, and characteristic (Mikolajczak, 2009; Mikolajczak, Petrides, Coumans, & Luminet, 2009). Emotional competence can be defined as the way of individuals in identifying, expressing, understanding, regulating, and using their emotions in terms of interpersonal and intrapersonal (Brasseur et al., 2013; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mikolajczak, 2009; Saarni, 1999). Emotional competence consists of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills in an appropriate time and manner (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 1999).

Lau and Wu (2012) stated that different attachment patterns might impact the development of emotional competencies from infancy to adulthood. A safe environment provided by caregivers leads to effective emotional regulation in children. If children's transitions are not properly supported, they are more vulnerable to develop hyperactive and inactive coping strategies (Colle & Del Giudice, 2011). Therefore, children who grow up in stable tend to have better involvement and problem-solving strategy (Lau & Wu, 2012).

The emotional competency model was replicated from four competencies suggested by Mayer and Salovey, but they separated identification from emotional expression due to alexithymia research

showed that those dimensions were different (Mikolajczak, 2009). The emotional competency model distinguishes intrapersonal from interpersonal aspects on each dimension. This model consists of five core competencies, they are: (a) identifying: ability to feel and identify emotions, (b) expressing: ability to express emotion in an appropriate way, (c) understanding: ability to understand the causes and consequences of emotions and distinguish the activating factors, (d) regulating: ability to regulate and suppress inappropriate emotions, (e) using: ability to use emotions to increase reflection, decision making, and action. From the components mentioned above, it can be concluded that emotional competence is the ability to identify, express, understand, regulate, and use emotions in intrapersonal and interpersonal contexts.

Students who came from outside Malang may experience culture shock when they study in one of the universities in Malang. As migrant students, they bring different habits and cultures that need to be adjusted with the current environment. Communication barriers may lead to prejudice, negative stereotypes, and segregation. Therefore, this study aims to compare the emotional competence of local students and migrant students in Malang. The theoretical benefits of this study are to provide empirical information about emotional competence in adolescents, especially local students and migrant students. Furthermore, the practical benefits of this study are understanding and developing emotional competence to assist freshmen in the learning and socialization process.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this study are as follows:

- Ha: There is a difference in emotional competence between local and migrant students in Malang.
- H0: There is no difference in emotional competence between local and migrant students in Malang.

Methods

Subjects

University students aged 18-22 years old participated in this study. There were two subject criteria; they were local university students (from Malang) who were studying in one of universities in Malang and students from outside Malang who were studying in one of Universities in Malang. The sampling technique was non-probability sampling. From this step, researcher collected 60 local students and 48 migrant students.

Measurement

Emotional competence was measured using Emotional Profile developed by Brasseur et al. (2013). It consisted of 50 items and two dimensions, namely intrapersonal and interpersonal. Each dimension had five core components, namely identification, compliance, expression, regulation, and utilization. The researcher used 34 items that met the discriminatory power minimum criteria (≥ 0.25). The reliability of the PEC was estimated by using Cronbach's Alpha. This estimation showed that the reliability of the

interpersonal dimension was 0.622, the reliability of interpersonal dimension was 0.750, and the stratified alpha reliability was 0.872. Five-point Likert scale ranging from SS (Strongly Agree), S (Agree), N (Neutral), TS (Disagree), STS (Strongly Disagree) was used in this study. Data obtained through PEC will be analyzed using Two-Way ANOVA with SPSS ver. 22.

Procedure

The researcher prepared and developed blueprints as a reference for the research instrument. Afterward, the researcher conducted a pilot study to three subjects, then propagated and distributed them to more subjects. Data were collected through offline questionnaire and google form distributed online using social media.

Results

This study used a Two-way ANOVA technic calculated by using SPSS version 22 for hypotheses testing. The result of hypotheses testing would show the difference in emotional competence between local and migrant students in Malang.

The results in table 1 showed that the average score of emotional competence in the local student group was 116.43 with $SD=12.333$, whereas the average score of emotional competence in the migrant student group was 118.15 with $SD=11.007$. The average score of emotional competence from both groups was 117.19 with $SD=11.740$.

The average score of interpersonal dimensions was 45.75 and $SD=5.086$, while the average score of interpersonal dimensions was 71.44 and the standard deviation was 117.19. The homogeneity analysis showed $sig. 0.693 > 0.05$. In other words, the data were not heterogeneous. The results obtained from intrapersonal contributions were $0.001 < 0.007$ contributions from interpersonal on local students and migrant students. Thus, it can be concluded that there was no difference in emotional competence between local students and migrant students with $F = 0.565$ and $sig. 0.454 > 0.05$ with a contribution of 0.5%. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The results proved that there were no significant differences in emotional competence between local students and migrant students, but the interpersonal dimension had bigger contribution than intrapersonal dimension. Generally, eastern people have higher level of collectivity than westerns. It makes them tend to form interdependent identities or personalities. The collectivity of students who are studying in Java is based on the values of harmony and respect as the foundation of local students and migrant students in establishing relationships.

Harmony and respect teach them to not looking the differences, trying to care for each other and maintain harmony and prioritize togetherness (Geertz, 1983; Lestari & Faturochman, 2018; Magnis-Suseno, 2006; Mulder, 1984). They try to maintain togetherness and harmony to avoid confrontation or by not solving

problems directly. In addition, respect for other people especially those with different cultural or regional backgrounds, and does not emphasize social status or strata. This is based on the desire to respect each other's feelings, opinions, and respect or *ngajeni* fellow students.

Research conducted by Min et al (2018) explained that the main effects on gender in intrapersonal emotional competence (including: expression, regulation of emotions, and understanding emotions), and interpersonal emotional competence (including: identification, regulation, and utilization emotions) in Asian countries such as Myanmar, Japan, China and Bangladesh. The differences in Asian countries reflect collective and individualist personalities.

In the interpersonal dimension of emotional competence, in intrapersonal emotional competence, male students had higher emotional regulation than female students. It is in line with the previous study conducted by Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcaldy, and Thomé (2000) and Brasseur et al. (2013). The results of other studies reinforce the findings that gender has a contribution in broad context (Kwon, Yoon, Joormann, & Kwon, 2013), and men use strategies to use their emotions to influence others (Kray & Thompson, 2004).

In the intrapersonal dimension of emotional competence, male students have higher emotional regulation than female students. It is in accordance with the previous studies conducted by Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcaldy, and Thomé (2000) and Brasseur et al. (2013). These results reinforce other findings related gender in broader context (Kwon et al., 2013), and male students use strategies to use their emotions to influence others. Males are more precise in detecting the emotional meaning of verbal cues (Hall, 1978, 1984; Hall, Carter, & Horgan, 2000), better in assessing other people's emotions from nonverbal cues and more effective and precise in understanding their emotions. On the other hand, females are more sensitive to others as they pay more attention to other people's gestures and have skills in breaking cues. In short, they are better at interpreting the emotions of others (Briton & Hall, 1995). In social networks, most Japanese participants responded that they did not have friends at work, contrary to what was seen in Philippines in the International Social Survey Program. Min and Takai (2017) stated that Asian countries have different relational values.

Historically, emotional competence has been considered as a universal cross-cultural concept, but nowadays it is focused on emotional competence as a concept that is culturally defined (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2003; Matsumoto & Hwang, 2012). Emotional competence is different from the function of a person's value, including the power and status of social relations. Recent conceptions of Asian culture discuss why and how various interpersonal relationships are formed, developed, and merged (Ho, 1998). Other studies have shown the results that the

habit of combining different cultural groups into one Eastern category or collectivist has been suggested because they appear to have different emotional competence features and arrange a variety of regional cultures.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic Result

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation | Variance |
|--------------------|-----|---------|---------|--------|----------------|----------|
| EC Intrapersonal | 108 | 30 | 60 | 45.75 | 5.086 | 25.871 |
| EC Interpersonal | 108 | 53 | 88 | 71.44 | 7.781 | 60.548 |
| EC Total | 108 | 84 | 143 | 117.19 | 11.740 | 137.822 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 108 | | | | | |

They also discovered the cultural differences of the ten cores of emotional competencies, which showed that Asian cultures varied in their emotional competence features, including two dimensions, intrapersonal and interpersonal. Each dimension consisted of identification, understanding, expression, regulation, and emotional use component.

Conclusion

Emotional competence is the ability to identify, understand, express, regulate and use emotion in intrapersonal and interpersonal. Knowledge, ability, and personality are important factors contributing to emotional competence. Emotional competence also has social construct which covers different meaning and different culture. Therefore, the result of this study showed that there was no difference between emotional competence between local students and migrant students.

References

- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2017). *Statistik mobilitas penduduk dan tenaga kerja 2017*. Jakarta: Badan Pusat Statistik.
- Bar-On, R., Brown, J. M., Kirkcaldy, B. D., & Thomé, E. P. (2000). Emotional expression and implications for occupational stress; an application of the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). *Personality and Individual Differences*, 28(6), 1107–1118. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(99\)00160-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(99)00160-9)
- Boyatzis, R. E., Goleman, D., & Rhee, K. (1999). *Clustering competence in emotional intelligence: Insights from the emotional competence inventory (ECI) in Handbook of Emotional Intelligence*. USA: Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, Calif.
- Brasseur, S., Grégoire, J., Bourdu, R., & Mikolajczak, M. (2013). The profile of emotional competence (PEC): Development and validation of a self-reported measure that fits dimensions of emotional competence theory. *PLOS ONE*, 8(5). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0062635>
- Briton, N. J., & Hall, J. A. (1995). Beliefs about female and male nonverbal communication. *Sex Roles*, 32(1–2), 79–90. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01544758>
- Colle, L., & Del Giudice, M. (2011). Patterns of attachment and emotional competence in middle childhood. *Social Development*, 20(1), 51–72.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Hunter, J. (2003). "Happiness in everyday life: The uses of experience sampling." *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 4, 185–199.
- Elfenbein, H. A., & Ambady, N. (2003). When familiarity breeds accuracy: Cultural exposure and facial emotion recognition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(2), 276–290. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.2.276>
- Garner, P. W. (2010). Emotional competence and its influences on teaching and learning. *Educational Psychology Review*, 22(3), 297–321.
- Geertz, H. (1983). *Keluarga Jawa*. Jakarta: Grafiti Pers.
- Hall, J. A. (1978). Gender effects in decoding nonverbal cues. *Psychological Bulletin*, 85(4), 845–857. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.85.4.845>
- Hall, J. A. (1984). *Nonverbal sex differences: Accuracy of communication and expressive style*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hall, J. A., Carter, J. D., & Horgan, T. G. (2000). Gender differences in nonverbal communication of emotion. In A. H. Fischer (Ed.), *Gender and emotion* (pp. 97–117). <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511628191.006>
- Ho, D. Y. F. (1998). Interpersonal Relationships and Relationship Dominance: An Analysis Based on Methodological Relationism. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 1(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-839X.00002>
- Kray, L. J., & Thompson, L. (2004). Gender stereotypes and negotiation performance: An examination of theory and research. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 26, 103–182. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-3085\(04\)26004-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-3085(04)26004-X)
- Kwon, H., Yoon, K. L., Joormann, J., & Kwon, J.-H. (2013). Cultural and gender differences in emotion regulation: Relation to depression. *Cognition & Emotion*, 27(5), 769–782. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699931.2013.792244>
- Lau, P. S. Y., & Wu, F. K. Y. (2012). Emotional competence as a positive youth development construct: A conceptual review. *The Scientific World Journal*, 2012, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1100/2012/975189>
- Lestari, S., & Faturachman. (2018). Transmisi rukun dan hormat sebagai nilai-nilai relasional utama. In Faturachman & T. A. Nurjaman (Eds.), *Psikologi Relasi Sosial* (pp. 169–190). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Magnis-Suseno, F. (2006). *Etika Jawa: Sebuah analisis filsafati tentang kebijaksanaan hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Matsumoto, D., & Hwang, H. S. (2012). Culture and Emotion: The Integration of Biological and Cultural Contributions. *Journal of Cross-*

- Cultural Psychology*, 43(1), 91–118. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111420147>
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1997). What is emotional intelligence? In *Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications*. (pp. 3–34). New York, NY, US: Basic Books.
- Mikolajczak, M. (2009). Going beyond the ability-trait debate: A three-level model of emotional intelligence. *E-Journal of Applied Psychology*, 5(25–32).
- Mikolajczak, M., Petrides, K., Coumans, N., & Luminet, O. (2009). An experimental investigation of the moderating effects of trait emotional intelligence on laboratory-induced stress — *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 9(455–477).
- Min, M. C., Islam, M. N., Wang, L., & Takai, J. (2018). Cross-cultural comparison of university students' emotional competence in Asia. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9918-3>
- Min, M. C., & Takai, J. (2017). Cross-Cultural Comparison of Relational Values of Asians: Analysing the World Values Survey, International Social Survey Programme, and AsiaBarometer. *Bulletin of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, Nagoya University (Psychology and Human Development Sciences)*, 64, 87–97.
- Min, M. C., & Takai, J. (2018). The effect of emotional competence on relational quality: Comparing Japan and Myanmar. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-0002-9>
- Moreno-Manso, J. M., García-Baamonde, M. E., Guerrero-Barona, E., & Pozueco-Romero, J. M. (2017). Emotional competence disorders and social communication in young victims of abuse. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 26(3), 701–708. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-016-0596-1>
- Mulder, N. (1984). *Kebatinan dan hidup sehari-hari orang Jawa: Kelangsungan dan perubahan kulturil*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Ristekdikti. (2018). *Statistik pendidikan tinggi 2018* (p. 248) [Annual Publication (2018)]. Jakarta: Kementerian Riset Teknologi Dan Pendidikan Tinggi Republik Indonesia.
- Saarni, C. (1999). *The Development of Emotional Competence* (R. A. Thompson, Ed.). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Saarni, C. (2007). The development of emotional competence: Pathways for helping children to become emotionally intelligent. In R. Bar-On, K. Maree, J. G. Maree, & M. J. Elias (Eds.), *Educating people to be emotionally intelligent*. (pp. 15–35). Westport, CT, US: Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Zeidner, M., & Olnick-Shemesh, D. (2010). “Emotional intelligence and subjective well-being revisited”. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 48(4), 431–435.