A Descriptive Study on How Students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) Affected in Online Learning

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Abstract:

This research was aimed to know the important of understanding the students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) in online learning and to know how students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) was affected in online learning. The researchers applied descriptive qualitative method to explore how the students’ emotional quotient (EQ) was affected in online learning. The data was collected through a questionnaire, observation, and interview. The sample of this study were 27 students from 215 tenth grader students at SMA IT AL-Islah Maros. Based on the results of data analysis, the researchers found that it was important to understanding the students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) in online learning. The research findings also indicated that students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) was affected in online learning at SMA IT AL-Islah Maros. The Emotional Quotient of the second-grade students at SMA IT AL-Islah Maros was considered good category. Overall, online learning allows for learning to occur in a setting that is not restricted by place or time. Online learning has the ability to disassemble barriers that have been constructed by poverty, location, disability, as well as other factors such as the condition of the covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: emotional quotient, online learning, covid-19 pandemic

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Introduction

In teaching, it cannot be pointed out a particular teaching method as the best methods, but all those methods are good methods based on the conditions. In this kind of situation, due to the pandemic condition, teachers are demanded to create creative teaching methods through online learning especially English online learning. Online learning seems to be new for almost all English teachers especially in Indonesia. The covid-19 forces the teachers to teach from home or via online. Dabbagh and Ritland (2005) stated out that online learning is education that takes place over the internet. He further explained that online learning is often referred to as “e-learning” among other terms.

There are some huge differences between teaching across distance or teaching online and teaching traditionally in classrooms. According to Learning (2020), Some of thems are lack of motivation in online learners or students, time-consuming, forgetting online learning activities, and so on. Through online learning, the teachers are demanded to know how to measure both Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Quotient (EQ) of their learners or students. Emotional Quotient (EQ) is the capability of someone in this case students to receive, to assess, to manage, to control the self emotion and others’ emotion around them while the Intelligent Quotient (IQ) is more like the capability of someone to give a validation of something (wikipedia.com, 2010).

Many theories about understanding people’s emotional quotient have been proposed by experts. Gardner (1983) stated that there are five main ideas of someone’s emotional quotient. Those are capability of realizing self-awareness, capability of managing self-awareness, sensitivity of others’ awareness, capability of responding and negotiating with others emotionally, and capability of using self-awareness to motivate his/her self. These five of things that the writer tried to find out to his students especially in online learning process.

Goleman (1995) stated that Emotional Quotient (EQ) refers to the capacities to recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and in others. EQ can be as much powerful, and at times, more powerful than Cognitive (abstract) Intelligence (IQ) in predicting success in various life challenges. Goleman (2002a) further explained that IQ can sort people before they start a career; it determines which fields or professions they can hold. To learn which individuals rise to the top or which individuals fail, however, IQ ‘short circuit’ and EQ proves to be stronger predictor of success. Emotional Quotient (EQ) can be defined as an aspect to recognize human’s emotions and those of others to distinguish discrepancy between them appropriately and the ability to control and manage their feelings and emotions in difficult situations.

Self management involves an inner conversation that guides our behavior. Social-awareness in mainly about empathy is having understanding sensitivity to the feelings, thoughts, and situation of others. This includes cognitively understanding another person’s situational circumstances as well as actually experiencing in other person’s feelings. By being empathic, people are also able to know a customer’s needs and
expectations, even when unstated. Social awareness extends beyond empathy for other individuals. It also includes being organizationally aware, such as sensing office politics and understanding social networks (Goleman, 2002b).

A person’s success in mastering Emotional Quotient skills determined by the ability and the talent of the person. Pisner, Smith, Alkozei, Klimova, and Killgore (2017) had conducted a study and identified about 12 factors that are associated with achieving skills. Those factors are sharpness of senses, perception, intelligence, physical size, past experience, undertaking, emotions, motivation, attitude, factors of other personalities, gender, and age.

Through their research, Ebrahimi, Khoshsima, and Zare-Behtash (2018) pointed out that Emotional Quotient (EQ) is the ability to identify and manage personal emotions and the emotions of others. EQ matters just as much as Intellectual Ability (IQ). In the employment field, work pressure, anxiety, employee’s stress, agitation, depression or irritability all are related to the various factors of emotional intelligence (McLeod, Kim, & Resua, 2018).

Another study conducted by Drigas and Papoutsi (2018) found that in spite of the fact that EQ sounds to play a very indispensable role in the process of learning, scarcity of research is felt in the area. More specifically, as Goleman’s Mixed Model reveals, EQ covers five main constructs, which consists of self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation. Consequently, implications relate to the need to accommodate ‘Emotional Quotient’ as an essential aspect of education. Moreover, EQ is a gateway, which sidelights on better learning.

In this current situation, due to the covid-19 pandemic, online learning is recommended to prevent the virus spreading from human to human, especially in schools (Nashruddin, Alam, & Tanasy, 2020). It seems like the only best way in preventing the spreading of this virus is through online learning. A big question then occurs. Is online learning effective in reaching the syllabus target? Considering there are many problems that both teachers and students could possibly find such as bad internet connection, lack of supervising, lack of motivation, and it could be lack of emotional quotient.

Regarding the importance of learning process in this kind of situation, in this case of covid-19, and understanding that learning as a complex process is the result of interactions of so many factors like cognition, emotions and strategies, the present study aimed to observe the importance of teachers’ understanding of students’ emotional quotient and how it was affected by online learning. The study would focus on Goleman’s theory about emotional quotient. Many researchers explain that factors involved in the learning situation are very complex and varied (Rosalina, Mutawakkil, Nashruddin, & Amin, 2020).

The researchers had initially observed the situation at SMA IT Al-Ishlah Maros and found that some teachers paid more attention only to students’ intelligent quotient to reach the syllabus targets, and ignored the students’ emotional quotient in online teaching. In the other hand, Gardner (1983) stated emotional quotient is the most important thing. It is twice more important than the intelligent quotient. Based on the background above, the researchers formulated research questions as follows:

1. Is the study of Emotional Quotient (EQ) important in online learning?
2. How was the students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) affected in online Learning?
Theoretically, the findings of the study were expected to be useful information for the teachers’ input in online learning process, and for people who concern about teaching method and its implementation. Practically, through this research, all educators could understand more about students’ emotional quotient, especially in online learning process.

**Method**

Considering the data and the research aims, the researchers applied descriptive qualitative method in this current study. Maxwell (1993) stated that the strength of qualitative design derives primarily from its inductive approach. It focuses on specific situations or people and it emphasizes on words rather than the numbers. This study was using a descriptive qualitative type of the study because the data were performed in written expression. The researchers had done an observation and online interview to collect the data. The total number of students at SMA IT Al-Ishlah Maros are 215 students, divided into 8 classes. From the population, 27 were chosen randomly to be the sample of this research. To collect data, the instruments that researchers used were interview and questioner. Those instruments were used to know the importance on students’ emotional quotient and its effects in online learning process.

**Results**

**The Important of Emotional Quotient (EQ) in Online Learning**

The data of students’ emotional intelligence obtained from emotional intelligence scale that contains 20 items. There were 20 items of emotional intelligence scale. To answer each item in the scale, the researchers provided five alternative answers, those are rarely (R), seldom (S), neutral (N), often (O), and very often (VO) with the value 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, for the favorable items and the value 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for the unfavorable items. The researchers observed the students’ behavior during six days. There were five aspects were observed to know the emotional intelligence of each student, those are: self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, empathy, and handling relationship. Those aspect mentioned in the observation checklist paper.

**The Effected toward Emotional Quotient (EQ) in Online Learning**

The following is a description about the effect toward Emotional Quotient (EQ) in online learning at SMA IT AL ISHLAH Maros. In response to an open-ended question about the overall benefits or effect of online learning, the majority of students reported and collected their work by their own pace within a given week. The online learning still placed time restraints on the students, in terms of deadlines for assignments, although the majority of students seemed to be partial to the flexibility of completing work in a time and place that was best suited for their learning. Students stated that they like being able to move at my own pace through the course work. If they understand a topic they can move on, and if they don’t understand the topic they can spend more time on it. The online learning creates an environment that students can pace themselves according to their own educational needs.
Discussion

The Important of Emotional Quotient (EQ) in Online Learning

For self-awareness aspect, when researchers taught online class and observed, there were some students who still lack of self-awareness. They did not aware how education is important for them in this covid-19 pandemic. Some students did not pay attention to the materials were explained by the teacher. They prefer to do other things such as talked with their family, and eyes contact less. Moreover, when teacher asked to submit the homework, there were 4 students that forgot and did not collect it. As a whole, student who lack of self-awareness, they will not confident enough too.

The second aspect that observed was self-management. From the observation result, it can be known that in the beginning, most of students have good self-management. They can control and manage their negative emotions in online learning. For self-motivation, when the researcher observed in online class, the up and down motivation often influenced by the kinds of subject. Students also have competition to show their best performance in online class.

In the empathy aspect, it can be seen that female students have higher respect and care (empathy) than male students. As we know, generally, female more sensitive about situation and feeling than male. The empathy feeling of female student in that class also better than male students. They help each other, share each other and entertain each other. For handling relationship aspect, it can be stated that students who participated in online class more cooperative, open minded, active, and easy to express their opinion.

The researchers continued by interviewing the students. It purposed to crosscheck the students’ answer on emotional intelligence scale. The results show that the average student understood about their feeling and what made they feel so. Sometimes they feel happy, bored, angry, or sad. Those feelings perceived alternately by students. They also knew that their feeling influence their behavior in their daily activity. In addition, half of students in that class have high confident. Overall, self-awareness of tenth grade science students can be called good enough.

Most of students were able to control their emotions well and only several of them who hard to control their emotions. For students who were passive and low in cognitive ability, and assignments often made they depressed. The result of interview showed that 15 of 27 students are easy to depressed because of that matter. Therefore, the students’ self-management in that class can be stated “poor” and it is not appropriate with the answer of emotional intelligence scale which is showed that the class has good self-management.

Based on the interview, every student has his/her own motivation source. Some come from inside (themselves) and some come from outside (other people). Although they have different motivation sources, but actually it will activate their self-motivation. The result show that most of students have good motivation. In addition, they are able to think positively against unlucky situation during this covid-19 pandemic. When they are asked to give an opinion about failure by the researcher, most of them considered a failure as new experience. Beside that, half number of students have prospect to go through the life.
The interview results also showed that female student has higher empathy than male. The principle of empathy itself including caring, respecting, sharing and helping. As we know that generally female more sensitive toward any feeling than male. That sensitivity makes female student easy to feel what the other feels. They also have various ways to show their respecting, caring, sharing and helping such as being a funny person to amuse their friend, and being a loyal listener.

For handling relationship aspect, in this online learning, 30 percent of students participated some organizations whether in or out the class and the rest did not participate any organization. Students who participated in an organization more communicative, easy to express their feeling and idea, and even have unlimited sociality and vice versa. The information also said that most of students were easy to cooperate, tolerance and interact with new people. Nevertheless, there were several of them who still hard to cooperate and tolerance. They who were easy to cooperate prefer to do their job in group and emphasize their public necessity. On contrary, several of students were hard to cooperate prefer to do any job or task individually, emphasize their own necessity and usually have limited sociality. There were eleven students with that type. It is not appropriate with students answer on emotional intelligence scale.

Based on observation and interview, there were eleven students who were in poor category. Those eleven students who already had filled the emotional intelligence scale, gave inappropriate answer with their real situation. Regarding the explanation above, the students’ emotional intelligence can be called at good enough category. Overall, the differences result among emotional intelligence, observation and interview can be seen that it was not too far. Therefore, the statistical calculation of emotional intelligence scale can be considered as acceptable and valid data. It means that understanding the students’ emotional quotient (EQ) in online learning was important in online learning at SMA IT AL ISHLAH Maros.

The Effected toward Emotional Quotient (EQ) in Online Learning

Several students also explained the benefit of having unlimited access to the internet throughout the online learning. Compared to the covid-19 pandemic, online learning work to made the students learning from home. In this study, the structure of online learning expanded the students’ use of technology and surpassed the technology used in the students’ learning from home settings. In addition, several respondents stated the importance of receiving school credit through an online learning. One student explained:

*The class gives you a taste of school work, where there’s no teacher bothering you about getting things done so you have to be motivated on your own.*

The majority of students also commented on the overarching themes of motivation as important characteristics that the online learning brings out in students who wish to be successful. Another student believed that the online learning not only taught students about the material, but also how to be an independent and responsible student.

Some students, however, noted challenges with the online learning in the covid-19 pandemic. Three respondents did not have access to the internet at home while enrolled in the online learning, therefore they had to complete everything within the constraints of
the school day. Another challenge student expressed having, particularly early on in the online learning, was the lack of face-to-face help from the teacher. One student noted:

As time went on it got easier to ‘help’ myself, but at the beginning I didn’t know what to do.

In the surveys, students explained the characteristics that they believe to be essential components to a successful online student. Time management, motivation, independence, responsibility, and the ability to see the overall objective of school were some of the reoccurring characteristics thought to be important aspects of a successful student. Time management was the most mentioned characteristic, with seven out of eight students mentioning its importance. One student noted the difficulties of balancing the benefit of working at one’s own pace with still meeting online learning deadlines by stating:

The benefits are being able to work at your own pace as long as you meet the deadlines. Meeting the deadlines takes time management skills and responsibility.

The students were asked to comment on the accessibility of blackboard, the medium in which the course was delivered. Blackboard is a learning management system used by the school and the teacher to deliver instructional material in an online format. Half of the respondents believed blackboard to be an accessible and user-friendly site, that was relatively easy to navigate through. Some students stated:

The site was very well structured and easy to access. The website is very easy to maneuver through. There were definitely confusing aspects such as where to go to find resources posted by the teacher for certain assignments.

The most common response when analyzing the difference between a traditional classroom versus an online learning in covid-19 pandemic was the feeling of less interaction and an increased need for independence in the online learning environment. One respondent expressed the feeling of isolation when facing difficulties with the course work stating:

We are mostly set off on our own to read about the subject and learn the content. There is no one to help guide you in an online learning.

The online learning includes a discussion board feature that the students are required to post their own response to a question, as well as comment on one of their classmates’ initial responses to the question. Student respondents noted another major difference being the lack of genuine communication, as stated by two students:

We don’t really communicate with our classmates and we never get to meet or talk with our teacher.

One student saw a benefit with the asynchronous discussion board feature as helpful since you get longer more thought out responses instead of the short bursts in normal classrooms, yet still had reservations due to the waiting time for the responses can make you lose interest in the discussion. One student believed the discussion board was helpful by stating:
I felt that discussing topics with my peers allowed me to learn about the topic more in depth. While the online discussion board feature allowed for students to engage in conversation, the students expressed a lack of interest and participation.

A common theme of isolation within the class was reflected in a student’s response:

*The social aspect of being in a traditional classroom is gone as well as the one on one help by the teacher if needed. Communication differs because in a traditional setting you can go ask your teacher directly for assistance but online you get assistance indirectly and have to wait for the professor to reply. It is easier to communicate to an instructor in a traditional setting because they are most likely there, while in an online setting you have to e-mail them and you may not know when they will respond.*

Majority of students acknowledged the use of e-mail and WhatsApp as a communication tool available during the class, but explained the hurdle of expressing difficulties in the course or questions about topics through a written medium as opposed to a face-to-face conversation. One student simply stated:

*I would rather talk to my teacher than e-mail and have to wait for a response.*

Timely feedback, clear instructions, and support for the students were the common pieces of advice the students would give to an instructor who is planning on setting up and instructing an online learning. One student commented:

*Be very specific in your instructions since it can be difficult to express things through text.*

All respondents unanimously answered that they would take an online course in the future, regardless of the challenges that they may have experienced. Two students expressed that the online course was easier because they were able to focus completely on the work and not on other factors such as social interaction with peers and physically attending class. The respondents overwhelming agreed that online courses are best suited for high school students due to the amount of responsibility that accompanies the online work. Some students stated stress and not being mature enough as reasons for restricting students below high school from enrolling in an online learning in the covid-19 pandemic. The data above shows that online learning has affected the Emotional Quotient (EQ) of students at SMA IT AL ISHLAH Maros.

**Conclusion**

Given the limited number of respondents, this research is based on a very small population, all of whom were enrolled in the same course, under the same teacher. Based on the results of data analysis, it is concluded that the students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) in online learning is important to understanding. It also indicates that students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) is affected in online learning. The current research shows the benefits of online learning outweigh the challenges that students face.
On a larger scale, involving more students and teachers, the online learning is needed to better evaluate the benefits, challenges, and useful strategies for successful students. It could be that student respondents to this survey has a uniquely different experience than their counterparts taking online learning elsewhere. Online learning has the ability to disassemble barriers that have been constructed by poverty, location, disability, and other factors.

Based on the conclusions above, the researchers would like to make a number of suggestions, as follows:

1. Emotional Quotient (EQ) can be considered as one of essential things that should be paid attention by learners and educators or teachers. It controls how people act and respond with some stimulations, knowledge acquisition and unfamiliar situations. Developing students’ Emotional Quotient (EQ) helps students achieve their success in learning.

2. For researchers, as a reference to the other researchers who wants to conduct further study about the relationship between Emotional Quotient (EQ) and English students achievement. The further researcher can try to conduct this research in different subject and location such as in vocational school and also try to conduct this research by using different method like experimental research.

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