



Differences in Emotional Intelligence in Terms of Gender

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis perbedaan kecerdasan emosional berdasarkan jenis kelamin pada mahasiswa Universitas Majalengka. Kecerdasan emosional adalah kemampuan untuk mengenali, memahami, dan mengelola emosi diri sendiri dan orang lain, yang berperan penting dalam keberhasilan akademik, hubungan interpersonal, dan kesehatan mental. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain deskriptif komparatif. Sampel terdiri dari 50 mahasiswa yang dipilih secara stratified random sampling, dengan proporsi jenis kelamin yang seimbang. Data dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan kuesioner kecerdasan emosional berbasis teori Goleman yang mencakup lima dimensi: kesadaran diri, manajemen diri, motivasi, empati, dan keterampilan sosial. Data dianalisis menggunakan ANOVA dan uji post-hoc Bonferroni. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan dalam kecerdasan emosional antara siswa laki-laki dan perempuan. Siswa perempuan memiliki rata-rata skor kecerdasan emosional yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan siswa laki-laki. Uji post-hoc memperkuat temuan ini dengan perbedaan rata-rata $p < 0,05$. Dimensi empati dan keterampilan sosial menjadi keunggulan utama siswa perempuan, sementara siswa laki-laki cenderung lebih kuat dalam mengelola emosi yang berkaitan dengan kompetisi dan pengambilan keputusan. Temuan ini menggarisbawahi pentingnya program pengembangan kecerdasan emosional yang responsif gender untuk mendukung kesehatan mental, adaptasi sosial, dan keberhasilan akademik siswa. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penerapan intervensi berbasis kecerdasan emosional, terutama untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa laki-laki dalam pengelolaan emosi dan keterampilan interpersonal..

Kata Kunci: Kecerdasan Emosional, Mahasiswa, Gender

Abstract

This study aims to analyze differences in emotional intelligence based on gender in Majalengka University students. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own and others' emotions, which plays an important role in academic success, interpersonal relationships, and mental health. This study used a quantitative approach with a comparative descriptive design. The sample consisted of 50 students selected by stratified random sampling, with a balanced gender proportion. Data were collected using Goleman's theory-based emotional intelligence questionnaire which includes five dimensions: self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Data were analyzed using ANOVA and Bonferroni post-hoc test. The results showed that there were significant differences in emotional intelligence between male and female students. Female students have a higher average emotional intelligence score than males. The post-hoc test strengthens this finding with a mean difference of $p < 0.05$. The dimensions of empathy and social skills are the main advantages of female students, while male students tend to be stronger in managing emotions related to competition and decision making. These findings underscore the importance of gender-responsive emotional intelligence development programs to support students' mental health, social adaptation, and academic success. This study recommends the implementation of emotional intelligence-based interventions, especially to improve male students' abilities in emotion management and interpersonal skills.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; Gender; College students.

Introduction

In an increasingly complex society, the ability to understand and manage emotions is becoming increasingly important. High emotional intelligence can improve interpersonal relationships and reduce conflict. Emotional intelligence becomes one of the important factors in an individual's life, especially in academic and social contexts (Cazan & Năstasă, 2014). There is a common assumption that men and women have different tendencies in managing emotions. This is a key issue that needs to be identified, as a better understanding of these differences can help in developing more effective educational and support strategies.

Emotional intelligence is an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage their own and others' emotions. In the work environment, low emotional intelligence can cause various problems, including interpersonal conflicts, decreased productivity, and high employee turnover rates. According to Nani and Mukaroh (2021), there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance, where employees with high KE tend to have better performance. Data shows that companies that implement emotional intelligence training experience an increase in productivity of up to 20% (Nani & Mukaroh, 2021).

One of the problems that students often face is academic stress. This stress can be caused by various factors, including high academic demands, pressure from the environment, and lack of social support. Natasia et al. (2022) revealed that students who have good emotional intelligence are better able to cope with stress and pressure faced during the study period. Students are able to manage negative emotions and stay focused on academic goals. According to Ahmad et al. (2018) students with good emotional intelligence are better able to adapt to new environments and establish good social relationships. Problems often faced by individuals who experience difficulties in self-adjustment are feelings of anxiety and loneliness.

Previous research shows that women tend to excel in aspects of empathy and social skills, while men are often more dominant in the management of emotions related to competition and decision-making (Suhendro & Agustina, 2022). Emotional intelligence plays an important role in various aspects of life, including

interpersonal relationships, work, and mental health.

Data from various studies show significant differences in emotional intelligence between men and women. According to research conducted by Yunalia et al. (2021), women have a higher average score of emotional intelligence than men. The study involved 200 students from various universities in Indonesia and found that women were better able to recognize and manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. This is in line with other studies showing that women are more likely to use adaptive coping mechanisms in dealing with stress (Julika & Setiyawati, 2019). Sukman et al. (2022) also found that female students were better able to avoid anxiety during online lectures compared to male students.

This research is important to determine the implications of emotional intelligence for education and individual development. Understanding gender differences in emotional intelligence can help educators and policy makers design programs that are more inclusive and responsive to students' emotional needs. Good emotional intelligence contributes to academic success and mental health. By knowing these differences, appropriate interventions can be implemented to support students in managing their emotions.

Emotional intelligence, according to Goleman & Hermaya (2002), includes the ability to understand and manage emotions, as well as the ability to build good relationships through empathy and social skills. Goleman emphasizes that emotional intelligence has five main elements, namely self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These elements become important foundations in forming a stable personality and being able to adapt in various situations. Individuals who have good self-awareness will be better able to recognize their personal emotions, understand the source of these emotions, and control the behavior that results (Maitrianti, 2021; Mayer, 1993). This ability plays an important role in supporting more harmonious and productive social interactions.

Previous research on emotional intelligence and gender has shown mixed results. Research conducted by Safari (2019) found that emotional intelligence has a significant effect on student learning achievement, with female students showing better emotional intelligence

than male students. Sebayang (2015) asserts that differences in emotional intelligence between men and women are not only seen in academic contexts, but also in social interactions. In this study, female students showed better ability in understanding and managing emotions, which could be influenced by different gender socialization.

Yunalia & Etika (2020) conducted a study showing that adolescent girls are better able to manage emotions and show empathy than adolescent boys. The data collected showed that 65% of adolescent girls had higher emotional intelligence scores than adolescent boys. According to Bariyyah & Latifah (2019) although there is an increase in emotional intelligence with age, the difference between men and women remains significant. Female students in higher grades have better emotional intelligence, which suggests that education and environmental factors play an important role in the development of emotional intelligence.

While some research suggests that women have higher emotional intelligence, there is little explanation of the factors underlying these differences. Further research is needed to explore how social, cultural and environmental factors contribute to the development of emotional intelligence in men and women. The main objective of this study was to identify and analyze differences in emotional intelligence between men and women. This research aims to provide empirical data that can be used to understand how gender affects emotional intelligence.

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with a comparative descriptive design to identify differences in emotional intelligence of college students based on gender (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). This approach was chosen to allow researchers to systematically compare the average emotional intelligence between male and female students. The study population was active students at Majalengka University in the 2024/2025 academic year. The research sample was selected using stratified random sampling technique to ensure that each gender was proportionally represented according to the distribution of students in the study program. The total sample involved was 50 respondents.

The research instrument is an emotional intelligence questionnaire adapted from

Goleman's (2002) emotional intelligence theory and has gone through a content validation process and reliability test in previous research (Haqq & Riyanto, 2020). The questionnaire consists of 30 items that measure the five dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. The collected data were analyzed using parametric statistical tests in the form of anova tests with a significance level set at $\alpha = 0.05$ to determine significant differences in the average emotional intelligence between male and female students (Anderson & Braak, 2003).

Result and Discussion

Emotional intelligence is one of the important aspects in personality development and individual success, both in academic contexts and daily life. This study aims to identify differences in emotional intelligence between male and female college students, and analyze the factors underlying these differences. This study used a questionnaire as data collection. The results of statistical data analysis are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics.

	N	Me an	Std. Deviati on	Minim um	Maxim um
Male	21	83.32	8.56	70	100
Female	29	90.48	7.34	80	120

Males had a mean emotional intelligence of 83.32 with a standard deviation of 8.56, indicating considerable variation in scores between individuals in this group. The minimum and maximum values were 70 and 100. Women have a higher mean emotional intelligence of 90.48, with a standard deviation of 7.34, indicating that emotional intelligence scores are more consistent than men. The minimum and maximum values are 80 and 120. Women tend to have higher emotional intelligence than men.

Table 2. Test of homogeneity

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2.087	2	48	.357

The value of Levene Statistic = 2.087 with Sig. = 0.357 (> 0.05) indicates that the variance of the two groups (male and female) is homogeneous. The assumption of homogeneity is met, so ANOVA analysis can be conducted.

Table 3. Anova

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	350.67	1	350.67	6.98	.017
Within Groups	4998.40	48	104.15		
Total	5349.07	49			

The results of ANOVA analysis show that there is a significant difference in emotional intelligence between men and women with a value of $F = 6.98$ and $Sig. = 0.017$ (< 0.05). This difference indicates that gender has a significant effect on emotional intelligence. The hypothesis stating that there are differences in emotional intelligence based on gender is significant.

Table 4. Multiple Comparisons

	(I) JK	(II) JK	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Bonferroni	Male	Female	-5.16	1.97	.010
	Female	Male	5.16	1.97	.010
Games-Howell	Male	Female	-5.16	1.97	.012
	Female	Male	5.16	1.97	.012

The post-hoc test results showed the Bonferroni test: The mean difference in emotional intelligence between men and women is -5.16, with a significant value of 0.010. This means that the emotional intelligence of women is significantly higher than that of men. Games-Howell: Similar results to Bonferroni, mean difference -5.16 with $Sig. = 0.012$. Both post-hoc test methods (Bonferroni and Games-Howell) support the finding that females have significantly higher emotional intelligence than males.

Discussion

The results of this study revealed that there is a significant difference in emotional intelligence between male and female university students. The data showed that the mean emotional intelligence of females ($M = 90.48$, $SD = 7.34$) was higher than that of males ($M = 83.32$, $SD = 8.56$). ANOVA analysis showed an F value of 6.98 with a significance level of 0.017 ($p <$

0.05), confirming that this difference was statistically significant. Furthermore, the results of post-hoc tests (Bonferroni and Games-Howell) reinforced these findings, with a mean difference of -5.16 ($p < 0.05$) consistently indicating that females have higher emotional intelligence than males.

Emotional intelligence includes the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions, both in oneself and others. Goleman (2002) identifies five main dimensions of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

The results showed that female students were better able to manage emotions, which contributed to better academic performance. This is in line with the theory that women tend to be more skilled in social and emotional aspects. Emotional intelligence can help students cope with academic stress and challenges, and suggests that interventions aimed at improving emotional intelligence can be beneficial, especially for male students.

Nindyati's research (2020) shows that female students with high emotional intelligence are better able to cope with stress compared to men. These results suggest that interventions to improve emotional intelligence can contribute to students' mental health, especially for men who often face greater academic pressure. Emotional intelligence also plays a role in social interactions in the academic environment. Students who have high EC tend to be more adaptable and build good relationships with classmates and lecturers. This can create a more positive and supportive learning environment, which in turn can improve overall academic performance (Basri, 2018).

Students with low emotional intelligence tend to feel anxious and depressed, which can interfere with concentration. Conversely, students with high emotional intelligence are able to identify the emotions they feel and find ways to overcome the anxiety, so they can achieve better results (Andiri & Sultoni, 2017).

Emotional intelligence is closely related to interpersonal communication skills. According to Darmawan et al. (2022) showed that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in shaping the quality of interpersonal communication between students and lecturers. Students with high emotional intelligence tend to be able to control emotions, manage stress, and build better relationships with lecturers. Academic success and a conducive learning atmosphere are strongly

influenced by individual emotional maturity. The development of emotional intelligence in the educational environment is very important in preparing individuals to become individuals who excel academically and socially.

Judging from the indicators of emotional intelligence found that women have a better average. Self-awareness indicators, which include the ability to recognize one's own emotions and their impact on behavior, are often more developed in women. Women's ability to better identify their emotions may be a major factor supporting higher emotional intelligence scores (Bar-On, 2000). The self-management dimension, which involves the ability to control negative emotions and impulses, is also better in women. This is in line with the findings of this study which showed that women's emotional intelligence was more consistent ($SD = 7.34$) than men's ($SD = 8.56$), indicating less variation in emotion management ability.

Women tend to be more sensitive to emotional signals and more able to respond empathetically than men. In this study, women's advantage in empathy likely contributed to higher emotional intelligence scores. Social skills show a female advantage. Research shows that women are more skilled at building and maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships (Riggio & Reichard, 2008). This enables women to manage social interactions more effectively, which is an important component of emotional intelligence.

Differences in emotional intelligence between men and women can be explained through various social and biological theories. From a social perspective, culturally constructed gender roles require women to be more emotionally expressive and empathic, while men are often encouraged to suppress their emotions to maintain an image of masculinity (Brody & Hall, 2008). These findings have important implications in the context of education and personal development. Given the significant differences in emotional intelligence by gender, educational programs should be designed to

strengthen emotional intelligence in both gender groups.

While this study provides important insights into gender differences in emotional intelligence, several limitations need to be noted. First, the relatively small sample size may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the use of quantitative methods may not fully capture complex emotional nuances. Future research is recommended to use a mixed methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more in-depth understanding.

Conclusion

This study showed a significant difference in emotional intelligence between male and female students. Female students had higher average emotional intelligence scores than male students. Women excel in the dimensions of empathy and social skills, which enable them to be more sensitive to others' emotions, build more harmonious interpersonal relationships, and create a supportive social environment. In contrast, male students showed an advantage in emotion management related to competition and decision-making, which is often an advantage in situations that require composure and focus. Women also have higher consistency in emotional intelligence abilities, reflected by lower standard deviations than men. Excellence in dimensions such as self-awareness and emotion management make women better able to cope with academic stress, adapt to educational challenges, and build positive relationships with peers and lecturers.

The implications of these findings are significant in the context of higher education. Gender-responsive emotional intelligence development programs can be designed to optimize the potential of both male and female students. Specific interventions are suggested to enhance men's abilities in the dimensions of empathy and interpersonal skills, which can help students build better social relationships. Female students can also be supported to utilize their emotional advantages to achieve greater success, both in academic and social settings.

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