Research on Emotional Intelligence of Students in the Vocational Colleges of Kocaeli University in Terms of Various Variables

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to determine the relationship between the emotional intelligence of the students who study at the Vocational colleges and some demographical variables. This descriptive study includes 160 students who study at the Hereke Vocational Colleges in Kocaeli University. The data is obtained using Emotional Intelligence Scale, which was originally developed by Schutte et al. (1998), modified by Austin et al. (2004), translated into Turkish by Gocet (2006), and the Personal Information Form which was developed by the researcher. SPSS 15.0 statistics package software was used for evaluating the data and determining the computed values. Since the data is non-normally distributed, nonparametric Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis H tests as well as descriptive statistics were used in the research. The margin of error was set 0.05. As a result of the research, it was found that there is no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender. It was also found that there is no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression subscales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their departments it is seen that optimism scores of students studying at vocational colleges is between 21 and 82, and the relevant mean score is 65.46±8,36; utilization of emotions score is between 6 and 30, and the relevant mean score is 15,50±3,81; emotion expression score is between 23 and 65, and the relevant mean score is 37,91±6,72; and the total emotional intelligence score is between 76 and 166, and the relevant mean score is 130,79±12,06. It was determined that total emotional intelligence level scores of students studying at vocational colleges are a bit higher than the average score.

Key Words: Emotional intelligence, Vocational Colleges, College Students

INTRODUCTION

Although the term emotional intelligence is new, it has become an issue creating great reactions both in academic circles and application areas especially in recent years. The term emotional intelligence firstly emerged in Thorndike's (1904) article titled "Intelligence and Its Uses" with the term "social intelligence" in 1920s. Thorndike defined social intelligence as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, to act wisely in human relations" and considered it as a part of IQ. According to Thorndike (1904), another dimension of social intelligence is "the ability to understand and manage men and women" (Bradshaw, 2008).

Mayer and Salovey defined emotional intelligence (EI) as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" in 1990 (Mayer and Salovey, 1993). Then in 1997, they defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to understand emotions and the cause-effect relation underlying the emotions and their relations, to recognize and perceive the emotions and to incorporate emotionally-related feelings" (Mayer, Caruso and Salovey, 2000).

On the other hand, Bar-On (1997) defined emotional intelligence as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar-On et al. 2000). Bar-On et al. (2005) asserted that emotional intelligence is composed of emotional and social skills. According to them, these emotional and social skills are the ability to recognize, understand and express one's own emotions, the ability to understand others' emotions and to establish relationship with them, the ability to control and manage emotions, the ability to adapt change, to manage change and to solve personal or interpersonal problems, and the ability to create a good mood and to motivate oneself.

Goleman (2000) thinks that people who are academically intelligent but lacking emotional intelligence, in other words people whose IQ level is high but emotional intelligence skills are low, have problems in working life or social life. By handling emotional intelligence in the dimensions of self-consciousness, self-control, social awareness and relation management, Goleman (2005) mentions that emotional intelligence is a strong determinant, sometimes even stronger than IQ, in motivating oneself, keeping oneself going despite of obstacles, delaying pleasure by keeping impulses under control, mood regulation, putting oneself in others' place, cherishing hope and applying the learned things.

Emotional intelligence is explained with two different models in general. According to "talent model," emotional intelligence is "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey and Mayer 1990). According to the second one which is "characteristic model," emotional intelligence is defined as "the whole non-cognitive characteristics which enables the individual to cope with different situations in life in a successful way" (Lyusin, 2006).

Some of the indicators of emotional intelligence (maturity) are controlling one's own body language, being sensitive to the other's body language, showing empathy, setting synergistic relationships based on reconciliation, being on good terms with people, taking other people into account, high emotional energy, optimism, being dedicated to working, being willing to change, being able to manage one self, coping with negative thoughts, handling stress and determination

(Baltas, 2000: 66). Possessing these abilities provides a way for individuals to keep up protecting his or her humaneness and mental health no matter where he or she works. Such human abilities may also improve the satisfaction and even happiness the individual gets from his or her job (Goleman, 2000: 392).

Latest researches on human brain show that cognitive intelligence is not the only real scale of human intelligence but the real determinant of life success is one's emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995:25). Individuals with higher level of emotional intelligence can control their emotions more successfully and become more successful in solving the emotional problems and in stress management, and related with this, display more creative and optimistic behaviors in family and social relations (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004). On the other hand, individuals with lower level of emotional intelligence are less successful in social relations and they develop negative relationships by displaying more violent behaviors (Brackett, Mayer Warner, 2003).

People graduated from the vocational colleges of departments as, Accounting, Foreign Trade, Securities, Accounting and Tax Applications, Electronic Technologies, Metallurgy. The relationship between emotional intelligence, which is one of the issues in psychology and management has recently attracted the attentions and a lot of researches have been carried out. This research was also carried out as a contribution to the related field and it analyzes the interrelation between the emotional intelligence level of the students who study at the vocational colleges and some demographical variables.

METHOD

Population and Sample Group

The population of the research is composed of students studying at the vocational school of Hereke in Kocaeli University in 2014-2015 academic years and the sample group (n=160) of the research is composed departments as, Accounting, Foreign Trade, Securities, Accounting and Tax Applications, Electronic Technologies, Metallurgyof the 1st, 2nd grade students in the from the vocational colleges of Hereke in Kocaeli University, Turkey.

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form was prepared by the researcher upon examining the relevant literature. The information concerning the gender, class, and educational level and income level of parents of the students participated in the sample group of research was obtained by using the Personal Information Form.

The Emotional Intelligence Scale, which was originally developed by Schutte et al. (1998), modified by Austin et al. (2004), translated into Turkish by Göçet (2006), was used for determining emotional intelligence levels of the students.

Emotional Intelligence Scale

Theoretical root of the Emotional Intelligence Scale of 33 items developed by Schutte et al. (1998) and commonly used in emotional intelligence researches is based on 3-dimensional emotional intelligence model. Emotional Intelligence Scale modified by Austin et al. (2004) is

composed of total 41 items, 20 of which are positive and 21 are negative. The scale has a 5-point likert type rating as (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) not sure, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree. The scale is composed of three factors: Optimism/Mood Regulation, Utilization of Emotions and Appraisal and Expression of Emotions. The Scale measures these three factors and the general emotional intelligence in whole.

Statistical Evaluation

SPSS 15.0 statistics package software was used for evaluating the data and determining the computed values. Since the data is non-normally distributed, nonparametric Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis H tests as well as descriptive statistics were used in the research. The margin of error was set 0.05.

FINDINGS

Statistical Evaluation

SPSS 15.0 statistics package software was used for evaluating the data and determining the computed values. Since the data is non-normally distributed, nonparametric Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis H tests as well as descriptive statistics were used in the research. The margin of error was set 0.05.

FINDINGS

Table 1. U-test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Rank Sum	$oldsymbol{U}$	P
Female	88	83.70	7366.00	2886.000	.333
Male	72	76.58	5514.00		

Considering Table 1, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender (U=2886,000, p>.05).

Table 2. U-test results concerning the emotional intelligence utilization of emotions subscale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Rank Sum	$oldsymbol{U}$	P
Female	88	71.41	6284.00	2368.000	.006
Male	72	91.61	6596.00		

Considering Table 2, a significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence utilization of emotions sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender (U = 2368,000, p < .05). When mean ranks are considered, it is likely to say that the male students utilize their emotions more than the female.

Table 3. U-test results concerning the emotional intelligence emotion expression sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Rank Sum	U	P
Female	88	85,90	7559,50	2692,500	,102
Male	72	73,90	5320,50		

Considering Table 3, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence emotion expression sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender (U=2692,500, p>.05).

Table 4. Kruskal Wallis Test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions, and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of departments

Emotional Intelligence Sub-scales										
		Optimism	Utilization of Emotions	Emotion Expression						
Department	N	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Sd.	\mathbf{X}^2	P			
Accounting	39	86.21	75.94	71.44	5	8.595	.126			
Foreign Trade	45	91.90	76.36	79.14	5	8.347	.138			
Securities	36	71.94	72.75	90.14	5	3.858	.570			
Accounting and Tax Applications	13	78.88	82.88	90.62						
Electronic Technologies	10	78.00	104.40	81.15						
Metallurgy	17	58.06	102.47	76.35						

Considering Table 4, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their departments (p>.05).

Table 5. Kruskal Wallis Test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions, and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of the educational status of father

Emotional Intelligence Sub-scales										
		Optimism	Utilization of Emotions	Emotion Expression						
Educational Status of Father	N	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Sd.	X ²	P			
Illiterate	3	45.67	130.00	132.50	5	5.233	.388			
Literate	5	97.60	73.10	87.20	5	4.408	.492			
Primary school graduate	84	83.82	79.77	83.30	5	6.075	.299			
Secondary school graduate	41	82.95	76.40	70.70						
High school graduate	22	68.16	86.91	80.27						
Undergraduate or higher status	5	62.70	75.90	76.90						

Considering Table 5, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of the educational status of father (p>.05).

Table 6. Kruskal Wallis Test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions, and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of the educational status of mother

	Emotional Intelligence Sub-scales										
		Optimism	Utilization of Emotions	Emotion Expression							
Educational Status of Father	N	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Sd.	X ²	P				
Illiterate	7	50.43	94.14	119.07	5	5.072	.407				
Literate	9	76.44	96.39	91.44	5	3.871	.568				
Primary school graduate	102	85.30	76.24	75.69	5	9.229	.100				
Secondary school graduate	32	76.00	83.19	77.13							
High school	9	72.72	87.61	105.17							

graduate					
Undergraduate or	1	51.50	126.50	99.50	
higher status	1	51.50	126.50	88.50	

Considering Table 6, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of the educational status of mother (p>.05).

Table 7.. Kruskal Wallis Test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions, and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of father's occupation

Emotional Intelligence Sub-scales										
		Optimism	Utilization of Emotions	Emotion Expression						
Father's Occupation	N	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Sd.	X ²	P			
Public servant	11	63,45	56,50	72,95	4	5,962	,202			
Worker	46	92,68	94,64	83,29	4	8,731	,068			
Retired	50	77,09	80,55	82,91	4	1,182	,881			
Self-employed	43	74,21	74,01	79,16						
Not working	10	87,30	69,50	69,65						

Considering Table 7, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their father's occupation (p>.05).

Table 8. Kruskal Wallis Test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions, and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of mother's occupation

	Emotional Intelligence Sub-scales									
		Optimism	Utilization of Emotions	Emotion Expression						
Mother's	N	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Sd.	X ²	P			
Occupation										
Housewife	123	81,08	81,00	81,52	3	4,221	,239			
Worker	22	89,66	78,93	66,20	3	1,512	,680			
Retired	6	77,08	96,25	95,92	3	3,310	,346			

Self-employed	9	52,44	67,00	91,22	
Public servant	0	-	-	-	

Considering Table 8, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their mother's occupation (p>.05).

Table 9. Kruskal Wallis Test results concerning the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions, and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of income level

Emotional Intelligence Sub-scales											
	Optimism	Utilization of Emotions	Emotion Expression								
N	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Mean Rank	Sd.	X ²	P					
13	78,73	73,96	99,08	4	3,316	,506					
86	78,35	82,23	84,58	4	,423	,981					
39	90,68	79,65	77,18	4	8,204	,084					
12	65,75	79,79	66,92								
10	79,25	78,25	50,50								
	13 86 39	Optimism N Mean Rank 13 78,73 86 78,35 39 90,68 12 65,75	Optimism Utilization of Emotions N Mean Rank Mean Rank 13 78,73 73,96 86 78,35 82,23 39 90,68 79,65 12 65,75 79,79	Optimism Utilization of Emotions Emotions Expression N Mean Rank Mean Rank Mean Rank 13 78,73 73,96 99,08 86 78,35 82,23 84,58 39 90,68 79,65 77,18 12 65,75 79,79 66,92	Optimism Utilization of Emotions Emotions Expression N Mean Rank Mean Rank Mean Rank Sd. 13 78,73 73,96 99,08 4 86 78,35 82,23 84,58 4 39 90,68 79,65 77,18 4 12 65,75 79,79 66,92	Optimism Utilization of Emotions Expression Emotions Expression Emotions Expression N Mean Rank Mean Rank Mean Rank Sd. X² 13 78,73 73,96 99,08 4 3,316 86 78,35 82,23 84,58 4 ,423 39 90,68 79,65 77,18 4 8,204 12 65,75 79,79 66,92					

Considering Table 9, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of income level (p>.05).

Table 10. Descriptive statistics concerning emotional intelligence scale and sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges

				Present Scores		Available Scores		
	N	X	S	Min.	Max	Min.	Max.	
Optimism	160	65.46	8.36	21	82	17	85	
Utilization of Emotions	160	15.50	3.81	6	30	6	30	
Emotion Expression	160	37.91	6.72	23	65	14	70	
Total Emotional Intelligence	160	130.79	12.06	76	166	41	205	

Considering Table 10, it is seen that optimism scores of students studying at vocational colleges is between 21 and 82, and the relevant mean score is 65.46 ± 8.36 ; utilization of emotions score is between 6 and 30, and the relevant mean score is 15.50 ± 3.81 ; emotion expression score is between 23 and 65, and the relevant mean score is 37.91 ± 6.72 ; and the total emotional intelligence score is between 76 and 166, and the relevant mean score is 130.79 ± 12.06 . It was determined that total emotional intelligence level scores of students studying at vocational colleges are a bit higher than the average score.

DISCUSSION

In this study which was carried out to examine the relationship of the emotional intelligence of the students who study at Vocational colleges with some demographical variables, a significant relation between gender and optimism was observed while no significant relation between utilization of emotions, and appraisal and expression of emotions was found. Findings of some studies support the obtained results whereas some others do not.

In 2005, in a research comparing emotional intelligence levels of the students and their gender, Harrod and Scheer found that women have a higher level of emotional intelligence. However, in Deniz and Yilmaz's research (2004) on university students, sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence and total emotional intelligence points of students do not differ significantly in terms of gender. Likewise, Goleman (2000) suggests that the similarities are much more than the differences when wide groups such as gender are compared with each other in any dimension. Baltas (1999) also emphasized that no difference was pointed about the emotional intelligence in terms of gender and that both sexes have same level of emotional intelligence in general. Sonmaz (2002) and Guler (2006) also obtained the same finding in their research. Ismen (2001), Asan and Ozyer (2003) found a significant relation between emotional intelligence and gender in their research. In Gocet's research carried out on university students in 2006, differences in terms of gender in the levels of optimism, appraisal and expression of emotions and utilization of emotions as sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence were significant in favor of women. In Uncu's research (2007), total emotional intelligence of women was found higher than the men's. Likewise, in the studies carried out by Erginsoy (2002) and Koksal (2003), it was observed that the emotional intelligence of female students is higher compared to the emotional intelligence of male students.

It was determined that there is a significant relation between the optimism and appraisal and expression of emotions sub-dimensions in terms of gender while there is no significant relation in utilization of emotions sub-dimension. While a significant difference was found between emotional intelligence points in terms of class variable in the research carried out by Yilmaz and Sahin (2004), no significant difference was found in the research by Deniz and Yilmaz (2004).

It was found that there is no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism sub-scale scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of gender. It was also found that there is no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their departments it is seen that optimism scores of

students studying at vocational colleges is between 21 and 82, and the relevant mean score is 65.46+8,36; utilization of emotions score is between 6 and 30, and the relevant mean score is 15,50+3,81; emotion expression score is between 23 and 65, and the relevant mean score is 37,91+6,72; and the total emotional intelligence score is between 76 and 166, and the relevant mean score is 130,79+12,06. It was determined that total emotional intelligence level scores of students studying at vocational colleges are a bit higher than the average score. This finding differs in the relevant literature. In the research carried out by Harrod and Scheer (2005) that compares emotional intelligence level of students with their demographic features (educational level of their parents, income level and the place they live), it was found that there's a positive relation between the emotional intelligence level of adolescents and the educational and income level of their parents. In our study, no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their father's occupation and no significant difference was found between the emotional intelligence optimism, utilization of emotions and emotion expression sub-scales scores of students studying at vocational colleges in terms of their mother's occupation. The lower the educational level of parents, the lower the level of emotional intelligence. In their research on university students, Yilmaz and Sahin (2004) found that there is a significant difference between the emotional intelligence and the educational level of parents. Yilmaz and Yilan (2004) found that there is a significant difference in terms of the educational level of fathers but there is no meaningful difference in terms of the educational level of mothers and the income level of parents. Gocet (2006) found no significant relation between the income level of the university students and their emotional intelligence. Koksal (2003) found no significant relation between the educational level of father and emotional intelligence. In a research carried out by Yilmaz (2007), it was determined that the educational level of mother does not pose any statistical difference in the subdimensions and total points of the emotional intelligence of students.

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