EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN PERSONALITY AND HAPPINESS AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN MALAYSIA

[1]SIM MIAW SZE, [2]MOHTARAM RABBANI

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts, UCSI University Kuala Lumpur
E-mail: [1]Smsze26@gmail.com, [2]Mohtaram@ucsiuniversity.edu.my

Abstract - Adolescent stage is a duration whereby an individual experiences gradual changes physically and emotionally from childhood to adulthood. During this stage, they will encounter a lot of challenges, ambiguities, obligations, expectations and influences which may affects them emotionally and make them feel unhappy. Present study was carried out to determine the role of emotional intelligence as a mediator between personality and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. 384 adolescents [13 to 17 years old] from four private institutions were selected as the respondents of this study. The data collected with using Goldberg's International Personality Item Pool [IPIP] Big-Five Factor Marker, Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test [SSEIT] and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire [OHQ]. Emotional intelligence partially mediates extraversion and conscientiousness to happiness, and fully mediates agreeableness and neuroticism to happiness. Emotional intelligence does play a role in mediating personality and happiness.

Index Terms - Adolescents, Emotional Intelligence, Happiness, Personality.

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a worrying trend in mental health issue worldwide and Malaysia is not excluded from this issue. It has been predicted that by 2020, the mental health illness will overtake cardiovascular disease as the second contributing factor that affect the Malaysians' health [1]. This can be seen from the increase in number of cases recorded in Malaysia, from 10.7% in 1996 to 29.9% in 2015 [2]. Out of 10 Malaysians, four is suffering from mental illness [3]. Children, especially students, are not excluded from this issue where 12.1% of 5 to 15 years old children and 29.2% of individuals who are 16 years old and above were reported to have mental health issues [2]. There are 32.7% of secondary school students suffered depression and 27.9% of secondary school students had suicidal ideation. Students who are depressed have greater suicidal ideation [55.8%] as compared to students who are not depressed [14.4%] [4]. According to the Institute for Public Health [2], the high suicide risk group in Malaysia are the individuals aged between 16 to 25 years old as they are most vulnerable to attempt suicide [5,6]. In the early to mid-development of adolescents, the brain experiences neurological development which encourage transition among the connectivity of various brain sections. The prefrontal cortex is associated with strategizing, problem-solving, and tasks execution [7]. In a growth of an adolescent where prefrontal cortex development is lagging behind other regions of the brain may cloud the judgement of the adolescent in terms of strategizing, problem solving, and tasks execution, hence adolescents are more vulnerable to be overwhelmed by emotions and lead to suicide [7]. In view of the worrying trend in mental health issues among Malaysians, it is crucial to have an understanding of the factors that affect individual's happiness in Malaysia.

Among the mental health issues, researchers [8,9, 10] have consistently found out that the primary element which lead to depression and suicide are feelings of extreme unhappiness. It is a known fact that the people in our society always have the tendency to focus more on their flaws and to think negatively. Individuals who are not happy are more likely to experience severe mental illness and other serious psychological issues that may affect their functioning in the form of social, cognitive and emotional [8,9,10]. Due to this pertaining issue, a new field of psychology called positive psychology has emerged in our society. The occurrence of positive psychology is to change people's attention from fixing their shortcomings to identifying and enhancing their potentials that make their life worth living [11]. The field of positive psychology has developed to explore the questions concerning human thriving, specifically the individual experiences of Subjective Well-being [SWB] or happiness over the past few decades [12]. The scientific term which is used to describe happiness is subjective well-being [11]. These two words, happiness and subjective well-being can be used interchangeable as both have the same meaning. Happiness is a universal term indicating an individual's perceptions about general quality of their life.

Happiness is defined by Lyubomirsky [13] as the feeling of joy, satisfaction or positive affect which come together with a sense of good and meaningful life. Lyubomirsky's study [13] have figured out that individuals are able to govern 40% of their happiness whereas the other 60% of happiness is caused by their set-points [50%] and their surroundings [10%]. An

individual's happiness can be determined by their actions, thoughts and goals that they have set in their daily life. A happy individual is able to excel in the workplace as they tend to have better work achievements, organizational citizenship, and are more productive [14]. Happiness also plays an important role in every student's life as most of the student's daily activities are connected to their happiness. It is a vital construct which allow an individual to deal more effectively with obstacles and stressful life events. It can also help an individual to reduce the risks of getting mental illness. When talking about a students' life factors that usually contributes to their happiness would be academic achievement, satisfying facilities of schools, quality of teachers, teaching methods and development of friendship [15]. Conversely, beside from academic achievement, facilities of schools, quality of teachers, teaching methods, social relationships, work, money, leisure or other external variables, some researchers have come into conclusion that personality is a larger contributing factor of happiness [16]. Personality is associated to the response of the emotions, the degree of the emotions and the time span of the emotional response [17]. Owing to differences in personality for each individual, different people may experience difference level of happiness [18]. People who are more inclined towards personality traits such as extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and emotional stability will experience more constant positive emotions, less recurrent negative emotions and greater life satisfaction [18, 19, 20]. People who are more neurotic tend to experience more negative emotions. They are more responsive to negative emotions [21].

In recent years, the importance of emotional intelligence [EI] has been reiterated in the dispositional explanations of happiness. Emotional intelligence is the subdivision of social intelligence. It signifies an individual's ability to recognize and control their own feelings and emotions as well as others. This ability enables them to utilise the information obtained to govern their thinking and actions [22]. An individual with emotional intelligence are always happy, confident, feel contented with their lives and more likely to think positively [23]. Emotional intelligence enables a person to be aware of their emotion and govern it in a way which encourages well-being and happiness [24]. Most of the past findings have examined on the personality [12, 25] and emotional intelligence [26, 27,28] aspects as a direct factor that affect happiness. However, very little has focus on how emotional intelligence play a role in mediating the relationship between personality and happiness. In addition, most of these studies [26,28, 25) were done in the western context rather than in Malaysia. Thus, there is not enough studies to imply the role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between personality and happiness in Malaysia context. Besides, past studies [12, 29] also do not solely target adolescent as their sample population, therefore, more studies are needed in adolescent stage. Adolescent stage is a duration whereby an individual experiences gradual changes physically and emotionally from childhood to adulthood [4]. During this stage, they will encounter a lot of challenges, ambiguities, obligations, expectations and influences which may affects them emotionally and make them feel unhappy. Hence, to fill up the research void, present study aims to investigate on how emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between personality and happiness among Malaysian adolescents.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method carried out in this study is quantitative research with the purpose to examine the role of emotional intelligence as a mediator between personality and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. The correlational design has been used to collect data. In this study, three instruments were used prior to collect data, such as Goldberg's International Personality Item Pool [IPIP] Big-Five Factor Marker, Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test [SSEIT] and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire [OHQ]. The first of the three instruments used is Goldberg's International Personality Item Pool [IPIP] Big-Five Factor Marker [30], it is used to examine an individual's personality in the five domains, namely Openness to experience [O], Conscientiousness [C], Extraversion [E], Agreeableness [A], and Neuroticism [N]. A high internal consistency was shown in all of the five domains, for instance, 0.79 [Openness to Experience], 0.81 [Conscientiousness], 0.87 [Extraversion], 0.79 [Agreeableness] and 0.88 [Neuroticism] [31]. The second instrument that was used is Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test [SSEIT] [32], it is used to measure emotional intelligence in the three areas namely, perception of emotions, management of emotions and employment of emotions. SSEIT had a high internal consistency of 0.90 and a high test-retest reliability of 0.87. According to Bastian, Burns and Nettelbeck [33], SSEIT has a high convergent and divergent validities. Lastly, the third instrument that was used is Oxford Happiness Questionnaire [OHQ]. This instrument is used to measure an individual's level of happiness. The internal consistency of OHQ is high which is 0.91[34]. Based on Pishva, Ghalehban, Moradi and Hoseini [35], OHQ has a good reliability and validity.

III. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

According to Department of Statistics Malaysia [36], the total population of adolescents [10 to 19 years old] in Kuala Lumpur is approximately 356,300. On average, the number of population between 13 to 17

years old in Kuala Lumpur is approximately 71,260. In this study, Cochran's formula [37] has used to determine the sample size. The estimated sample size for this study is 383 respondents with 95% level of confidence and 5% margin of error. Therefore, total number of 384 adolescents of age 13 to 17 years from four private institutions in Kuala Lumpur has participated in this study. To obtain 384 adolescents as the respondents, convenience sampling was used.

IV. DATA COLLECTION

Prior from the data collection, approval was sought from the Department of Psychology of UCSI, the school principals, parents and students. After approval was granted from all required parties, collection of data was commenced. Before distributing the questionnaire, the purpose of this study was explained to respondents in brief and seek for their permission to participate. Respondents were reminded that all their information written in this questionnaire will be kept confidential through a written informed consent. Every respondent was required to complete a questionnaire packet which consists of an informed consent, demographic information and a battery of questionnaires. Goldberg's IPIP Big-Five Factor Markers, Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test [SSEIT] and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire [OHQ] were used to assess the respondents. 384 set of questionnaires were distributed to the respondents age 13 to 17 years old from the four private institutions. Respondents were given as much time as they need to complete the questionnaires. Any doubt that respondents have regarding the questionnaire was clarified by the researcher. The questionnaires were collected back once the respondents have completed it.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Statistic Package of Social Science [SPSS] version 21 was used for data analysis. In this study, three statistical methods such as Pearson's correlation coefficient, multiple linear regression and Sobel test were used to analyse the data.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Subscales for Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Happiness

	Subscales	Mean	Standard Deviation
Personality			
	Extraversion	29.71	4.362
	Agreeableness	32.19	4.441
	Conscientiousness	30.90	4.357
	Neuroticism	29.02	4.801
	Openness	30.85	4.465
Emotional Intelligence		107.97	13.190
Happiness		3.688	.437

According to table 1, most of the adolescents of age 13 to 17 years old in Kuala Lumpur fall under the category of agreeableness [M=32.19, SD=4.441], followed by conscientiousness [M=30.90, SD=4.357], openness [M=30.85, SD=4.465], extraversion [M=29.71, SD=4.362], and lastly neuroticism [M=29.02, SD=4.801]. The data revealed that neuroticism have the least score among all the five subscales of personality. Besides, the data has also shown that the score for emotional intelligence of 13 to 17 years old adolescents in Kuala Lumpur are more than average [M=107.97, SD=13.190] as the highest score for emotional intelligence is 165. This finding indicate that the respondents are capable to identify, facilitate, understand and regulate their own emotions. Moreover, the respondents were found to have a moderate level of happiness [M=3.688, SD= .437] as the highest score for happiness is 6. The findings shown that the 13 to17 years old adolescents in Kuala Lumpur are not particularly happy or unhappy.

Table 2. Pearson Product-moment Correlations Between Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Happiness

Variable	α	1	2	3	4	5	6
Happiness	.918	-					
Emotional Intelligence	.880	.516**	-				
Extraversion	.700	.248**	.117*	-			
Agreeableness	.698	.280**	.475**	.056	-		
Conscientiousness	.827	.232**	.211**	.082	.061	-	
Neuroticism	.818	-.162**	-.263**	-.006	-.137**	.065	-
Openness	.787	.089	.252**	.038	.188**	.083	-.104*

Note: N=384
*. P < .05 level [2-tailed].
**. P < .01 level [2-tailed].

The relationship between the Big Five personality and happiness was investigated using Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient. The findings shown that there was a positive significant correlation between happiness and the three dimensions of personality [Extraversion; r=.248, Agreeableness; r=.280, and Conscientiousness; r=.232, n= 384, p < .05]. Neuroticism was found to negatively correlated to happiness, r=-.162, n= 384, p < .05. The findings are consistent with the past studies [20, 38], thus, the alternative hypotheses are supported.

Only openness to experience was found to have no significant correlation to happiness, r=.089, n=384, P>.05. This finding has shown that openness is not related to happiness. The finding was inconsistent with the findings from past studies [20,38], therefore, the alternative hypothesized relationship is not supported.

Besides, the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate the relationship between Big Five personality and emotional intelligence. The relationship between the Big Five personality and happiness was investigated using Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient. The findings shown that there was a positive significant correlation between emotional intelligence and the four dimensions of personality [Extraversion; r=.117, Agreeableness; r=.475, Conscientiousness; r=.211, and Openness; r=.252, n= 384, p < .05]. Only neuroticism was found to negatively correlated to emotional intelligence, r=-.263, n= 384, p < .05. These findings are consistent with the findings from past studies [39, 40], thus, the alternative hypotheses are supported.

Moreover, to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and happiness, Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was conducted. A positive significant correlation was found between emotional intelligence and happiness, r=.516, n=384, p<.05. When emotional intelligence increases, happiness increases. This result is consistent with past studies [28, 27], hence, the alternative hypothesis is supported.

Table 3. Testing Mediator Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Extraversion and Happiness Using Multiple Regression [N=384]

Testing steps in mediation model	B	SE	t	Sig
Testing Step 1 Extraversion → Happiness	.025	.005	4.994	.000*
Testing Step 2 Extraversion → Emotional Intelligence	.354	.154	2.302	.022*
Testing Step 3 Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.017	.001	11.760	.000*
Testing Step 4 Extraversion →Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.019	.004	4.403	.000*

Note: B: Unstandardized Coefficients, SE: Standard Errors, *. P < .05 level [2-tailed].

In table 3, researcher had conducted multiple regression analysis to analyse the effects of emotional intelligence as a mediator on extraversion and happiness. In step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of extraversion on happiness was significant, b=.025, t[382] = 4.994, p<.05. Step 2 showed that the regression of extraversion on the mediator, emotional intelligence, was also significant, b=.354, t[382] = 2.302, p<.05. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the regression of mediator [emotional intelligence] on happiness, was significant, b=.017, t[381] = 11.760, P<.05. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator [emotional intelligence], extraversion was also significant, b=.019, t[381] = 4.403, P<.05. A partial mediation was found in the model [z=2.249, p<.05] through a Sobel test. It was found that emotional intelligence partially mediated the relationship between extraversion and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. The result of this study is consistent with Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett and Furnham's study [41], thus, the hypothesis is supported.

Table 4. Testing Mediator Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Agreeableness and Happiness Using Multiple Regression [N=384]

Testing steps in mediation model	B	SE	t	Sig
Testing Step 1 Agreeableness → Happiness	.028	.005	5.690	.000*
Testing Step 2				

Agreeableness → Emotional Intelligence	1.410	.134	10.546	.000*
Testing Step 3 Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.017	.001	11.760	.000*
Testing Step 4 Agreeableness →Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.004	.005	.899	.369

Note: B: Unstandardized Coefficients, SE: Standard Errors, *. P < .05 level [2-tailed].

Furthermore, for the table 4, a multiple regression analysis was conducted by researcher to test the mediator effects of emotional intelligence on agreeableness and happiness. In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of agreeableness on happiness was significant, b = .028, t[382] = 5.690, p < .05. Step 2 showed that the regression of the agreeableness on the mediator, emotional intelligence, was also significant, b = 1.410, t[382] = 10.546, p <.05. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the regression of mediator [emotional intelligence] on happiness, was significant, b=.017, t[381] = 11.760, P<.05. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator [emotional intelligence], agreeableness was not a significant predictor of happiness, b = .004, t[381] = .899, p>.05. A full mediation was found in the model [z = 7.208, p<.05] through a Sobel test. It was found that emotional intelligence fully mediated the relationship between agreeableness and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. The result of this study is consistent with Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett and Furnham's study [41], therefore, the hypothesis is supported.

Table 5. Testing Mediator Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Conscientiousness and Happiness Using Multiple Regression [N=384]

Testing steps in mediation model	B	SE	t	Sig
Testing Step 1 Conscientiousness → Happiness	.023	.005	4.654	.000*
Testing Step 2 Conscientiousness → Emotional Intelligence	.638	.151	4.210	.000*
Testing Step 3 Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.017	.001	11.760	.000*
Testing Step 4 Conscientiousness →Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.013	.004	2.899	.004*

Note: B: Unstandardized Coefficients, SE: Standard Errors, *. P < .05 level [2-tailed].

As for the table 5, researcher had used multiple regression analysis to test the mediator effects of emotional intelligence on conscientiousness and happiness. In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of conscientiousness on happiness was significant, b = .023, t[382] = 4.654, p < .05. Step 2 showed that the regression of the conscientiousness on the mediator, emotional intelligence, was also significant, b = .638, t[382] = 4.210, p <.05. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the regression of mediator [emotional intelligence] on happiness, was significant, b=.017, t[381] = 11.760, P<.05. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator [emotional intelligence], conscientiousness was a significant predictor of happiness, b = .013, t[381] = 2.899, p<.05. A partial mediation was found in the model [z = 3.918, p<.05] through a Sobel test. It was found that emotional intelligence partially mediated the relationship between conscientiousness and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia.

This result is consistent with Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett and Furnham's study [41], therefore, the alternative hypothesis is supported.

Table 6. Testing Mediator Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Neuroticism and Happiness Using Multiple Regression [N=384]

Testing steps in mediation model	B	SE	t	Sig
Testing Step 1 Neuroticism → Happiness	-.015	.005	-3.205	.001*
Testing Step 2 Neuroticism → Emotional Intelligence	-.722	.136	-5.324	.000*

Testing Step 3 Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	.017	.001	11.760	.000*
Testing Step 4 Neuroticism →Emotional Intelligence → Happiness	-.003	.004	-.622	.535

Note: B: Unstandardized Coefficients, SE: Standard Errors, *. P < .05 level [2-tailed].

In table 6, researcher had run multiple regression analysis to test the mediator effects of emotional intelligence on neuroticism and happiness. In Step 1 of the mediation model, the regression of neuroticism on happiness was significant, b = -.015, t[382] = -3.205, p < .05. Step 2 showed that the regression of the neuroticism on the mediator, emotional intelligence, was significant, b = -.722, t[382] = -5.324, p < .05. Step 3 of the mediation process showed that the regression of mediator [emotional intelligence] on happiness, was significant, b=.017, t[381] = 11.760, P<.05. Step 4 of the analyses revealed that, controlling for the mediator [emotional intelligence], neuroticism was not a significant predictor of happiness, b = -.003, t[381] = .622, p>.05. A full mediation was found in the model [z = -4.791, p<.05] through a Sobel test. It was found that emotional intelligence fully mediated the relationship between neuroticism and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. This finding is consistent with Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett and Furnham's study [41], thus, the alternative hypothesis is supported.

Table 7. Testing Mediator Effects of Emotional Intelligence on Openness and Happiness Using Multiple Regression [N=384]

Testing steps in mediation model	B	SE	t	Sig
Testing Step 1 Openness → Happiness	.009	.005	1.755	.080

Note: B: Unstandardized Coefficients, SE: Standard Errors

A multiple regression analysis was done by researcher to test for the mediator effects of emotional intelligence on openness and happiness. However, the current study shows that there is no significant relationship between openness and happiness. In the initial step of the mediation model, the regression of openness on happiness was not significant, b = .009, t[382] = 1.755, p > .05. Hence, researcher did not evaluate the mediation analysis for openness. The hypothesis is not supported as emotional intelligence does not mediate between the relationship of openness and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to examine the role of emotional intelligence as a mediator between personality and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. The results prove that emotional intelligence plays a partial mediator role in extraversion and happiness. However, this finding is inconsistent with Hafen, Singh, and Laursen's study [42] which did not show any mediation effect on emotional intelligence in the relationship between extraversion and happiness. Extraverts' happiness can be influenced by their favourable social situations [43]. People who score high in extraversion have the tendency to participate in pleasurable events that make them feel positive. Their engagement in these pleasurable events has enable them to learn the skills to effectively socialize with others [39]. Besides, extravert is found to have high emotional intelligence [44]. When interact with others, people with extraversion personality tend to observe other's facial expression [45] and unconsciously imitate other's behaviour [46]. As they imitate other's facial expression, they are more likely to identify, understand and feel the emotions of others which is then allow them to accurately interpret other people's facial expression [47]. Hence, their ability interprets other's emotions has enable them to easily build rapport with others and achieve success in their social relationship, thus obtain happiness. In short, extraversion can be linked to happiness through mediation of emotional intelligence such as social skills, social behaviours, positive overt and covert gestures in different social circumstances and environment [35]. In addition, the results also revealed that emotional intelligence is fully mediating the relationship between agreeableness and happiness. This result is substantiated by Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett, and Furnham [41]. According to Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett, and Furnham [41], emotional intelligence was found to have a full mediation on the relationship between agreeableness and happiness. Agreeableness is referred to an individual's nature to adapt with others. Agreeableness is significantly related to happiness whereby they tend to pose altruistic attitudes, compassionate and being thoughtful of others. Besides, agreeable people cherish relationships and easily get along with others [48]. They hold high moral values, are kind, humble, conforming and possess high capability of emotional regulations [49].

Hence, with high agreeableness, an individual tends to show more emotional intelligence as they are understanding, concern, and cooperative with others therefore regulating their emotions thus obtaining their happiness [50].

Besides, this result also proves that emotional intelligence mediates partially on the relationship between conscientiousness and happiness. This corroborates the results from Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett, and Furnham's study [41] indicating that emotional intelligence mediates partially on the relationship between conscientiousness and happiness. Conscientious people are goal oriented, hardworking, perseverance, prudent, systematic and dependable. Conscientious people have strong responsibility to complete given tasks. The study conducted by Manczak, Zapata-Gietl, and McAdams [51] have indicated that conscientiousness is linked to positive emotion. People who obtain high score on conscientiousness have high self-control which enable them to govern their own emotions. Thus, individuals with high conscientiousness tend to have high emotional intelligence as their ability to regulate emotions enable them to experience low emotional arousal and feel calm [50]. When they feel clam, they tend to have a better concentration on their tasks. Besides, they will also be more patience when dealing with difficult tasks. With better concentration and patience, conscientious people are more likely to achieve their goals and feel satisfy, thus obtaining their happiness.

Apart from that, the findings also indicated that emotional intelligence plays a role as a full mediator between neuroticism and happiness. This finding is consistent to Hafen, Singh, and Laursen's study [42] suggesting that emotional intelligence is a full mediator between neuroticism and happiness. Neurotic people are more likely to have negative emotions. They are more apprehensive, impulsive and self-conscious. Owing to their instable emotions and poor impulse control, they could not cope well with stress [50]. Neurotic people are more likely to suffer from mental illness such as anxiety and depression [52] and they don't know how to regulate their emotions. When neurotic people experience stressful event, they are more prone to avoid from acting or making decisions [53]. They are pessimistic in trying any approach to manage their emotions as they have the fear of failure [54]. This fear of failure has make them hard to achieve their long-term goals and needs which is then makes them feel unhappy. Thus, individuals with high neuroticism tends to have low emotional intelligence due to their poor coping skills. Their inability to cope with stress and also to regulate their emotions will lead them to feel emotionally unstable and make them feel unhappy. On the contrary, emotional intelligence is found to have no mediation between openness and happiness. Studies conducted by both Chamorro-Premuzic, Bennett, and Furnham [41], and Hafen, Singh, and Laursen [42] supports the finding of no sign of emotional intelligence as a mediator between openness and happiness. The happiness of a person with openness personality is related to environmental factor [55]. For instance, a person's openness to experience can be limited by parenting styles especially authoritarian parenting styles which is known as the majority parenting styles among Malaysian parents. Parents who practice authoritarian parenting styles tend to be controlling and demanding. They set strict rules to children and expect their children to obey their rules or demands without questioning [56]. Being a child with openness to experience personality, the restrictions from their parents may tend to limit their sense of freedom in thinking openly, creatively and intellectually, hence they could not fully manifest their personality, thus unable to achieve their happiness. Even though openness is related to emotional intelligence, people with openness to experience personality will still unable to achieve their happiness when their freedom of expressing their own personality is restricted.

Besides, this study also aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and happiness among adolescents in Malaysia. According to the results, emotional intelligence is found to be moderately positive significant related to happiness. This finding is aligned with studies done by Abdollahi, Abu Talib, and Motalebi [27] which states that there is a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and happiness. Individuals with high emotional intelligence will have high level of happiness. People with high emotional intelligence are expected to have high self-regulation which allow them to regulate their negative emotions when they encountered difficulties [28]. Their ability to self-regulate has help them to quickly return to their ideal conditions. Besides, high emotional intelligence individuals also tend to have the capability to empathise or understand other's emotions. They are able to interact effectively with others, and hence obtain better resources and social support which can protect them against stress [28]. Individuals who score high on emotional intelligence are happier as they tend to interpret the situations that they encounter as less stressful event [57].

The data obtained from this study is solely based on adolescent's self-report. Thus, this may lead to the occurrence of social desirability bias which may affect the accuracy of the results. To obtain a non-bias data, future researcher should consider employing various assessments when evaluating an individual's happiness rather than solely depending on the respondent's self-report. Future researcher can utilise memory and reaction time assessment, physical evaluation and reports from informant to assess happiness [58].

Besides, this study is correlational in nature, researcher could not explore the causal relationship among the variables and could not examine behaviour over an extended period of time. In order to establish causality, future researcher should carry out a longitudinal study to let the researchers and readers to have an in-depth understanding on the causal relationship between the variables.

English language was used as the medium in the survey questionnaires without translation given to the respondents which may induce discrepancy in understanding the actual meaning of the questions for respondents who are not eloquent in English language. Hence, future researcher should translate their questionnaire into various languages such as Mandarin, Malay language and Tamil language to ensure that the respondents are able to fully understand the questions provided in the questionnaire which is then reduce the chances of the respondents misinterpret the questions and affect the accuracy of the data. The fact that this research was conducted in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia only, the findings cannot be used to generalized to the whole Malaysian adolescents' population or either to the adolescents in the other parts of the world. Thus, there is a need to further replicate this study by conducting this study in other states of Malaysia so that the findings can be generalised to the whole population of adolescents in Malaysia.

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