



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**ANTECEDENT AND MEDIATORS OF LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG
UNDERGRADUATES IN THE KLANG VALLEY, MALAYSIA**

KUNNASUNTHARY A/P RAMACHANDRAN

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UNDERGRADUATES IN THE KLANG VALLEY, MALAYSIA**

By

KUNNASUNTHARY A/P S RAMACHANDRAN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

July 2019

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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By

KUNNASUNTHARY A/P S RAMACHANDRAN

July 2019

Chairman : Associate Professor Hanina Halimatusaadiah Hamsan, PhD
Faculty : Human Ecology

Higher education students, especially undergraduates who are in a transitional social period, face many confusions and challenges in their learning environment. Indeed, life stresses that undergraduates encounter can be overwhelming and can have a serious impact on their level of life satisfaction. Life satisfaction is considered to be a central aspect of students' quality of life. It is the ultimate goal, and students strive to achieve this goal throughout their learning life. Therefore, this research focused on investigating the factors which can be used as predictors of life satisfaction among undergraduate students in Klang Valley universities. This research aimed to identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction, mediated by attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction. This study applied Emotional Intelligence Model and PERMA Model as a theoretical framework. About 600 Malaysian undergraduate students from Klang Valley participated as respondent and this study chosen using a multistage cluster sampling techniques. Data were gathered through survey questionnaire and analysed using SPSS. Two types of data analyses were conducted. First, the descriptive analysis is to identify the levels of all the related variables and second the inferential analysis is performed using Chi-Square test, Pearson Correlation test, Independent T-test, Binary Logistic Regression and Hayes Bootstrapping Mediation Analysis to test nine hypothesis drawn from the research model. The findings indicate that student with higher life satisfaction had a high level of emotional intelligence, attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal attraction and interpersonal needs. Furthermore, the logistic regression analysis indicated that attachment relationship of peers and immediacy behaviour of lecturers are strongest predictors which associated with life satisfaction among undergraduates. The bootstrapping analysis showed immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and attachment relationship as the significant mediators between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. Finally, this study confirmed all the predictors jointly explained 13% of the variance life satisfaction. Based on these findings, the implication and recommendation for future

investigation to the current theoretical framework and empirical findings that social variables such as immediacy behaviour, attachment relationship and international needs more influenced undergraduates' life satisfaction compared emotional intelligence in this research context.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PEMBOLEH UBAH ANTESEDEN DAN PEMBOLEH UBAH
PENGANTARA TERHADAP KEPUASAN HIDUP DALAM KALANGAN
PELAJAR PRASISWAZAH DI LEMBAH KLANG, MALAYSIA**

Oleh

KUNNASUNTHARY A/P S RAMACHANDRAN

Julai 2019

Pengerusi : Profesor Madya Hanina Halimatusaadiah Hamsan, PhD
Fakulti : Ekologi Manusia

Pelajar terutamanya peringkat prasiswazah kini berhadapan dengan pelbagai cabaran kesan perubahan sosial. Tekanan yang dihadapi pelajar boleh mendatangkan kesan terhadap tahap kepuasan hidup mereka. Kepuasan hidup adalah penting untuk pelajar bagi kualiti hidup yang baik. Oleh itu, ia adalah matlamat utama bagi pelajar untuk mencapainya sepanjang pembelajaran mereka. Kajian ini memfokus kepada pengenalpastian faktor-faktor yang dapat meramal kepuasan hidup dalam kalangan pelajar prasiswazah di universiti di sekitar Lembah Klang. Objektif kajian ini adalah mengenalpasti hubungan antara kecerdasan emosi dan kepuasan hidup serta kesan pengantara iaitu perapatan, kelangsungan, keperluan perseorangan dan daya tarikan perseorangan. Kajian ini mengaplikasikan model '*Emotional Intelligence*' dan model '*PERMA*' sebagai kerangka teori. Seramai 600 pelajar prasiswazah dari Lembah Klang telah terlibat sebagai responden dan kajian menggunakan persampelan berkelompok secara berperingkat. Data dikumpul melalui borang soal selidik dan dianalisis menggunakan SPSS. Dua jenis data analisis dijalankan, pertama analisis diskriptif yang digunakan untuk mengenalpasti tahap setiap pembolehubah yang berkaitan, dan kedua analisis inferens menggunakan untuk menguji sembilan hipotesis yang diambil daripada kerangka kajian. Kajian ini membuktikan bahawa pelajar yang mempunyai tahap kepuasan yang tinggi, memiliki tahap kecerdasan emosi, perapatan, kelangsungan, keperluan perseorangan dan daya tarikan perseorangan yang tinggi. Regresi logistik analisis mengemukakan bahawa perapatan bersama rakan dan kelangsungan bersama pensyarah adalah peramal yang paling kuat berkaitan dengan kepuasan hidup di kalangan prasiswazah. Analisis *Bootstrapping* menunjukkan perapatan, kelangsungan dan keperluan perseorangan sebagai faktor-faktor pengantara penting dalam hubungan antara kecerdasan emosi dan kepuasan hidup. Berdasarkan penemuan ini, implikasi dan cadangan untuk kajian di masa hadapan dengan merujuk kepada kerangka teoretikal semasa dan penemuan empirikal iaitu faktor sosial seperti perapatan, kelangsungan dan keperluan perseorangan lebih

mempengaruhi prasiswa kepuasan hidup berbanding dengan kecerdasan emosi dalam konteks kajian ini.



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Kunnasunthary Ramachandran

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Hanina Halimatusaadiah binti Hamsan, PhD

Associate Professor
Faculty of Human Ecology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Ezhar b Tamam, PhD

Professor
Faculty of Modern Language and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Azlina binti Mohd Khir, PhD

Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Human Ecology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

ZALILAH MOHD SHARIFF, PhD

Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies Universiti
Putra Malaysia

Date:

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Name and Matric No. : Kunnasunthary A/P S Ramachandran GS32407

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Signature: _____

Name of Chairman
of Supervisory
Committee:

Associate Professor

Dr. Hanina Halimatusaadiah binti Hamsan

Signature: _____

Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee:

Professor Dr. Ezhar b Tamam

Signature: _____

Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee:

Dr. Azlina binti Mohd Khir

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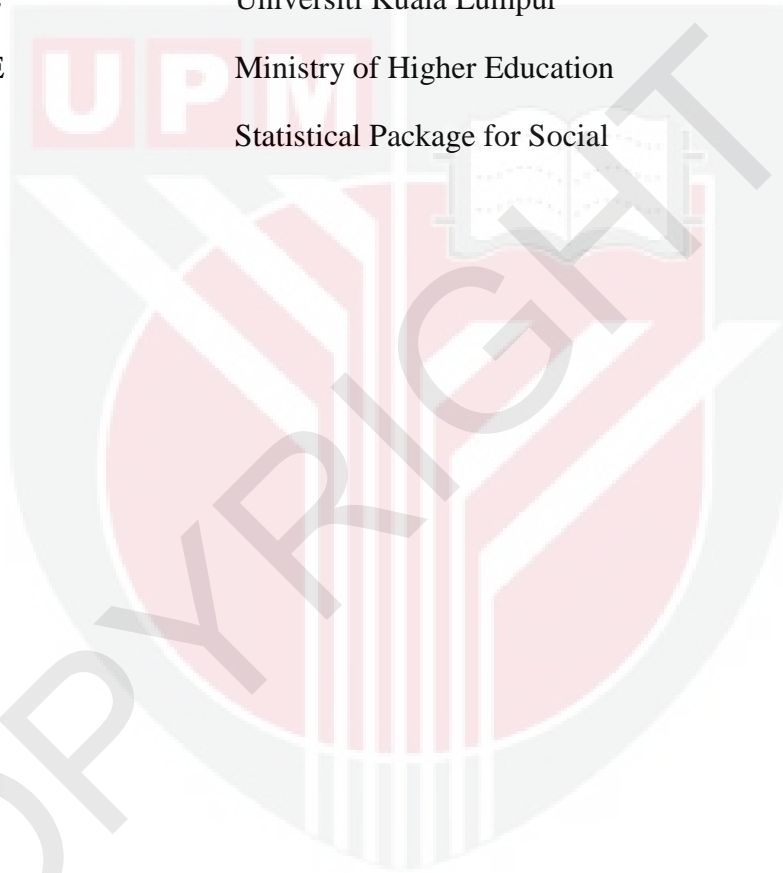


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IPTA	Institute of Public
IPTS	Institute of Private
UM	Universiti Malaya
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UniTEN	Universiti Tenaga Nasional
UniKL	Universiti Kuala Lumpur
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Life satisfaction is an essential construct in social psychology. From the time of Aristotle since 1925, the pursuit of life satisfaction for a good life has been a major concern in foundational mission of psychology (Bugay, 2001). In a major study of 2009 based on a systematic literature review on life satisfaction, 392 abstracts were reviewed and 122 empirical studies were identified under a social psychology study (Proctor, Linley, & Maltby, 2009). Among 122 identified articles from PsychoINFO and Psycarticles, only 23 articles were related to young adult life satisfaction. It goes without saying that it is vital for any society to take into consideration the satisfaction level of young adults and to study this factor in a social psychological context.

Satisfaction in life is formed from the person's individual assessment of their own quality of life by personal intention, expectation, performance and personal benchmarks (Lin, 2007). Quality of life is, in fact, a multi-aspect evaluation of the equality between the subjectively expected life standard and the objectively assessed life standard. Martin and Schumacher (2003) argued that there are domains in life satisfaction which can be viewed from different perceptions such as quality of life. Therefore, in young adult life, satisfaction can be viewed from different perspectives of situation based on the external and internal factors of social psychology.

Proctor et al., (2009), posited that fostering positive life satisfaction results in positive personal behaviour among young adults. Although the majority of research studies conducted in social psychology generally offer an expectedly positive association between life satisfaction and its benefit to young adults, there are clearly also many negative effects from dissatisfaction levels among young adults documented, such as stress, psychological problems and disorders. Based on an International Health Interview Survey Report 2013 by Layard and Sachs, (2014) that young adults from 18 to 25 years old easily tend towards high dissatisfaction levels, especially those studying in higher education institutions.

Students satisfactory levels can be influenced by both internal and external environmental factors (Tackett, 2001). Internal factors tend to focus on their home living while external factors can be stated as the college or university setting. Students' life dissatisfaction is mainly focused on the environment of a higher education institution. Naturally, one reason may be living away from their family for the first time in a tertiary education setting, sometimes in uncomfortable and inconvenient conditions throughout their university life.

University life can be particularly disruptive for the student as it includes challenging new responsibilities, complicated academic tasks, different unknown experiences and the pressures and possibilities of achievement for the future. For most students, the university is the first experience of separation and living apart from their parents, siblings and relatives. Living alone increases demands in various aspects of a student's life. University life, therefore, increases the possibility of a high level of dissatisfaction among students. In this sense, a student's campus life satisfaction is one of the most common psychosocial problems among university students (Molooki.M, 2015).

Figure 1.1 shows the percentage of factors that caused students to be the unhappiest on the Happiness Index Report 2015 reported by Helliwell, Layard and Sachs (2016). Based on the pie chart, as many as 50% of students claimed to be unhappiest because of school life rather than from personal reasons, lack of sleep and money in the studying environment. It could be said that the place of study plays a notable role in determining the happiness level of a student's life.

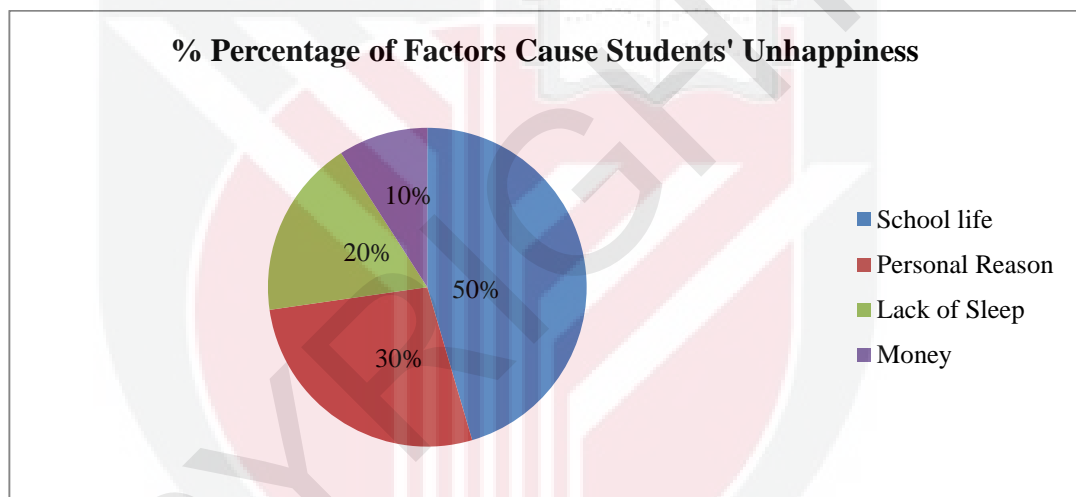


Figure 1.1 : Percentage of Factors Cause Students Unhappiness (World Happiness Report, 2015)

Based on this exploration, it is hoped that the promotion of the well-being and happiness of students will contribute to their academic success (Bucknam, 2013). Also, if students are happy with their university experiences, not only will they be more favourable towards remaining in their universities but will eventually tell their families, relatives and friends about their positive experiences and encourage them to follow their path. Conversely, if students are dissatisfied with their campus environment, only negative news is shared with others (Kim, 2004).

This study underlines how the differing elements of social psychology merge together in the question of a student's life satisfaction as an undergraduate. In fact, social psychology helps to explain the important role of the domains of relationship and personality among students within the context of a student's surroundings (Balogun,

Adetula, & Olowodunoye, 2013). Based on recent evidence from previous studies, relation variables such as cognitive and ability traits mutually stimulate each other to build a satisfaction environment among students in the learning process.

Many predictors, directly and indirectly, affect student life satisfaction on campuses. It is common for students to build relationships at different levels with others such as peers and lecturers who are there to provide them emotional and cognitive support in their university life (Kim, 2004; Murphy, 2006; Nabavi et al., 2014). Students who are satisfied by positive emotions can contribute positively to their relations with peers and lecturers at the campus. On the other hand, students who are dissatisfied fail to meet their needs and expectations in terms of their quality of life at university (Kim, 2004). It could, therefore, be said that one of the main variables which influences students' life satisfaction emotionally is emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is known as a mental process which does not act independently but is a combination process which forms a foundation for an individual's mental capacity (J.D. Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Indeed, emotional intelligence is a meta-ability for evaluating how well individuals can apply their capacity and available skills, including genius behaviours. These behaviours can be identified, evaluated, assessed, measured and modified by individual development growth to obtain experience and knowledge (Schutte et al., 2001). In a campus setting, students require the capability to adapt to the university environment. Self-mindfulness and other signs of emotional intelligence within a university environment, allow students to appraise their human strengths and tackle their potential weakness, ultimately serving their insights on professional options and their academic endeavours (Kim, 2004).

Emotional intelligence is a useful component in predicting life satisfaction and is theoretically linked with the life satisfaction model (On, 2006; Goleman, 1996; Mayer et al., 2000). A growing body of research implies that this link can be used to identify the positive university experiences among students. Students who are able to perceive, utilize and understand this emotional information directly increase their lifestyle satisfaction on campus.

Emotional Intelligence has been identified as a main construct in psychology and is significantly associated with social variables under social psychology. The current study attempted to show how psychological variables merge together with social variables in determining the level of satisfaction among undergraduates. Recently, the life dissatisfaction of students who are away from home seems to be increasing, according to various indirect indicators such as attachment relationships, interpersonal needs, immediacy behaviour and interpersonal attraction to the new environment of university. Sharnowski (2009) found that the university period is a very jumbled phase of young adult (student) life, where there is disclosure to new surroundings, culturally, physically, socially and academically. Also, new relationships are established with others such as lecturers and peers within the campus community. It can be said that attachment plays a significant role in establishing relationships with other students, peers and lecturers which indirectly affects student life satisfaction on campus.

An attachment relationship, as stated by Bowlby (1969), is the bond between perceiver and provider. This relationship specifically provides a prototype for subsequent intimate relationships. In the university setting, receivers are students, while providers are peers and lecturers. These all mediate an attachment bond between emotional intelligence and a student's life satisfaction. The extraordinary feature of the attachment relationship is that the students prevail or seeks closeness from the relationship by positive emotion if found, result in feelings of comfort and satisfaction (Boncher, 2003). This study determined to analyse the attachment relationship as a mediating variable. This is necessary because there are few studies which only examine attachment relationship as a mediator between emotional intelligence and students' life satisfaction in the university environment (Boncher, 2003; Duru.K.C, 2015).

Past studies have shown that the immediacy behaviour of an instructor was observed by students as being more emphatic and effective, in turn, due to an expanding effect towards the lecturer (McCroskey, Daly & Sorensen, 1976). Such studies indicated immediacy eloquence as a potentially significant variable in improving quality of life effectiveness. This study plans to investigate immediacy behaviour as a mediator variable between emotional intelligence and students' life satisfaction. When a student's emotional intelligence, skills and abilities increase independently, positive thoughts are generated on lecturer immediacy behaviour which leads to the creation of a suitable environment for student satisfaction on campus (Mottet et al., 2008).

Interpersonal needs, as defined by Schutz (1978), are needs which are satisfied only through the accomplishment of emotional relations with others. Interpersonal needs, therefore, influence the aspect of well-being that is life satisfaction. A situation in which an individual is unable to fulfil his/her needs, for example if he/she feels emotional loneliness, can lead to insecurity abandonment and lack of satisfaction. Being unsatisfied in such a way can result in the individual experiencing dissatisfaction with their living environment (Ramanathan, 2008). This study, therefore, aimed to discover the interpersonal needs for a student's life satisfaction.

According to Ekman (1977), interpersonal attraction is known as one of the variables which impact on students' life satisfaction. The more people are attracted to one another, the more they feel comfortable communicating with each other. It can be stated that the more students are attracted to their peers, the more influence those peers will have on students in their interpersonal attraction. The judgements regarding liking or being attracted to another person will depend on emotional cognitive thinking. Supporting this observation, this study plans to examine whether interpersonal attraction of peers mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction or vice versa. It should be noted that there is a lack of studies which identify interpersonal attraction as a mediating variable in the field of social psychology.

Life satisfaction is a powerful indicator of quality of life. Life satisfaction predicts how individuals assess their whole life for long term process. Life conditions and surroundings are most important factor for a person's satisfaction. Malaysians are, comparatively, a little more dissatisfied with life than the citizens of western countries, based on the World Values Survey 2011 database (Howel et al, 2012). Malaysian students, either attending government or private universities, were shown to have higher levels of psychiatric disorders than the students of universities in America or Europe, according to Nardin et al., (2009). This lower level of life satisfaction leads to lower levels of mental health and loneliness. Clearly, high levels of loneliness are experienced by students, who are far away from family contact, so a lack of strong social relationships might result in low satisfaction. This study suggests that the different living style of Malaysians from that in western countries, both socially and culturally, is the main reason for this disparity.

An understanding life satisfaction among Malaysian students is very important within the area of social psychology to be able to properly understand and forecast the factors (emotional intelligence, attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs, and interpersonal attraction) which influence students' life style at university. Identifying these factors also allows for precautions to be taken to overcome dissatisfaction among Malaysia students in campus life who are pursuing their degrees as undergraduate students. However, to date, little research has been undertaken based on this subject matter (Howell et al., 2012; Brown, 2015) and the first 'warning model' of this study may aid in preventing the consequences of further student dissatisfaction with their undergraduate life. Faculty and administration members may develop alternative ways of enhancing student satisfaction and retention in undergraduate programmes because emotions skills are also known as having an essential effect on student well-being and experiences at campus.

1.2 Statement of problem

Dissatisfaction with life has become a growing cause for concern among undergraduate students, who study apart or away from family. Due to the vital role of life satisfaction in universities, psychologists have focused on life satisfaction as the main part of the learning process (Marzuki et al., 2018). Following this, the task of identifying the needs and the effective factors that are related to students' attitudes and feelings towards their life satisfaction has become paramount. The question of students' life satisfaction is essential in Malaysia universities, where it can enhance the learning environment and increase the performance of universities themselves. Based on the Malaysia Well-being Report of 2017, students participation in tertiary education slightly decreased from 2003 (32.6%) to 2017 (31.7%) (Marzuki et al., 2018). The major reason given was that social well-being was slightly poorer in the higher education environment. This is of real concern, as higher education must play a significant role in providing an environment for student satisfaction, as they are the future leaders of society.

Additionally, based on a National Health Interview Survey, Bakar et al., (2017) reported that young adults around the age of 18-24 years old showed more depressive symptoms (50%) compared to young adults aged around 25-29 years old (45%), from the year 2006 until 2014 (Figure 1.2). This means that young adult (18-24 years old) who are pursuing their tertiary degree (known as undergraduate students) were facing more mental health symptoms, compared to working young adults (25-29 years old). With this concern, this study has selected undergraduate students as a typical population who suffering depressive symptoms in their learning environment. Unsurprisingly, dissatisfaction with life correlates significantly with depressive symptoms.

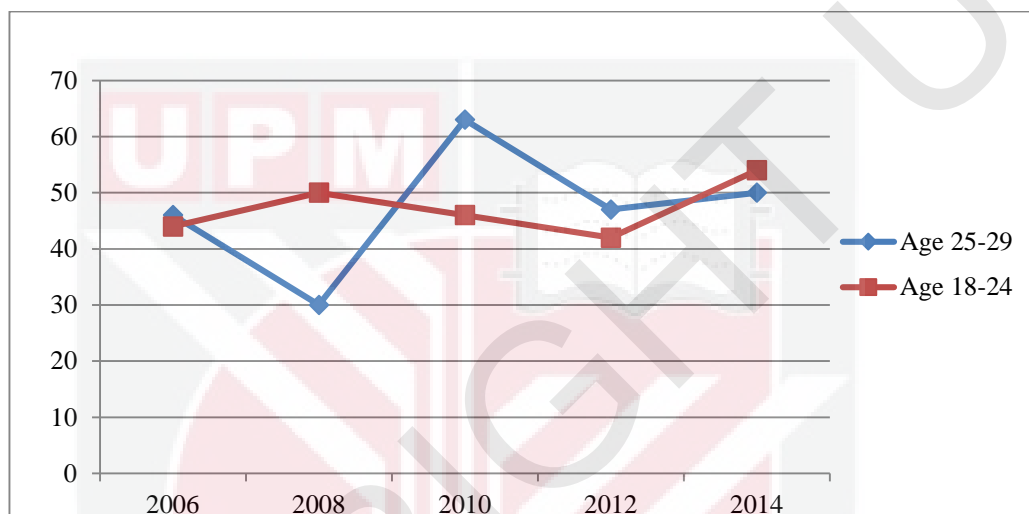


Figure 1.2 : Percentage of Depressiveness among Young Adult Aged (18-24) and (25-29) (National Health Interview Survey, 2015)

Asserting that happiness and well-being are the most ordinary goals in life, the UN's World Happiness Report (Helliwell, 2018) identified six important components: having someone to count on; freedom from happiness obstacles ; perceived freedom to make life choices, healthy life expectancy and satisfaction with the quality of life. Malaysia was ranked the 61st, according to the World Happiness Report of 2017. It was also reported that Malaysia had dropped ten places from its previous ranking of 51st in 2016 (Marzuki et al., 2018). Of course, Malaysians ask why, according to these statistics, they "feel unhappier than ever" but this is a complex question which this study attempted to address, seeking to identify exactly what factors lead to a lack of well-being for Malaysians; particularly among the upcoming generation who are undergraduates. As life satisfaction is one of the major criteria for individual fulfilment, well-being and happiness, this is a vitally important question (Mehrad, 2015).

A low level of life satisfaction is one of the main obstacles affecting students in higher education institutions and can be considered an independent variable, as it has the power to control or mitigate negative views of life satisfaction at a place of study

(Forgeard, Jayawickreme, Kern, & Seligman, 2011). Of course, inadequate conditions may cause low life satisfaction levels among students and consequently reduce their presentation and performance at university and finding an appropriate solution and applying it correctly can be beneficial to students' life development.

In social psychology, there is a lack of studies of relationship variables in terms of their effect on socialization and life satisfaction (Proctor et al., 2009). Indeed, the role of relationship variables as a social domain in social psychology for answering questions about life satisfaction needs to be taken into account, as student dissatisfaction has both psychological and sociological dimensions. This study interprets emotional intelligence as a psychological dimension, while attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction are social elements within the domain of social psychology (Frisch, 2013; Larsen & Eid, 2008; Schneider & Alderfer, 1973; Tackett, 2001).

It is imperative to identify factors which have a strong relationship with life satisfaction (Ismail, Hafezi, Mohd Nor & Baghini, 2014). Clearly, emotional intelligence has a direct relation with perceived life satisfaction, while attachment relationships, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction all have an indirect effect on life satisfaction. Also, emotional intelligence is one of the best predictors of achievement in life: 'what it means to be smart' (Gibbs, 2010). In higher education institutions, this is clearly relevant to student success and retention of university fresh graduates. Emotional intelligence means the capability to apply emotions in a positive manner but undergraduate students may not utilise their emotions in a positive way when negative emotions take over their cognitive intellectual behaviour. It is, therefore, essential to identify what particular elements of emotional intelligence lead to negative student life satisfaction. It is also important to discover exactly what factors have an indirect influence on emotional intelligence and life satisfaction, such as attachment relationships, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction.

An attachment relationship refers to when individuals gain or pursue closeness from a relationship, resulting in comfort, warm feelings and protection (Ainsworth, 1989). It is well known that in the college setting, students being away from their families always face obstacles in building attachment relationships with their peers and lecturers, indirectly leading them to have less satisfaction in their college life. Furthermore, students who are emotionally struggling with mental health tend to have fewer attachments, viewing their lecturers and peers in a more negative light and having a lower level of confidence in those relationships. Consequently, emotional intelligence directly influences peers and lecturers' attachment relationship, while the factor of attachment relationship indirectly impacts students' life satisfaction. Therefore, this study examines the cause of problems in peers and lecturers' attachment relationship towards students as a mediator between emotional intelligence and students' life satisfaction.

Also, interpersonal needs among students who do not feel fulfilled might be a cause of life dissatisfaction in their learning environment. Students' interpersonal needs can be defined as tolerance, control and expression of feelings (Schutz, 1978). Although prior studies have investigated interpersonal needs in various contexts, there has been a general lack of studies of the interpersonal needs of students in terms of their life satisfaction at university. This study, therefore, addressed this gap in the literature on interpersonal needs understood as a mediator variable between life satisfaction and emotional intelligence. In Malaysia, so far, there has also been a lack of studies in this area, even though it is widely agreed to be one of the important predictors of student life satisfaction. According to Wang (2007), a lot of undergraduate students have complications in facing the challenges of balancing their lifestyle according to the university environment. There is a need to understand a proper socialisation process in order to facilitate healthy adaptations for living and learning to ultimately achieve good academic results. Studies on lecturer immediacy behaviour towards student life satisfaction are still very limited (Ismail & Yusof, 2010). Consequently, this study endeavours to explore how the immediacy behaviour of lecturers acts as a mediating variable which may influence the relationship between an input variable (emotional intelligence) and output variable (life satisfaction) in the universities of Malaysia.

Another essential point is that relevant parties in higher education are not taking serious concerns about interpersonal attraction in terms of 'socio-emotional' problems which may lead to unhappiness with the surrounding environment (McCroskey et al., 1998). Peers are a particular group who are very close to students' lives and exert a large influence on their lifestyle at university. The combination of poor interpersonal attraction with peers, accompanied by a lack of emotional intelligence, might threaten the happiness, well-being and satisfaction among undergraduate students at university. As above, there is also a lack of studies concentrating on this issue.

Based on a thorough review of the related social psychology literature, very little research has concentrated on the importance of direct and indirect factors to the question of life satisfaction at educational organisations. Indeed, it is necessary to identify and evaluate precisely which social and psychological elements merge together to cause high dissatisfaction levels among students. Previous research in Malaysia tended rather to focus on the well-being of working people, marriage couples and not on life satisfaction among undergraduate students, in spite of this being an important concern for Malaysian higher education (Marzuki et al., 2018; Bakar et al., 2017; Choon, Hasbullah, Ahmad & Ling, 2013; Razak, 2016b; Nabavi et al., 2014; Sabri & Falahati, 2012).

1.3 Research Questions

This study was attempted to determine the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and life satisfaction which are mediated by attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers. Based on the discussion argue earlier, prior research aimed to response the questions below:

1. What are the levels of emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students, interpersonal attraction of peers and life satisfaction?
2. Are there any relationships between the socio-demographic characteristics of undergraduate students and their level of emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students, interpersonal attraction of peers and life satisfaction?
3. Are there any relationships between emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students, interpersonal attraction of peers and life satisfaction of students? What are the predictor(s) of life satisfaction among undergraduate students by the level of socio-demographic characteristics, emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers?
4. Do attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction among undergraduate students?

1.4 Research Objectives

The main research objective of present research is to discover the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction, which is mediated by attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers. Specifically, the objectives of the study were:

1. To identify the levels of emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students, interpersonal attraction of peers and life satisfaction.
2. To determine the relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the undergraduate students and their level of emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students, interpersonal attraction of peers and life satisfaction.
3. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers and life satisfaction of students.
4. To determine the predictor(s) of life satisfaction among undergraduate students by the level of socio-demographic characteristics, emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers.

5. To determine the mediating effect of attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers on the relationship emotional intelligence and life satisfaction among undergraduate students.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses of the current research were applied from the present study objective and are consisted of ten major hypotheses, follow by subordinate Hypotheses. Below, are the major hypotheses which were examined.

Research Objective 2:

- Ha1:* There is significant relationship between socio demographic characteristic (age, gender, educational background and household income) and life satisfaction of undergraduate students in universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.
- Ha2:* There is significant relationship between socio demographic characteristic (age, gender, educational background and household income) and emotional intelligence of undergraduate students in universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.
- Ha3:* There is significant relationship between socio demographic characteristic of undergraduate students (age, gender, educational background and household income) and attachment relationship of peers and lecturers in universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.
- Ha4:* There is significant relationship between socio demographic characteristic of undergraduate students (age, gender, educational background and household income) and immediacy behaviour of lecturers in universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.
- Ha5:* There is significant relationship between socio demographic characteristic (age, gender, educational background and household income) and interpersonal needs of undergraduate students in universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.
- Ha6:* There is significant relationship between socio demographic characteristic of undergraduate students (age, gender, educational background and household income) and interpersonal attraction of peers in universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.

Research Objective 3:

Ha7: There is significant relationship between emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behavior of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students, interpersonal attraction of peers scores based on life satisfaction of students in Klang Valley Universities, Malaysia.

Ha7a There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction

Ha7b(i) There is a significant relationship between attachment relationship of lecturers and life satisfaction.

Ha7b(ii) There is a significant relationship between attachment relationship of peers and life satisfaction.

Ha7c There is a significant relationship between immediacy behavior and life satisfaction.

Ha7d There is a significant relationship between interpersonal needs and life satisfaction.

Ha7e There is a significant relationship between interpersonal attraction and life satisfaction.

Research Objective 4:

Ha8: There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction among undergraduate students by the level of socio-demographic characteristics, emotional intelligence, attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behavior of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers in Klang Valley Universities, Malaysia.

Ha8a There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by age.

Ha8b There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by gender.

Ha8c There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by religion.

Ha8d(i) There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by CGPA.

Ha8d(ii) There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by universiti.

Ha8e There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by household income.

Ha8f There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by emotional intelligence.

Ha8g(i) There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by attachment relationship of lecturers.

Ha8g(ii) There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by attachment relationship of peers.

Ha8h There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by immediacy behaviour of lecturer.

Ha8i There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by interpersonal needs of students.

Ha8j There is a significant prediction of life satisfaction by interpersonal attraction of peers.

Research Objective 5:

Ha9: Attachment relationship of peers and lecturers, immediacy behaviour of lecturers, interpersonal needs of students and interpersonal attraction of peers mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction among undergraduate students in Universities in Klang Valley Universities, Malaysia.

Ha9a(i) Attachment relationship of lecturers mediates significantly the relationships between emotional intelligence with life satisfaction.

Ha9a(ii) Attachment relationship of peers mediates significantly the relationships between emotional intelligence with life satisfaction

Ha9b Immediacy behavior of lecturers mediates significantly the relationships between emotional intelligence with life satisfaction

Ha9c Interpersonal needs of students mediates significantly the relationships between emotional intelligence with life satisfaction

Ha9d Interpersonal attraction of peers mediates significantly the relationships between emotional intelligence with life satisfaction

1.6 Significance of the Study

The present study contributed to the field of social psychology, human communication and self-development by offering empirical evidence on factors that reliably predict life satisfaction among undergraduate students (Ang, Talib, Tan, Tan, & Yaacob, 2015; Chiong, 2016; Ling.S, 2015; Mehrad.A, 2015; Molooki.M, 2015). This study has proposed indicators of life satisfaction among undergraduate students and suggests that non-academic factors such as university setting, students intellectual and emotional skills, the closeness of peers and lecturers, the personality of students, the quality of their interpersonal communication, all have an effect on student satisfaction. Naturally, measuring life satisfaction is a subjective issue and an issue for social psychological study, where student life satisfaction is examined as subjective issue from a necessarily behavioural perspective. Social psychology also concerns larger issues, such as the value of the individual, the importance of the subjective perspective in evaluating life and the classification of one's own well-being (Bakar et al., 2017). This study contributed appreciates the dynamism of social psychology and contributes to this wider debate.

Regarding educational studies, there is also a lack of studies on life satisfaction for students (Sabri & Falahati, 2012). It should be noted that although life satisfaction might be measured typically via factors such as wealth, health, career and religion, the effect of the learning environment is also known to have a potentially critical effect. Therefore, it is essential to know how far an individual is satisfied with their life in the context of the overall learning process, without omitting the value of wealth, health and religiosity. This study explored the nexus between life satisfaction, emotional intelligence, attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction among undergraduate students in universities in the Klang

Valley, Malaysia. Also, awareness of the nature of dissatisfaction and developing a primary warning model may assist in preventing negative developments among these students.

In summary, the present study offers significant insight into a serious problem on campus for students. This can assist academic institutions, public institutions of higher learning (IPTA) and private institutions of higher learning (IPTS) and for the Ministry of Higher Education (KPT) in identifying aspects that most influence the life satisfaction of undergraduate students. There is, at least, clearly a need for all stakeholders to acknowledge the importance of emotional intelligence, attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction in order to foster life satisfaction among students in the future. It should be of concern that well-being measurements in Malaysia generally show slightly lower scores than for western societies (Yogeesvaran, 2013). It is hoped that the findings of this study will help those involved in the management of institutions of higher education to work to develop alternative strategies to improve student well-being and satisfaction in Malaysian universities.

Also, at an individual level, this study may benefit undergraduate students who are starting a new life on campus by helping them to identify the causes of their dissatisfaction in their new environment. The finding from this present study might also be used as a guideline for future researchers intending to develop a predictor framework for life satisfaction. At the national level, this study will be a significant help by providing information, knowledge and data on undergraduate students in Malaysia universities at both government and private higher intuitions.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations that must be identified for this study. The main limitation of the survey for this study was the lack of current statistics about Malaysian students' well-being. It was, therefore, necessary to combine and manipulate worldwide happiness reports for the Malaysian context. As stated previously, this study also had to limit the range of the respondents due to the scope of the study: being only undergraduates. The reason for this was that undergraduate students tended to stay full time on campus compare to most postgraduate students. Also, this study was limited to the Klang Valley area. This location was selected because of the presence of a large number of undergraduate students in the area. It is also necessary to mention that, due to scope of this study, the essential research limitation was having to identify only some, rather than many, certain critical underlying variables which influence life satisfaction: emotional intelligence, attachment relationship, immediacy behaviour, interpersonal needs and interpersonal attraction.

1.8 Definitions of Main Terms

Life Satisfaction

Conceptual: Nabavi et al., (2014) defined that life satisfaction refer to feeling of happiness and circumstances of positive emotion that a person may possess it with the accomplishment of one's wants and desire in life.

Operational: In this study, life satisfaction evaluated by extended life satisfaction scale that was proposed by (Alfonso, Allison, Rader, & Gorman, 1996) which include three dimension to measure students life satisfaction. These three dimension based on family life, social life and learning life which measure how life satisfaction affected by respondents. The questions of life satisfaction test in concept of respondent's perceptions by applying seven-point Likert Scale ranging from (1- strongly agree to 7- strongly disagree).

Emotional Intelligence

Conceptual: Mayer, Salovey, Caruso and Sitarenios (2001) defined that emotional intelligence is the ability to receive and express emotions about their surrounding environment, subsequent feeling and utilizing the information.

Operational: In this study, emotional intelligence evaluated by emotional intelligence scale that was proposed by (Schutte et al., 1998) which include four dimension to measure students emotional intelligence. These four dimension refer to perception of emotion, utilizing emotion, managing emotion and social skills. It was measured by using a five-point Likert scale.

Attachment Relationship

Conceptual: Boncher (2003) defined that attachment relationship defines as reciprocal bond between child and primary caregiver in social interaction. In this study child define as students, while primary caregiver as peers and lecturers

Operational: In this study, attachment relationship refers to respondents' perception towards peers' attachment and lecturer attachment at campus. Additionally, it also measures how students perceived their peers and lecturers' attachment at campus by using a five-point Likert scale. Attachment relationship measured by using inventory of peer/teacher (IPPA) developed by Bowlby & Ainsworth (1969).

Immediacy Behaviour

Conceptual: Christophel (1990) defined immediacy as the degree of receive physical and psychological closeness among two individual.

Operational: In this study, it was defined as a person's observation regarding their lecturer immediacy behaviour presumed as motivational abilities in student's life, by measured with using five-point Likert scale. Immediacy behaviour measured by Christophel (1990) which included two dimension, that verbal and nonverbal cues.

Interpersonal Needs

Conceptual: According to Mayer et al., (2001), interpersonal needs means a person necessity and insufficiency that are satisfied only through the accomplishment of a satisfactory interaction with others.

Operational: Interpersonal needs in this study were defined as a set of needs which consists of three main components: inclusion, control and affection. It was measured by using a six-point Likert scale. In this study, Interpersonal needs measured by Schutz (1978) which contains three dimension which are control, affection and inclusion in determine interpersonal needs among students.

Interpersonal Attraction

Conceptual: McCroskey et al., (1976) define interpersonal attraction as judgement on liking and feeling about other's impression or appearance.

Operational: Interpersonal attraction refers to judgment on an individual on their peers' attraction by interpersonal and measured by using five-point Likert scale. In this study, interpersonal attraction tested by McCroskey et al., (1976) scale based on physical and person attractiveness.

Undergraduate Student

Conceptual: Adnan and Mavi (2015) undergraduate student is a person pursuing degree as tertiary education at higher education institutions. Malaysia Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) consists of 31 public university and 72 private university

Operational: Undergraduate students who study in the public and private Malaysian higher education institutions in Klang Valley. Undergraduate students learning at Klang valley universities were eligible respondents of this study as it serves as the highest general population of students in

Malaysia. Respondents selected are currently pursuing degree between the age group of 19 to 26 years old.

1.9 Organizations of the Thesis

Five chapters systematically organised into this report. This section covered an introduction to this study. Along with elaboration of problem statement, research questions, objectives of research, hypotheses and significance of the study, conceptual and operational definition of terms, followed with limitation of the study.

Chapter 2 reviewed prior research and empirical task in the field of satisfaction of life. It supplied an elaboration on how past empirical research have confront with the life satisfaction issue. This study criticised the theoretical approaches to life satisfaction and other predictors. The first theory reviewed in this chapter is PERMA model as the theoretical basis of present study. Meanwhile, the second theory is emotional intelligence theory, addressed the influence of emotional intelligence in the predication of life satisfaction.

Chapter 3 provided the methodology of research for the study, in which contained the research design, measurement regarding to life satisfaction and selected variables applied in the present study, measurement, techniques of sampling, techniques of gathering data and methods of data analyses.

Chapter 4 drew the findings result and discussion. Firstly, it explained the respondents' characteristics followed by description of survey distributions variables analyses. Subsequently, additional analysis was presented for every research objective. The hypotheses testing and explanation result were also displayed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 assigned the conclusion with regards to the research objective and implication in terms of theoretical, policy makers and deficiency in research elaborate in this chapter.

1.10 Chapter Summary

Present section displayed an introduction of life satisfaction, problem statement, questions of research and objectives of research and hypotheses. Additionally, significance of study, scope and limitation also were discussed in this chapter, followed by conceptual and operational definition of terms.

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BIODATA OF STUDENT

Prior to enrolling in doctorate program in fall of 2019, Kunnasunthary spent seven years developing her career in the academic line. She has been in numerous roles as a Lab Coordinator at Faculty of Veterinar, Universiti Putra Malaysia. She was also private tutor at International School, Labuan. She has received a scholarship from Malaysia Government to pursue her PhD.

She graduated from Universiti Putra Malaysia with Diploma in Animal Health and Production in 2003 and degree in Communication in 2008. She received her Master in Human Communication in 2011 from Universiti Putra Malaysia. She started her PhD at Universiti Putra Malaysia in November 2012.



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