

The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Army Ethos in the Malaysian Army

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Abstract: *Army professionals must display great competence to control certain situations, particularly in conflict zones, where they must understand and comprehend their subordinates' feelings in order to make informed decisions. The army personnel require a formula or technique to develop their competency in controlling their emotions, recognising the feelings of others, and making sound decisions in any situation, whether during war or conflict. These emotional situations relate to emotional intelligence. The army ethos entails 9 pillars of philosophical doctrine. These philosophical disciplines represent the hallmark of the army. The purpose of the study looks into the relationship of emotional intelligence to the army ethos. From the findings, it was found that emotional intelligence does certainly improve the level of the army ethos. From the 5 dimensions, emotional recognition and expression and emotions direct cognition were found to have a strong impact.*

Keywords: performance, strength, ability

1. Introduction

The Malaysian Army is always committed in assisting the government and the people in any situation regardless of natural or health disasters and is always ready to work with other government agencies. This was displayed in the recent floods. The Armed Forces sprang into movement on Friday, December 17, 2021, supporting evacuate flood sufferers to comfort centres, with out looking forward to any directive from the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma). The Army ethos is primarily based totally at the features portrayed via way of means of a tremendous variety of gallant warriors in Malaysian history. To display such abilities requires a certain amount of skill, according to Zea, Sarayu, & Nuzulul, (2020), this skill is related to emotional intelligence. During tough and critical situations like the recent floods, the military personnels needed to work under stressful conditions. They had to monitor not only their own feelings but also of others which includes personnels from other government agencies and the flood victims. This requires a control of their emotions (Oden, Lohani, Crutchfield, & Rivers, 2015). The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship of emotional intelligence and the Malaysian army ethos.

2. Literature Review

The Malaysian Army

The Malaysian Army motto "GAGAH SETIA" or known as "Strong and Loyal" in English. The military personnel are required to be resilient in different circumstances to demonstrate their indestructible performance towards their organisation. The army ethos is a set of military beliefs that encompass encompassing ideal values, service norms, norms of service, and ethics. Likewise, it is the practice of all military personnel to demonstrate a desirable amount level of synergy towards in relation to the effectiveness and effectiveness of the military organization. These values are always internalised and portrayed displayed by all soldiers to show give a respectable picture image of the Malaysian Army. The Army Ethos entails 9 pillars of philosophical doctrine, namely: Belief in God, Discipline, Loyalty, Sacrifice, Esprit de Corps, Integrity, Courage, Honour, and Professionalism.

The Army Ethos was developed based on the qualities portrayed by great numbers of gallant warriors in Malaysian history and Belief in God is become the main pillar which require Army personnel to obtain their highest submission to the supremacy of the creator. It is proven that this ethos made man willing to fight extreme hardship and worst condition event to the extent to sacrifice their lives. Meanwhile, the Army Ethos emphasised Discipline to control the behaviour of the personnel to obey orders and instruction as well as to maintained pride on himself, units and their profession as military personnel. Every personnel are demanded to place their Loyalty to the Yang Di Pertuan Agong, the Nation, the Organization, the Commander and their Leader as a non-negotiable trait of Malaysian Army. Thus, Sacrifice, Honour, Esprit de Corps, Courage, and Integrity as well as Professionalism are an essential trait imposed by army personnel in performing their duties.

Since the establishment of Malaysian Army in 1933, the organization was able to perform effectively with pride either operating in Malaysian territories or operating under United Nation (UN) mission worldwide. Many recognitions were received due to high professionalism and excellence services provided by Malaysian Army. The most notable UN mission operations carried out by the Malaysian Army are Peacekeeping Operations such as in Congo (1960-1964), Bosnia-Herzegovina (1993-1998), Somalia (1993-1995) and Lebanon since 2007 until now.

The army personnels are needed to have a good value system. This value system is related to a branch of soft skills, which is Emotional Intelligence. The personnels must be able to make critical decision in complex environment characterised by uncertainty and fiction (Caudle, 2010). The Army developed its personnels by enhancing its cohesive teams, promoting resiliency, cultivating trust, and fostering positive command climates, while avoiding unethical behaviour or misjudgments.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is the area of cognitive ability traits and social skills that facilitate interpersonal behaviour. It is defined as an individual's ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and judgement of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection, and influence (Casper, 2002). According to Mayer et al., (2008), emotional intelligence entails the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the capability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to reflectively regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

Robert & Daniel (2003) advocates that when an individual demonstrates high level of emotional intelligence, they tend to perform better than those who have lower level of emotional intelligence. Subsequently, employees with high emotional intelligence are key indicators to organizational success (Roseberry et al., 2018).

Genos (formerly known as Swinburne University's emotional intelligence index) claimed that five key emotional skills could be transferred to the workplace. “Emotional recognition and expressions” relate to the ability to first recognize one's emotions and emotional states, and the ability to convey those emotions to others. The ability to recognize and understand the emotions of others and the emotions that appear in response to a colleague's office environment or meeting is ranked second. Furthermore, “emotions direct cognition” refers to how feelings and emotional data are utilized in decision-making and problem-fixing circumstances. “Emotional control” additionally refers back to the capacity to govern one`s personal and others' wonderful and terrible feelings. Aside from that, “emotional management” is described because the capacity to efficiently manage sturdy emotional states together with anger, tension, worry, and inflammation that arise at work. “Understanding the emotions” of others is an essential emotional talent (Schultz, Izard, & Abe, 2005). Many teachers have targeted their interest in this emotional talent because it serves as the inspiration for different elements of emotional intelligence. Izard (1971) additionally found that a person's capacity to realize feelings in others seems rapidly after birth.

Parents and other families who shape an individual's early social environment are important agents of socialization (Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1996). They act as mentors for both the pleasant and negative emotions they experienced as a child. In particular, “an individual's emotional declarative knowledge and emotional processing patterns are strongly influenced by past and present emotional experiences” (Fox, 2003; Schultz, Izard, and Abe, 2005). According to Thompson (1991), “people learn to deal with overwhelming emotions such as sadness, anger, and fear from an early age”. “This learning process occurs throughout a person's life, from infancy to infancy, from infancy to adolescence, from adolescence to adulthood, and from adulthood to old age” (Cartensen, Gross & Fung, 1998). Therefore, emotional coordination or emotional management and control is a lifelong process.

3. Methodology

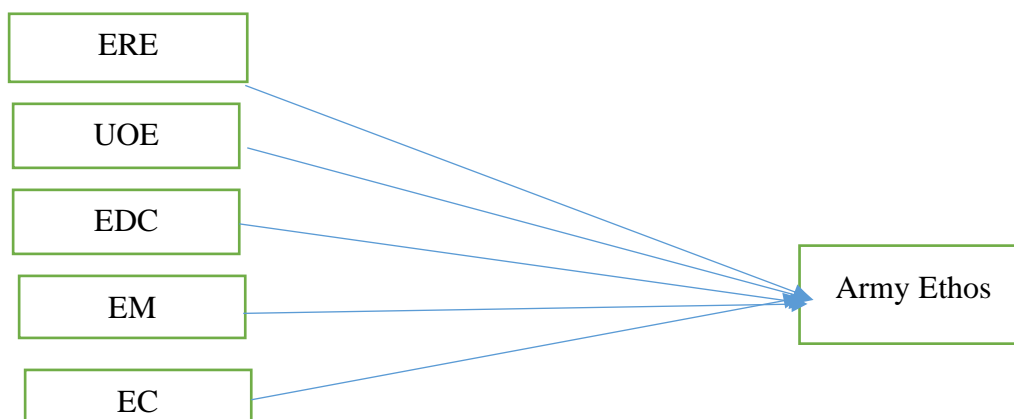


Figure 1: Framework

Key words : ERE – Emotional Recognition and Expression; UOE – Understanding Others Emotions; EDC – Emotions Direct Cognition; EM – Emotional Management; EC – Emotional Control

Based on the framework, there would be 5 research questions and 5 research objectives.

The research questions are as follows:

- 1) Will Emotional Recognition and Expression (ERE) enhance the army ethos?
- 2) Can Understanding Others Emotions (UOE) improve the army ethos?
- 3) Could Emotions Direct Cognition (EDC) increase the level of the army ethos?
- 4) How would Emotional Management (EM) impact the level of army ethos?
- 5) What would the effect be if Emotional Control (EC) impacts the level of army ethos?

The research objectives are as follows:

- 1) To determine the relationship between ERE and the army ethos.
- 2) To find out the relationship between UOE and the army ethos.
- 3) To examine the relationship between EDC and the army ethos.
- 4) To analyse the relationship between EM and the army ethos.
- 5) To study the relationship between EC and the army ethos.

The study used the quantitative approach. The questionnaire used to collect the emotional intelligence responses has been developed by Palmer and Stough (2001). The Genos EI questionnaire developed by Palmer and Stough (2001) has been found to be effective in workplace. The questionnaire has been developed to test respondents' reaction towards certain situations, for example, in terms of extreme stress. The questionnaire has 64 statements and have 5 elements; they are emotional recognition and expression, understanding others emotions, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control. For the army ethos, the statements are based on the 9 pillars. They are: Belief in God, Discipline, Loyalty, Sacrifice, Esprit de Corps, Integrity, Courage, Honour, and Professionalism.

The demographic characteristics of the participants has been examined. The findings have been highlighted in tables 1, 2, 3 and 4. It can be observed that 25 (4.9%), 37 (7.3%) and 223 (44.1%) of the participants were the rank of Lt Col / Maj, Capt / Lt / 2nd Lt, and NCO (WO I / WO II/ SSGT/ SGT) respectively. Coherently, 221 (43,7%) of the participant were of the ranks of CPL/ L/CPL/ Pvt. The analysis revealed that 328 (64.8%) of the participant were married while 173 (34.2%) were single and 5 (1%) divorced. The age groups of the participants indicate that 66 (13%), 188 (37.2%), and 252 (49.8%) of the participants are between the ages of 18-23 years, 24-30 years, and above 31 years, respectively. The analysis of the years of service shows that most of the participants had less than 10 years of experience accounting for 244 (48.2%). In addition, 171 (33.8%) and 91 (18%) of the participants have 11-16 year and above 17 years of experience.

Table 1: Summary of Ranks

Ranks	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Lt Col/ Maj	25	4.9	4.9	4.9
Capt/ Lt/ 2 nd Lt	37	7.3	7.3	12.3
NCO (WO I/ WO II/ SSGt/ Sgt	223	44.1	44.1	56.3
Cpl/ LCpl/ Pvt	221	43.7	43.7	100
Total	506	100	100	

Table 2: Summary of Married Status

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Married	328	64.8	64.8	64.8
Single	173	34.2	34.2	99.0
Divorced	5	1.0	1.0	100
Total	506	100	100	

Table 3: Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-23 Years Old	66	13.0	13.0	13.0
24 -30 Years Old	188	37.2	37.2	50.2
31 Years and above	252	49.8	49.8	100
Total	506	100	100	

Table 4: Year of Service

Year of Service	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 10 Years	244	48.2	48.2	48.2
11 - 16 Years	171	33.8	33.8	82
17 Years and above	91	18.0	18.0	100
Total	506	100	100	

Findings and Discussion

Table 5 shows the relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence to the army ethos. It was found that all the relationships are positively significant. All the p values are less than 0.05. It was found that the t values for emotional recognition and expression, emotions direct cognition, emotional management and emotional control are more than 2. Based on the R value, it shows that 81.1% of the variations in the army ethos attributed from the dimensions of emotional intelligence. A high percentage shows the impact and importance.

Table 5: Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	sig
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.023	0.331		0.069	0.945
ERE	0.320	0.070	0.325	4.565	0.000
UOE	0.158	0.082	0.149	1.931	0.050
EDC	0.250	0.072	0.263	3.477	0.001
EM	0.164	0.076	0.168	2.155	0.033
EC	0.178	0.069	0.167	2.596	0.011

Dependent Variable : Army Ethos

Model	R	R Squared
1	0.811a	0.657

Key : ERE – Emotional Recognition and Expression; UOE – Understanding Others Emotions, EDC – Emotions Direct Cognition, EM – Emotional Management, EC- Emotional Control

Emotional recognition and expression shows the highest t value indicating the significance of the dimension. Emotional recognition and expression is one component of emotional intelligence that demonstrates the ability to predict social and behavioural adjustment after monitoring definite temperamental personalities or traits, and cleverness or intelligence. This means that the army personnels displayed appropriate behaviours after taking into consideration the nature of the situation. In the recent flood situation that devastated a major area in Selangor, a state in Malaysia, the army personnels remained calm despite the going through the stress and pressure of the people affected by the devastation. In such a situation, the army personnels showed all the army ethos, they are Belief in God, Discipline, Loyalty, Sacrifice, Esprit de Corps, Integrity, Courage, Honour, and Professionalism.

Likewise in emotions direct cognition, this skill is related to the gut feelings which relates to the number of experiences the individual received. A high t value showed that emotions direct cognition enhances the army ethos. In order to make good decisions, requires discipline, honour, courage, sacrifice, professionalism, loyalty, esprit de corps and belief in God. It is not easy for any one to demonstrate these values to the highest value. From the findings, the higher the level of emotions direct cognition, the higher would be the level of the army ethos.

Both emotional management ($t = 2.155$) and emotional control ($t = 2.596$) showed a similar range of t values. A high t value describes the behaviour of the army personnel. They are able to handle extreme emotions in a very controlled manner. For the ordinary citizen, they might be venting their frustrations to others. A high level of emotional management and emotional control increases the level of army ethos. For understanding others emotions, the t value is the lowest among the 5 dimensions. It still showed that the army personnel does understand the situation of others – the public and their colleagues.

4. Conclusion

The current study focused on one independent variable which is emotional intelligence. The findings may be a little limited, as the focus was on one variable. Based on the R value, 81.1% of the variations are attributed to emotional intelligence. This shows that there could be other variables that has the potential to improve the level of the army ethos.

Based on the findings, it was found that emotional intelligence does improve the level of the army ethos. The higher the level of emotional intelligence, the higher would be the level of the army ethos. The 5 dimensions of emotional intelligence were found to have positive and significant relationship with the army ethos. From the 5 dimensions, 2 dimensions were found to have a high t value, ie emotional recognition and expression and emotions direct cognition. This finding showed that these 2 dimensions plays a strong role in improving the army ethos. It is suggested that other organisations can include emotional intelligence in their trainings to further improve the workplace environment.

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