

The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Empathy of Mountain Climbing Students

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Abstract

Mountaineering is a physically and emotionally challenging activity that requires skill, strength and endurance. One of the positive values that can be obtained from this activity is the emergence of empathy. This research aims to analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence and empathy in mountaineering students. The research method used is a quantitative approach with data analysis using product moment correlation techniques. The research subjects were students who are members of a nature lover organization, selected through incidental sampling technique. The results showed a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and empathy, with a correlation value of 0.763. Emotional intelligence contributes 58.1% to empathy, while 41.9% is influenced by other factors such as parenting, social environment, and personality. This research implies that emotional intelligence plays an important role in enhancing empathy, which is necessary to support teamwork and safety in climbing activities. The findings provide insights for the development of emotional intelligence training programs to improve climbers' social and emotional abilities.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Climbing.

INTRODUCTION

Mountain climbing is an interesting activity that can refresh the mind and may even become a hobby for many people and can be an achievement that can be proud of (Prasetya & Murti, 2015). Mountaineering activities today are no longer a rare activity, meaning that it is not only carried out by individuals who say they are nature lovers, nature explorers and so on, but many people or people in the general public have done it (Putra et al., 2020).

Mountaineering is a challenging activity, but sometimes it is also an activity that is very extreme for individuals (Sandi, 2022). Someone will get a sense of satisfaction if they are able to reach the top of the mountain and can see the beautiful crater of the mountain from a very close distance. In mountaineering activities, there are many things that must be known in the form of rules during climbing, preparation, climbing equipment, and good ways to carry out climbing activities and others (Faiz, 2020).

Preparations that must be prepared before climbing must be really mature, especially information about the destination mountain, both weather information, mountain altitude, vegetation types, climbing routes, springs and so on. In addition to these preparations, climbers must also know the condition of their respective bodies, whether they have diseases that can recur at any time when they are on the mountain. Mountain climbing requires a lot of preparation involving physical preparation, logistics, itinerary organization and emotional management. This is important because when climbing a mountain you are required to bring

equipment that is able to ensure safety so that when traveling it can be carried out as planned (Nugraha et al., 2020).

A mountaineer is required to have a sense of empathy in order to be able to understand what other people feel and think in certain situations (Nurlitasari & Rohmatun, 2020). Empathy is the ability to understand and feel the feelings and experiences of others (Indriasari, 2016). As a mountaineer, empathy can be an important quality in interacting with fellow climbers, team members, or even people you may meet during your hike. When a mountaineer who has a sense of empathy must understand the mental and emotional state of others while doing activities in nature.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in interacting with oneself and others (Hm, 2016). When a mountaineer, emotional intelligence becomes an important quality to deal with various situations and challenges that may arise during the climb. These emotions are then managed and used to motivate oneself and provide benefits in relationships with others so that individuals will be able to build productive relationships and achieve optimal success even when the individual is facing problems (Ren et al., 2025).

One of the positive values that can be obtained from mountain climbing is the emergence of a sense of empathy among climbers. The brotherly relationship that is established, without distinguishing, religion, race and between groups is the most important part of doing activities in the wild. This can lead to a high sense of empathy among mountain climbers (Wati, 2021). Therefore, it is very necessary for climbers to be emotionally mature and have a sense of empathy because it will greatly affect the mind and physique of individuals, if climbers are not emotionally mature and do not have a sense of empathy, it will have fatal consequences. Emotions owned by climbers include awareness to emotional repair carried out when climbing mountains. Where climbers will be faced with various obstacles in climbing (Sifa & Astuti, 2023).

Empathy is the urge to help others without considering one's own interests (Juan & O'Connell, 2024).. Empathy emphasizes the welfare of others. Individuals who have a high sense of empathy for others, will make them have the desire to always help others. Empathy is formed from self-awareness. The more open an individual is to his or her own emotions, the more skillful that individual will be in reading feelings. Empathy is basically understanding other people's hearts, mindsets, and feelings including other people's backgrounds, feelings, and motives (Gustini, 2017). The greater the empathy for others, the greater the individual can appreciate and respect others.

Empathy is considered a very effective way to recognize, understand and evaluate others. Through empathy, individuals will be able to feel and know what other people's needs, aspirations of other people, complaints felt, happiness, heartache and disappointment felt by others. Individuals with empathy can establish and have good social relationships with society and their environment (Gustini, 2017).

The skill of empathy will be the key to success in getting along and socializing in society. Individuals can be accepted by others in relationships if the individual is able to understand the conditions and feelings of others and is able to provide treatment that is appropriate and in accordance with what the person expects (Wati, 2021). Individuals need to hone their empathy skills so that they are able to adjust to their environment. Empathy serves to accelerate relationships with others so as to avoid misunderstandings, arguments and

disagreements between individuals. Empathy also functions in self-adjustment because there is an awareness that everyone's point of view is different so that they are more flexible, optimistic and have emotional intelligence. Empathy is an important part of individual development that is useful for keeping individuals from behavior that can harm others as well as finding ways to adjust to the social environment (Indriasari, 2016).

Many people do not understand the benefits or positives of mountain climbing. The challenges faced during mountain climbing are a test for a climber. How can one overcome these problems by using existing abilities and being able to blend in with nature. If one manages to face it all, then one will easily overcome fear, anxiety and achieve victory to fight the ego that exists within because mountain climbing also requires team work.

The problem of the ability to empathize is shown by female mountain climbers. Mountaineering activities can instill positive character for the perpetrators. This activity can foster intertwined brotherhood relationships, among climbers without distinguishing race, religion and intergroup. This is because when climbing, there are no servants to serve and one cannot rely on others other than ourselves who do it. Conditions that are far from the crowd, there are no helpers other than yourself and fellow climbers. The intimacy that exists between fellow hikers can create a sense of empathy among the hikers themselves.

(Sutanti, 2015) suggests that empathy consists of three aspects, namely:

- a. The cognitive component, which is a component that gives rise to an understanding of the feelings of others. Empathetic individuals will have skills related to social communication issues, social perspectives and also sensitivity in understanding the socio-emotional state of others. A person without adequate cognitive abilities will be wrong in understanding the situation of others (incongruence), because the social phenomena captured do not match the existing social reality.
- b. The affective component refers to the skill of balancing emotional experiences with others. The affective component in this aspect of empathy consists of sympathy, sensitivity and willingness to share the suffering that is being experienced by others, for example feeling close to the difficulties experienced by others who are imagined as if experienced by themselves. To be able to experience empathy, an affective component is needed, namely a skill to be able to experience emotions with an adequate level of emotional reactivity.
- c. Communicative component, an expression of empathic thoughts (intellectual empathy) and empathic emotions to others that can be manifested in the form of words and actions. The communicative component is a bridge or as a means of implementing the expression of the cognitive and affective components.

An explanation of the aspects of empathy, namely:

- a. The cognitive aspect is more focused on the cognitive process of being able to understand other people's perspectives appropriately, so that the hope is that someone is able to distinguish emotions from other people appropriately, and can accept other people's perspectives. Cognitive aspects consist of:
 - 1) Perspective tacking is a tendency for individuals to spontaneously take over another person's point of view. Perspective tacking ability is very important to be applied to non-egocentric behavior, which is behavior that is oriented not to self-interest, but is a behavior that is more oriented to the interests of others.

- 2) Fantasy (imagination), which is an individual's tendency to transform himself into the feelings and behavior of imaginary characters obtained from fairy tale books, television, cinema, or games.
- b. The affective aspect is the tendency of a person to experience the emotional feelings of others. The affective aspect consists of:
 - 1) Empathic concern, which is an orientation from a person to others in the form of sympathy, compassion, and concern for others who are experiencing difficulties. Empathic concern is positively related to emotional reactions and actions to provide help to others.
 - 2) Personal distress, which is a person's orientation towards themselves in the form of anxiety and restlessness in interpersonal situations.

The sense of empathy is influenced by several factors, the factors that influence empathy are: socialization, mood and feeling, situation and place, learning process and identification, communication, language, and parenting. In his research revealed that some of the process of developing one's empathy according to several experts is influenced by several factors, namely parenting, gender, personality, situation variations, age, degree of maturity, experience and response objects, and socialization.

Emotional intelligence is strongly influenced by the environment, it is not sedentary, it can change at any time. For this reason, the role of the environment, especially parents in childhood, is very influential in the formation of emotional intelligence. Choosing interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence to serve as the basis for revealing emotional intelligence in individuals. According to him, emotional intelligence is a person's ability to recognize one's own emotions, manage emotions, motivate oneself, recognize other people's emotions (empathy) and the ability to build relationships (cooperation) with others (Hm, 2016). Emotional intelligence is the ability to feel, understand and effectively apply emotional power and sensitivity as a source of energy, information, correction and humanizing influence (Hm, 2016). Emotional intelligence requires discernment of feelings to learn to recognize, appreciate feelings in oneself and others and respond appropriately, apply effectively emotional energy in everyday life.

Goleman defines that emotional intelligence is a person's ability which consists of various abilities to be able to motivate oneself, endure frustration, control impulsive needs or impulses, not exaggerate pleasure or distress, be able to regulate reactive needs, keep stress free, not paralyzing the ability to think and the ability to empathize with others, and the principle of trying while praying. Goleman also added that emotional intelligence is the other side of cognitive intelligence that plays a role in human activities which includes self-awareness and impulse control, perseverance, enthusiasm and self-motivation as well as empathy and social skills (Hm, 2016). Emotional intelligence is more aimed at efforts to recognize, understand and realize emotions in the right portion and efforts to manage emotions so that they are under control and can be used to solve life problems, especially those related to human relations.

In mountain climbing activities, mountaineers are required to be ready in every way. Psychological aspects are very influential in rafting activities and also other outdoor activities, both in the formation of emotional maturity, self-concept, group dynamics or the decision-making process. Therefore it is very necessary for climbers to be emotionally mature and have a sense of empathy because it will greatly affect the mind and physique of the individual, if

climbers are not emotionally mature and do not have a sense of empathy, it will have fatal consequences.

(Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022) describes emotional intelligence in 5 main ability aspects, namely:

a. Recognizing Self-Emotions

Recognizing one's own emotions is the ability to recognize feelings as they occur. This ability is the basis of emotional intelligence, psychologists refer to self-awareness as metamood, which is a person's awareness of their own emotions.

b. Managing Emotions

Managing emotions is an individual's ability to handle feelings so that they can be expressed appropriately or in harmony, so that balance is achieved within the individual.

c. Motivate Yourself

Achievement must be accomplished by having motivation within the individual, which means having the perseverance to resist gratification and control impulses, and having positive motivational feelings, namely enthusiasm, passion, optimism and self-confidence.

d. Recognizing the Emotions of Others

The ability to recognize the emotions of others is also called empathy. According to (Widiatmoko, 2017) a person's ability to recognize others or care, shows a person's empathy ability.

e. Fostering Relationships

The ability to build relationships is a skill that supports popularity, leadership and interpersonal success (Sarnoto, 2014).

Mountaineering is not just a physical activity; it is a unique combination of physical, emotional, and social challenges that test one's resilience and adaptability. The increasing popularity of mountaineering among various groups highlights the need for deeper insights into the psychological and emotional aspects that contribute to a successful climbing experience. Despite the benefits, a lack of emotional intelligence and empathy in climbers can lead to conflicts, misunderstandings, and even safety risks during expeditions. Understanding how emotional intelligence and empathy intersect in mountaineering is essential to encourage teamwork, increase safety, and improve the overall experience. This research is particularly important as it aims to address a significant gap in the literature, emphasizing the role of emotional maturity and empathy in fostering cooperation and achieving common goals in extreme environments. By exploring this topic, this research has the benefit of contributing to the development of strategies that can prepare climbers for the psychological and social demands of the activity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a quantitative research. The data collection method in this research uses 2 scales, namely the empathy scale which is compiled based on the empathy aspects of the empathy scale. (Sutanti, 2015) namely cognitive, affective and communicative aspects, and an emotional intelligence scale that is arranged based on aspects of emotional intelligence from (Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022), which provides awareness of one's own feelings and also the feelings of others. The subjects of this research were students who participated in the nature lovers organization. The sampling technique used incidental sampling.

Accidental sampling is a data collection technique by determining the sample based on chance, which means that when doing anyone can be used as a sample, if it is deemed that the person who happens to be met is suitable as the source of the data needed (Suriani & Jailani, 2023).

The data analysis method uses the product moment correlation technique. This technique is used to find the relationship between two variables, namely the independent variable and the dependent variable. The relationship is that the higher the independent variable, the lower the dependent variable, and vice versa, the lower the independent variable, the higher the dependent variable. Data analysis was carried out with the SPSS program.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis methods with product moment correlation techniques using the SPSS program can be seen in Table 1. with a value of $\alpha = 0.05$ and $r_{table} = 0.4329$.

Table 1. Product Moment Correlation Output

Correlations			
		Sense of Empathy	Emotional Intelligence
Sense of Empathy	Pearson Correlation	1	.763*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	21	21
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.763	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	21	21

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the results of data processing, it shows that the r_{count} value is 0.763 and the significance value between empathy and emotional intelligence is equal to 0.001. The results of data processing also show that between empathy and emotional intelligence of mountain climbing students show a positive relationship because the r value shows a positive number with a high correlation coefficient interpretation.

The results of the linear regression technique analysis can be seen in Table 2. With the dependent variable being empathy and the independent variable being emotional intelligence.

Table 2. Results of linear regression technique analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.763	.581	.559	295
a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Intelligence				
b. Dependent Variable: Sense of Empathy				

Based on regression processing using SPSS, it can be seen that emotional intelligence has an influence of 58.1% while 41.9% is influenced by other variables.

The positive relationship between empathy and emotional intelligence of mountain climbers at Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo University is seen from the correlation value of $r_{xy} = +0.763$. Based on the analysis, it is known that $r_{count} > r_{table}$ and $sig. < 0.05$, it can be concluded that there is a significant correlation. The r_{xy} or r_{count} value is equal to $0.763 > 0.4329$ and $sig. 0.001 < 0.05$, it can be concluded that the sense of empathy and emotional intelligence of mountain climbers at Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo have a significant correlation. Emotional intelligence also contributes 58.1% to the sense of empathy while 41.9% is influenced by parenting, gender, age, education, personality, and also the social environment.

The results of the data processing above show that the hypothesis of this research is accepted, namely emotional intelligence gives an influence on a person's sense of empathy. (Masela, 2019) also explains that the emergence of behavior in this case a sense of empathy is the impact of the basis of adolescent development in the form of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to manage emotions effectively and it can be interpreted that individuals who have high emotional intelligence have more stable emotions in this case knowing where to place empathy when climbing a mountain.

The results of a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and empathy of mountain climbers indicate that the higher the emotional intelligence, the higher the level of empathy of the individual. This is because high emotional intelligence can make the individual better understand his own emotional feelings so that it is easier to express empathy to others.

According to Myers in (Tartila & Aulia, 2021) empathy is the urge to help others without considering personal interests. Empathy focuses on the welfare of others. Someone who has a high level of empathy tends to have a desire to provide assistance to others. Empathy focuses on the well-being of others. The higher the empathy, the higher the desire to help others.

One way to increase empathy is by doing mountain climbing activities. Handayani said that activities carried out in the wild are able to increase a sense of love for the homeland, establish a bond of brotherhood so that it will encourage a high sense of sympathy and empathy among fellow climbers (Handayani, 2010). Based on the results of SPSS analysis, empathy is influenced by 58.1% of a person's emotional intelligence and the rest is another factor. Other factors according to (Dewi, 2024) which affect empathy are parenting, personality, type of kelain, the situation at hand, age, and the degree of socialization maturity.

Emotional maturity as a state of an individual who does not easily feel himself disturbed when getting emotional stimuli, both from within himself, and those from outside, individuals who have good emotional maturity, are able to act appropriately and reasonably in accordance with existing conditions, and still prioritize their duties and responsibilities. Thus adolescents who have good emotional maturity, are able to provide empathy to others in accordance with what is the hope of people who need it.

Based on the results of the above research, it can be concluded that the emotional intelligence possessed by mountain climbers will affect the sense of empathy. Emotionally mature mountaineering students can distinguish what behaviors should be done and what behaviors should be avoided. One of them is fostering a sense of empathy for others.

CONCLUSION

The research concludes that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and empathy among mountain climbers at Muhammadiyah University of Sidoarjo, with a correlation value of 0.763. Emotional intelligence contributes 58.1% to empathy, indicating its pivotal role in enhancing empathic abilities. Climbers with high emotional intelligence are better at understanding, regulating, and expressing empathy, essential for fostering teamwork and ensuring safety in mountaineering. Additionally, factors such as parenting and environmental influences also play a role, highlighting the multidimensional nature of empathy development.

Future research could explore demographic factors like age, gender, and cultural background in shaping the emotional intelligence-empathy relationship among climbers. Further studies might also examine the impact of emotional intelligence training programs on

improving team dynamics, investigate the role of mentorship and peer interactions, and conduct longitudinal research to observe how emotional intelligence and empathy evolve with mountaineering experience. These efforts can deepen understanding and contribute to safer and more cohesive climbing experiences.

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