

## A Comparison of Scouts' Emotional Intelligence Levels With Regards To Age and Gender Variables: A Cross-Cultural Study

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**ABSTRACT.** The aim of this study was to investigate whether or not there were differences between the emotional levels of Turkish scouts and scouts from other countries (England, Portugal, America, Holland, Norway and Ireland) with regards to the age and gender variables. The participants were 215 scouts who attended to an international scout camp in England. 90 of the participants were Turkish and 125 were from other countries. The age range of the scouts was 11-20. Results demonstrated that Turkish scouts' emotional intelligence levels were significantly higher than the other countries' scouts ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, scouts, age, gender.

### INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence, playing an important role in determining the individuals' success in work, family, and social life and an individual's ability to manage his/her relations efficiently with his/her environment, includes the awareness of the emotions, judgment of the knowledge related to the emotion, and operating on the emotional knowledge as a part of problem solving (Aşan & Özyer, 2003; Goleman, Boyatzis & Mckee, 2002). Briefly, emotional intelligence is using the emotions wisely. By doing so, individuals can manage their behaviors through their emotions and acquire positive results (Weisinger, 1998). Emotional intelligence can also be defined as the ability of an individual to understand his/her emotions, motivate the people around, and manage his/her relations successfully (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

The term "emotional intelligence" was first used by Mayer and Salovey in the first half of 1990s and defined as an individual understands of his/her and others' emotions, making a selection among these and operating this knowledge in thoughts and behavior (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Individuals' understanding, perceiving emotions and using the emotional knowledge are different from others. Therefore, individuals' emotional levels contribute to their emotional success and development (Salovey et al., 2000). After that, the term "emotional intelligence" became a current issue with the publication of Daniel Goleman's "Emotional Intelligence" in 1995 and was defined as "a person's understanding of his/her emotions, having empathy with other people's emotions and drawing up his/her life in an enriching manner (Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis & Mckee, 2002; Yılmaz, 2001; Yeşilyaprak, 2001). Ericson defined emotional intelligence as a composition of the self (James, 1997). Accordingly, if an individual uses his/her emotions for reaching his/her targets and if he/she can achieve these targets, that person can be identified as "emotionally intelligent" (Yeşilyaprak, 2001). One important characteristics of emotionally intelligent individuals is that they can control themselves successfully (Goleman, 1998). The people who can control themselves can also use their performance in an efficient way.

People studying on emotional intelligence have constructed a model with five dimensions of ability. These are: self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness refers to one's having the knowledge of himself/herself, having the knowledge of his/her own emotions and evaluating these emotions accurately. Individuals having the knowledge of themselves are also aware of their values, objectives, abilities, and limitations and can direct their life more successfully. These contribute to development of one's self-confidence and self-confidence has an important role in one's self-actualization (Goleman, 1998; Ural, 2001). Emotional self-regulation refers to expressing the emotions in a balanced and congruent way and the ability of being able to

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postpone the satisfaction with one's own will through the target when needed. People who can regulate their emotions can better deal with their problems (Goleman, Boyatzis & Mckee, 2002).

Motivation includes activating emotions through a target and an intrinsic drive. Motivated people try to turn difficulties into opportunities and are more effective towards difficulties. Empathy is the ability to imagine oneself in the position of another person, and so to share and understand that person's emotions. Social skills refer to the ability of establishing effective interpersonal relations and maintaining them. Socially skilled people can direct other people's behavior through their own demands, establish healthy relations with their environment and so they can maintain a successful and happy life. These five dimensions have profound impact on a person's intelligence, decision making process and individual success (Weisinger, 1998; Goleman, 1998; Goleman, Boyatzis & Mckee, 2002; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000; Çakar & Arbak, 2004). Emotional intelligence is also a sum of many abilities which help one express, evaluate and regulate his/her and others' emotions and which help one use the emotions bringing success (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Scientists assume emotional intelligence as an intelligence dimension which can be developed and learned at all ages (Shapiro 1998; Goleman, 1998). Neither is emotional intelligence hereditary, nor does its development occur in early childhood ages. As a general view, whereas IQ does not show significant development after ages 13-19, EQ can be learned and developed through life-span. Since the development of emotional intelligence is related to cognitive and biological maturity, school's function becomes important. Significant correlation was found between individuals' EQ levels and their living conditions and, people they model (Yeşilyarak, 2001).

There are a limited number of cross-cultural studies concerning emotional intelligence. In their study comparing the emotional intelligence levels of the teachers in South and North Cyprus, Titrek, Erden and Erden (2007) found that the emotional intelligence levels of teachers in North Cyprus were significantly higher than the teachers in South Cyprus. In a research conducted by Deniz and Yılmaz (2006) it was found that there was a significant relationship between the emotional intelligence ability and coping with stress levels of university students. Furthermore, some of the studies concluded that there was no significant difference with regards to university students' age and gender (Yılmaz & Şahin, 2004; Deniz & Yılmaz 2004), but there was significant difference regarding to the grade variable (Yılmaz & Şahin, 2004; Kaya & Keçeci, 2004).

In their studies conducted on with 77 university students, Shutte et. al. (2001) found that the individuals having high levels of emotional intelligence were more sociable and were more preferred in interpersonal relationships. Empathy has also a very important role in interpersonal relationships. Individuals having high levels of emotional intelligence were found that they have high levels of empathy (Quebbeman & Rozell, 2002) and there were positive relationship between empathy and emotional intelligence (Mayer & Cobb, 2000). Perkins, Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (2001) found that adolescents having high levels of emotional intelligence could better organise their emotions in peer relations than adolescents having lower emotional intelligence levels.

In the light of this information, this study aimed to investigate if there was significant difference in emotional levels of students from diverse cultures. Also, it was examined if these levels differ according to the age and gender variables.

## METHOD

### Participants

Participants were 215 scouts attended to an international scout camp in 2004. 90 of the scouts were from Turkey (45 girls, 45 boys; age average  $\bar{x}$ = 16.07, Sd=7.80). From other countries (England 65, Portugal 23, America 13, Holland 7, Norway 7, Ireland 10) 125 scouts (74 boys, 51 girls, age average  $\bar{x}$ =14.47, Sd=2.71) were participated into the study.

### Instruments

For data collection "Emotional Intelligence Assessment Scale" developed by Hall (1999) and adapted into Turkish by Ergin (1999) was used. Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale was .84. Item-total correlations were ranged from .73 to .89 and two items were found insufficient. These two items were revised and made clearer to understand.

Furthermore, reliability coefficient was found as .79 by using Split-half reliability method. The scale is composed of 5 sub-scales which are self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Hence, the scale is a 30-itemed Likert-type scale (1=strongly agree to 6=strongly disagree) and a total score can be obtained from the scale.

### Procedure

The application was accompanied in International Camp Down scout camp during 28 July- 8 August 2004. There were totally 4317 scouts from 18 different countries and their age range was from 11 to 29. 56% of the scouts were girls and 44% were boys. For analysis of the data, t-test, two-way Anova and Tukey test were used.

### RESULTS

In this section the results of the study were given.

**Table1.** *t-test results of the scouts according to their emotional intelligence levels*

	Countries	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t
emotional intelligence in total	Other countries	125	122,16	17,96	-5,41***
	Turkish scouts	90	136,52	20,75	

\*\*\*  
 $p < .001$

As shown in Table 1, there were significant difference ( $p < .001$ ) between Turkish scouts and scouts from other countries when their emotional intelligence levels were compared. Turkish scouts average were higher than the scouts from other countries.

**Table 2.** *Descriptive statistics of the emotional intelligence levels of the scouts according to their nationality and gender*

Nationality	gender	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd
Other countries	boys	74	121,70	17,07
	girls	51	124,01	19,84
	Total	125	122,64	18,21
Turkish	boys	45	135,53	24,92
	girls	45	135,13	16,91
	Total	90	135,33	21,18
Total	boys	119	126,93	21,38
	girls	96	129,22	19,25
	Total	215	127,95	20,45

Table 2 illustrates that Turkish girl and boy scouts' emotional intelligence levels were closer while the girls' level of emotional intelligence were higher than boys in other countries.

**Table 3.** *Analysis of variance in emotional intelligence for the scouts of different nationalities and genders*

	Sum of squares	SD	Mean Square	F
Nationality	8021,846	1	8021,846	20,919***
Gender	47,373	1	47,373	,124
Nationality x Gender	95,165	1	95,165	,248
Error	80910,840	211	383,464	
Total	3609753,000	215		

\*\*\*  
 $p < .001$

As shown in Table 3, the average of boys' emotional intelligence levels was  $X = 126.93$ , while girls' were  $X = 129.22$ . There was not significant difference between two groups [ $F_{(1-211)} = .124, p > .05$ ]. Scouts' emotional intelligence level did not differ according to the gender variable. Therefore, this demonstrated that the gender did not have a significant effect on emotional intelligence levels. However, a significant difference was found between their emotional intelligence levels according to

the nationality variable [F<sub>(1-211)</sub> = 20.91, p < .001]. Both nationality and gender variable did not have a significant impact on emotional intelligence levels [F<sub>(1-211)</sub> = .248, p > .05]. It can be concluded that scouts living in different countries were not shown a significant difference according to the gender variable.

**Table 4.** *t-test Results of emotional intelligence levels of boy scouts from Turkey and other countries*

	Nationality	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t
emotional intelligence in total	Other countries	73	121,15	16,51	-3,93***
	Turkish scouts	46	136,10	24,95	

\*\*\* p < .001

As shown in Table 4, when the boy scouts' emotional intelligence levels were compared with regards to the gender variable, it was found that there was a significant difference (p < .001) between Turkish scouts and scouts from other countries. Turkish boy scouts' average of emotional intelligence ( $\bar{x}$ =136.10) were significantly higher than the boy scouts from other countries ( $\bar{x}$ =121.15).

**Table 5.** *t-test results of emotional intelligence levels of girl scouts from Turkey and other countries*

	Nationality	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t
emotional intelligence in total	Other countries	51	124,01	19,84	-2,93**
	Turkish scouts	45	135,13	16,91	

\*\* p < .01

As shown in Table 5, when the girl scouts' emotional intelligence levels were compared with regards to the gender variable, it was found that there was a significant difference (p < .01) between Turkish scouts and scouts from other countries. Turkish girl scouts' average of emotional intelligence ( $\bar{x}$ =135.13) were significantly higher than the girl scouts from other countries ( $\bar{x}$ =124.01).

**Table 6.** *Descriptive statistics of Turkish scouts and scouts from other Nationalities based on age criteria*

	Nationality	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd
11-13	Other countries	55	124,61	18,79
	Turkish	10	137,80	17,48
	Total	65	126,64	19,07
14-16	Other countries	47	117,29	16,18
	Turkish	27	137,29	27,25
	Total	74	124,59	22,88
17-19	Other countries	13	126,61	20,62
	Turkish	45	134,08	16,69
	Total	58	132,41	17,73
20+	Other countries	10	125,80	14,68
	Turkish	8	146,00	20,66
	Total	18	134,77	19,91
Total	Other countries	125	122,16	17,96
	Turkish	90	136,52	20,75
Total	Total	215	128,17	20,40

In Table 6, emotional intelligence levels of Turkish scouts and scouts from other nationalities based on age criteria are presented. As seen in the table, scouts over 20 have the highest level of emotional intelligence and Turkish scouts' emotional intelligence levels were higher than scouts from other nationalities with regards to age variable.

**Table 7.** *Analysis of variance in emotional intelligence for the scouts from different ages*

	Sum of squares	SD	Mean Square	F
Age	1170,448	3	390,149	1,070
Nationality	7396,878	1	7396,878	20,285***
Age x Nationality	1140,306	3	380,102	1,042
Error	75482,363	207	364,649	
Total	3621410,000	215		

\*\*\*  
 $p < .001$

As seen in Table 7, there was not significant statistical difference between the scouts from different ages [ $F_{(3-207)} = 1.070$ ,  $p > .05$ ]. This result demonstrated that age variable did not have a significant impact on emotional intelligence. It was also found that there was a significant statistical difference between the scouts as regards their nationalities [ $F_{(1-207)} = 20.285$ ,  $p < .001$ ]. Turkish scouts' average of emotional intelligence ( $\bar{x} = 136.52$ ) were higher than the scouts from other countries ( $\bar{x} = 122.16$ ). This result shows that nationality variable is a significant factor on the scouts' emotional intelligence levels. Both nationality and age variable did not have a significant effect on emotional intelligence [ $F_{(3-207)} = 1.042$ ,  $p > .05$ ].

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study demonstrated that there was statistically significant difference between scouts as regards their nationality. Turkish scouts' emotional intelligence levels were significantly higher than the scouts from other countries. The study of Titrek, Erden and Erden (2007) supports this result. Besides, the fact that individualism and competition are given more importance in western countries might contributed to this result. However, in Turkish culture, interpersonal relationships are given more importance than individualism (Arı, 1991).

Furthermore, the fact that Turkish scouts' emotional intelligence levels were higher than scouts from other countries might be resulted from recent developments in Turkish families' efforts to have a better insight about their children's education. They attend to seminars and training programmes organized to improve their relationship with their children, have better insight about their children and their emotions. All of these factors may have contributed to the results found.

This result does not mean that the emotional intelligence levels of the people grown in western culture. There are research results that assertiveness levels were higher in western societies than eastern societies (Furnham, 1979; Mondeca-MacIntyre, 1985). These results contradict with the research findings. Yet, when all components of emotional intelligence are taken into consideration a difference resulting from some characteristics of Turkish culture might appear. New researches are needed on different samples regarding this subject.

There was not significance difference between boy and girl scouts. This result demonstrates that gender has no statistically significant effect on emotional intelligence. However, there was significant difference as regards the scouts' nationality.

A current and common view is that women's emotional intelligence level is higher than men's (İşmen, 2001; Ergin, İşmen & Özabacı 1999; Goleman, 2000; Sartorius, 1999; Schutte et al. 2001; Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 1999; Reiff et al., 2001; Ciarrochi et al., 2001; Charbonneau & Nicol, 2002). In their study on investigating the demographic factors effecting emotional intelligence Aşan and Özyer (2003) found that women's emotional intelligence level is higher than men's. On the other hand, in their study on 166 participants Bar-on et al. (2000) did not find significant difference between women and men as regards their emotional intelligence. Similarly, Ergin (1999) found significant difference in in four sub-scales of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, motivation, and empathy) but there was not significant difference in social skills ( $p < .05$ ). Boy university students' emotional intelligence level was higher than girls'.

It was seen that there was significant difference between Turkish boy scouts and boy scouts from other countries as regards their emotional intelligence. Turkish boy scouts' emotional intelligence level was higher than other boy scouts.

It was seen that there was significant difference between Turkish girl scouts and girl scouts from other countries as regards their emotional intelligence. Turkish girl scouts' emotional intelligence level was higher than other girl scouts.

No statistically significance difference between scout's emotional intelligence levels with regards to age variable was found. This result demonstrates that age variable does not have effect on emotional intelligence. Turkish scouts' emotional intelligence was higher than scouts from other countries. This result demonstrates that the nationality variable has an important effect on emotional intelligence. Both nationality and age variables did not have an effect on emotional intelligence. Scouts from different countries and different age groups were not found significant difference as regards their emotional intelligence. Our findings are not supported by other research results from literature.

Emotional competence could be learned in any period of one's life. As an individual acquires self-awareness, copes with his/her problems, learns empathic behavior, his/her emotional intelligence level enhances (Goleman, 2000). Ergin, İşmen and Özabacı (1999) conducted a study on adolescents and found that 15-year-old students' emotional intelligence levels were lower than 16-17-year-old students'. Reiff et al. (2001), Bar-on et al. (2000), Mayer et al. (1999), and Derksen et al. (2002) appointed that emotional intelligence level increases as age increases. Development of emotional is just like cognitive and biological development. During this development process the function of the school is very crucial. From age 6 to 11, school life is a complementary educational experience which contributes to child's adolescence years and further (Yeşilyaprak, 2001). Aşan and Özyer (2003) found negative correlations between emotional intelligence and age.

As a result, individuals attending to social activities might say to have social skill to some extent or these activities may contribute to the development of emotional intelligence. More cross-cultural studies are needed on more extensive samples. Hence, the effects of cultural characteristics on emotional intelligence are determined.

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# İzcilerin Duygusal Zekâ Düzeylerinin Yaş ve Cinsiyet Değişkenleri Açısından Karşılaştırılması: Kültürler Arası Bir Karşılaştırma

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**ÖZ.** Bu araştırmanın amacı 2004 yılında İngiltere’de yapılan uluslar arası izcilik kampına katılan Türk izciler ile diğer ülkelerden katılan izcilerin (İngiltere, Portekiz, Amerika, Hollanda, Norveç, İrlanda) duygusal zeka düzeyleri arasında yaş ve cinsiyet değişkenleri açısından anlamlı düzeyde farklılaşma olup olmadığını belirlemektir. Araştırma İngiltere’de yapılan uluslar arası izcilik kampına katılan toplam 215 izci üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma grubunu oluşturan izcilerden 90’ı Türk, 125 ise diğer ülkelerden katılan izcilerdir. İzcilerin yaş ranjı 11-22 arasında değişmektedir. Araştırma sonucunda Türk izcilerin duygusal zeka düzeyleri diğer ülke öğrencilerinden anlamlı düzeyde yüksek olduğu görülmüştür (p<0.001).

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Duygusal zeka, izci, yaş, cinsiyet

## ÖZET

**Problem Durumu:** Duygusal Zeka kavramı ilk olarak psikolog Mayer ve Salovey tarafından 1990 yıllarının ilk yarısında kullanılmış ve bireyin kendisinin ve başkalarının duygularını anlama, bunlar arasında seçim yapma ve bu bilgileri düşünce ve davranışlarında kullanabilme yeteneği olarak tanımlanmıştır. Bireylerin duyguları anlama, algılama ve duygusal bilgiyi kullanma yetenekleri birbirlerinden farklıdır. Bu nedenle bireylerin duygusal zeka seviyeleri duygusal başarılarına ve gelişimlerine çok önemli katkılar sağlamaktadır.

**Araştırmanın Amacı:** Bu araştırmanın amacı İngiltere’de yapılan uluslar arası izcilik kampına katılan Türk izciler ile diğer ülkelerden katılan izcilerin (İngiltere, Portekiz, Amerika, Hollanda, Norveç, İrlanda) duygusal zeka düzeyleri arasında yaş ve cinsiyet değişkenleri açısından anlamlı düzeyde farklılaşma olup olmadığını belirlemektir.

**Araştırmanın Yöntemi:** Araştırma grubu, 2004 yılında Uluslar arası izcilik kampına katılan 215 izciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmada Hall (1999) tarafından geliştirilen ve Türkçe geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışması Ergin (1999) tarafından yapılan ‘Duygusal Zeka Değerlendirme Ölçeği’ kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde, t testi, çift yönlü varyans analizi ve Turkey testi kullanılmıştır.

**Bulgular:** Türk ve diğer ülke izcilerinin duygusal zeka puan ortalamaları arasında .001 düzeyinde anlamlı fark olduğu görülmektedir. Türk izcilerin duygusal zeka puan ortalamaları diğer ülke izcilerine göre daha yüksektir. İzcilerin duygusal zeka düzeyleri cinsiyetlerine göre anlamlı düzeyde farklılaşmamaktadır. Bu bulgu cinsiyetin duygusal zeka düzeyleri üzerine etkisinin olmadığını göstermektedir.

**Sonuç:** Sonuç olarak sosyal etkinliklere katılan bireylerin belli bir sosyal beceri düzeyine sahip olduğu kabul edilebilir. Ya da bu etkinlikler bireylerin hem sosyal becerilerinin hem de duygusal zeka yeteneklerinin gelişimine katkıda bulunabilir. Bu konuda daha kapsamlı gruplar üzerinde kültürlerarası araştırmalara ihtiyaç vardır. Böylece kültürel özelliklerin duygusal zeka üzerindeki etkisi de belirlenmiş olacaktır.

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