

EXPLORING THE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF FUTURE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract. *The aim of the present study is the theoretical justification and empirical research of the emotional intelligence level of students speciality "Primary Education", the disclosure of pedagogical conditions for the development of emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers in the process of their professional training in a higher education institution.*

The theoretical and experimental research was conducted during 2021-2023 on the basis of the Faculty of Psychology and Pedagogy of the Mariupol State University. It performed two main tasks: 1) determination of the emotional intelligence development level of future primary school teachers, in particular in the context of their professional training; 2) justification of effective pedagogical conditions for the development of emotional intelligence in future primary school teachers.

The article describes the biological, social and pedagogical factors of the development of emotional intelligence. The principles of organizing the process of developing emotional intelligence in a higher education institution are considered: the principle of activity, contextuality, systematicity, and the principle of emotional variability. The analysis of empirical data obtained within the framework of the conducted research is given.

Keywords: *emotional awareness, emotional intelligence, empathy, future primary school teacher, managing social relationships, New Ukrainian school, primary school, professional training, personal motivation, self-motivation.*

Introduction

Social and emotional education (SEE) has attracted substantial attention from researchers, educators, and curriculum developers all over the world for nearly three decades now. The goal of SEE is to help children develop

self-confidence and self-control skills, increase social awareness, and improve the quality of their relationships.

Social and emotional education is also connected with positive academic attitudes, increase academic achievement, prosocial behaviour and decrease antisocial behaviour and anxiety. It also affects the formation of positive relationships, a sense of belonging to the team, and a tolerant attitude towards an individual.

The content of the State standard of primary education determines guidelines of the primary school students' harmonious development and defines a list of cross-cutting skills, namely: problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, the capacity to cooperate, communicate effectively, the capacity to develop one's own emotional intelligence, conduct research, organize own activity, ability to reflect, thoughtful reading, etc (Kabinet ministriv Ukraini, 2018).

In view of the above, the development of emotional intelligence of younger schoolchildren is considered as one of the priority tasks of modern education. Solving this issue is impossible outside the context of the teachers' pedagogical activity, the level of emotional intelligence, readiness to develop the emotional intelligence of younger schoolchildren. Therefore, emotional and ethical competence (B2) occupies an important place in the Professional Standard for the profession "Primary school teacher of general secondary education". The specified competence includes a complex of other, narrower competences, namely:

- the capacity to be aware of personal sensations, emotions and feelings, needs, to manage one's own emotional states (B2.1);
- the ability to constructively and safely interact with the participants of the educational process (B2.2);
- the ability to realise and appreciate the interdependence of people and systems in the global world (B2.3) (Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 2020).

The results of current scientific research and the practice of educational institutions regarding the development of the emotional intelligence of schoolchildren show that the development of the emotional intelligence of primary school teachers' personality is one of the key prerequisites for their successful professional activity.

In view of the above, the problem of developing higher education students' emotional intelligence becomes relevant.

The research aim is to theoretically substantiate and empirically investigate the level of emotional intelligence development of the "Primary Education" specialty students.

Literature review

Nowadays, emotional intelligence is attracting more and more attention from researchers. Wide interest in this problem is not accidental: developed emotional intelligence enables a person to positively influence his own adaptation in society and achieve the tasks in life, which is an urgent problem today. There is even a belief among researchers, supported by the results of numerous studies, that it is emotional intelligence that determines 80% of a person's future success in various areas of his life (social, professional and personal). IQ in this context stands out at no more than 20%.

However, the concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has been used in scientific researches relatively recently. The theory of EI and the concept of emotional competence as a key condition for personal success have been used since 1990 thanks to the works of J. D. Mayer and P. Salovey, who first substantiated this phenomenon. Since then, numerous studies have been conducted with the purpose of conceptualising this topic, developing indicators of EI and criteria for its formation (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990).

The influence of developed EI on various spheres of everyday human life was studied by J. D. Mayer and P. Salovey proved the correlation between a high level of EI and an increased likelihood of good health and appearance, positive interaction with friends, loved ones, and family. The structure of EI was studied by P. Salovey, factors affecting emotional intelligence were studied by O. Veritova. We emphasise that these studies contributed to the creation of methods aimed at ensuring emotional communication within educational activities (Mayer et al., 1990; Veritova, 2019).

V. Zarytska considered the problem of developing the EI of students in the professional training system (Zarytska, 2013). Emotional intelligence was studied as one of the factors of social and psychological adaptation of the individual to the student environment and as a mechanism impacting the life success of the individual (Nosenko, & Chetveryk-Burchak, 2014).

Theoretical Consideration

Characterization of pedagogical conditions and factors for the development of emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers in the process of professional training requires clarification of the concept of “emotional intelligence” and its structural elements. It should be noted that researchers do not have a single vision regarding the interpretation of this concept, but there are different approaches to defining the concept of “emotional intelligence”, which characterizes it as quite complex. P. Salovey i J. D. Mayer provide the following understanding of the concept of emotional intelligence as “the capacity to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, distinguish between them, and use

this information to guide one's thoughts and actions” (Mayer et al., 1990). The understanding of the mentioned scientists about the nature of emotional intelligence is targeted at understanding the structure of emotions. The EI model proposed by the researchers has a number of elements that emphasise the capacity to recognize and analyse emotions: identify them, cause and handle emotions, understand and analyse them, regulate their influence (Zadorozhna-Knyagnitska, & Hadzhinova, 2021).

D. Goleman's structure of emotional intelligence is characterised by a number of cognitive characteristics that combines with individual traits. The researcher singled out important personal characteristics that are evidence of developed EI: the capacity to form suitable types of relationships with other people; the capacity to sensitively respond to other people's emotions; the capacity to use empathy.

According to D. Goleman's model, educational programs for the development of EI should focus on certain results: understanding one's own emotions; the capacity to control one's emotions; empathy; management of social relations (Goleman, 2011; Zadorozhna-Knyagnitska, & Hadzhinova, 2021).

Purposeful development of emotional intelligence is possible. In particular, D. Mayer, P. Salovey believe that emotional knowledge – the type of knowledge that EI works on – can be relatively easily acquired, including in the process of learning (Mayer et al., 1990); according to D. Goleman and other researchers of emotional intelligence, it can and should be developed (Goleman, 2011). In their opinion, emotional intelligence can be consciously formed in children in the process of education and upbringing, and in adults – through education.

To understand the algorithm for the development of EI, it is necessary to consider the factors that affect this process.

We can single out three groups of factors for the development and formation of emotional intelligence: biological, genetically determined (functional asymmetry of the brain, temperament properties and cognitive abilities), social (conditions of family socialization, personal attitudes, the individual's own activity and his religiosity) and pedagogical.

Characterising biological conditions, D. Goleman notes that the dominance of the right hemisphere of the brain is one of the main biological factors in the development of emotional intelligence. The right hemisphere is responsible for creative thinking, integrity of perception and imagination. The dominance of the right hemisphere is associated with non-verbal intelligence, which contributes to the accuracy of emotional hearing – the recognition of emotions in speech. Therefore, people with a dominant right hemisphere better recognize emotions and adequately respond to the emotions of others (Goleman, 2011).

Social factors also have an important role in the development of emotional intelligence. Emotionally rich relationships between parents are necessary to create optimal conditions for the child's emotional development. In such families,

more time and attention are devoted to discussing and analysing each other's emotional issues and emotional experiences. The tendency of parents to analyse emotional problems contributes to a better understanding of the child's own emotions and the development of emotional self-regulation.

Pedagogical factors in the formation of EI include: emotional communication in the educational environment; emotionality of the teacher; partnership relationships (interaction and cooperation of students, teachers, parents); the role of pair and group forms of work; atmosphere of emotional comfort; activities aimed at obtaining essential experiences that bring joy and negative emotions; active forms of educational activity that cause emotions (games, quizzes, contests, trainings, etc.); the emotionality of the educational material; clarity, on the basis of which feelings and emotions arise, evokes vivid images; multimedia tools; a set of exercises and tasks that help identify, understand and control one's own emotions and the emotions of others (Suxopara, 2019).

Methodology

In order to determine the level of development of future primary school teachers' emotional intelligence in the process of their professional training and development of the necessary methodological materials, an empirical study was conducted among students of higher education in the speciality 013 Primary Education of full-time and part-time forms studying at Mariupol State University in the period from 2021 to 2023. The sample consisted of 90 undergraduate students. The average age of the study participants is 19 years. The "Emotional intelligence test" by N. Hall was used, aimed at determining the level of emotional intelligence according to personal characteristics. This technique consists of 5 scales and 30 statements. These scales are: emotional awareness scale; managing one's emotions scale (emotional forgiveness, emotional non-rigidity); self-motivation scale (the ability to independently manage your emotional state); empathy scale; recognition of other people's emotions scale (the ability to influence the emotional state of others).

Each statement requires a response on a 6-point scale: from -3 (strongly disagree) to +3 (strongly agree). According to the results, three levels of each scale can be distinguished: high level (14 and above points), medium level (13-8 points), low level (7 and below points) (Doroshkevych, & Ilyash, 2020).

Research results

After conducting the test, we received the following results based on levels of emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers (Fig.1; Fig.2; Fig.3; Fig.4; Fig.5).

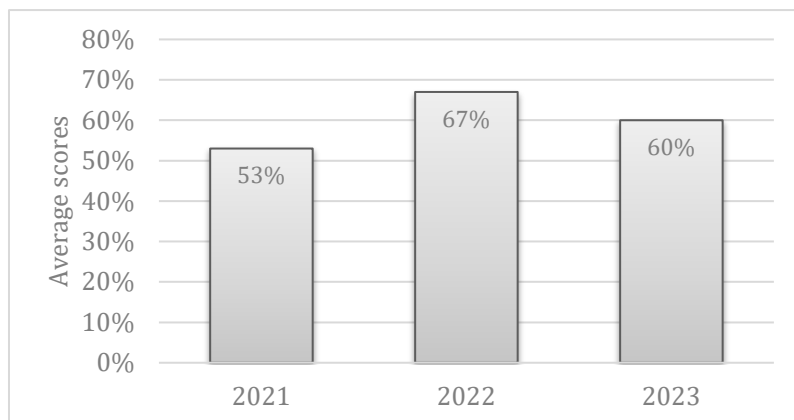


Figure1 *The level of emotional intelligence according to the N. Hall test (scale of emotional awareness) (made by authors)*

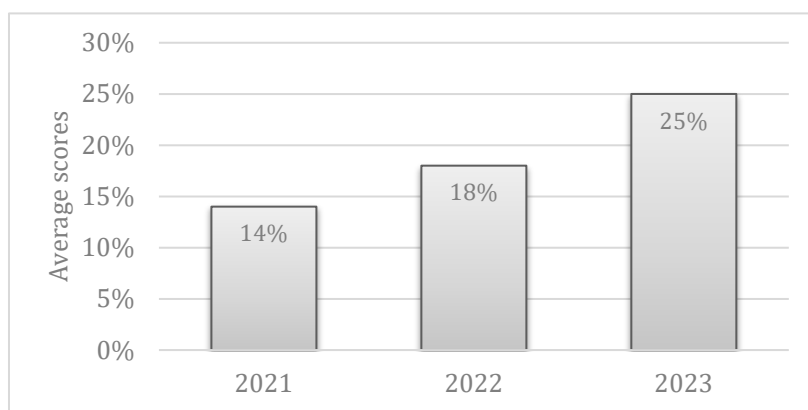


Figure2 *The level of emotional intelligence according to the N. Hall test (scale of managing one's emotions) (made by authors)*

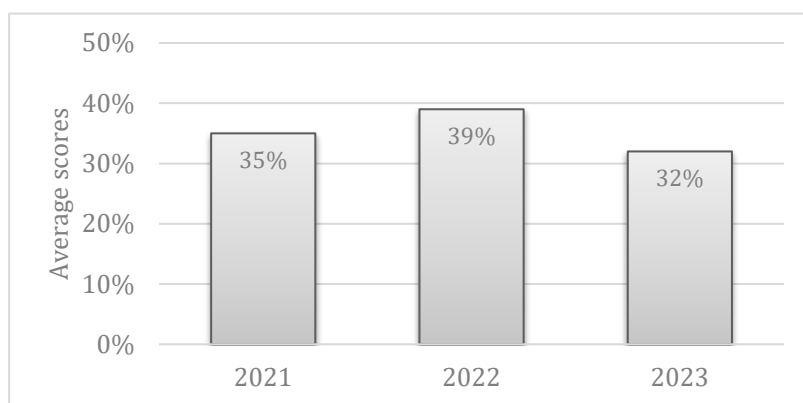


Figure 3 *The level of emotional intelligence according to the N. Hall test (scale of self-motivation) (made by authors)*

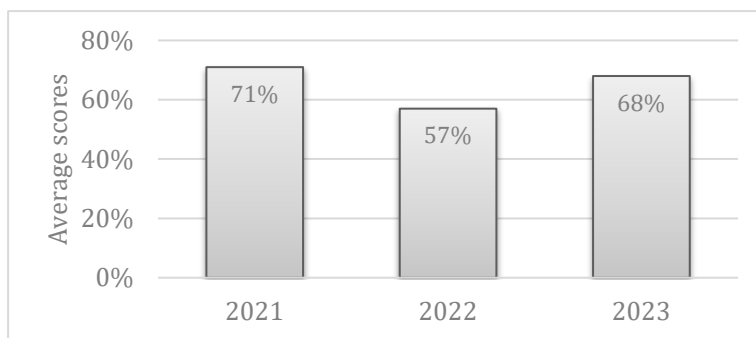


Figure 4 *The level of emotional intelligence according to the N. Hall test (scale of empathy) (made by authors)*

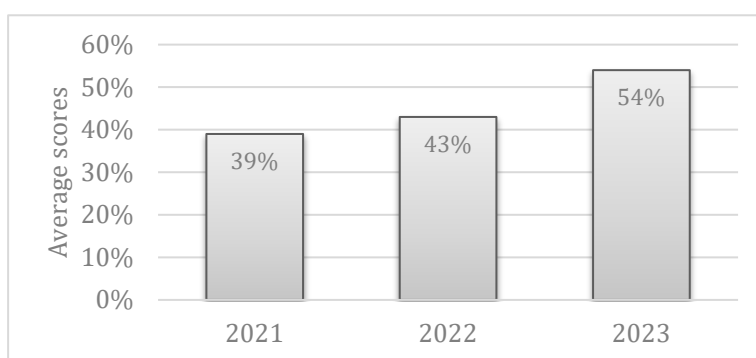


Figure 5 *The level of emotional intelligence according to the N. Hall test (scale of recognizing emotions of other people) (made by authors)*

According to the research results, the level of development of students' EI is low (Fig.6). In N. Hall's methodology, it is determined that the sum of all scales is equal to the level of emotional intelligence of an individual. A high level is characterized by 70 or more points, an average level is 40-69 points, a low level is equal to 39 points and below. Regarding individual scales, the levels of empathy (9,16) and emotional awareness (8,5) are somewhat higher, but they are also approaching the lower limit of the average level. Particularly alarming is the very low indicator of “managing one's emotions” (2,6), which indicates significant difficulties for students in freely managing their own emotions. Therefore, the obtained results demonstrate that most students do not know how to manage their emotions and direct them into a constructive matter, are not emotionally flexible, have a poor idea of what the people around them feel and how to interact with all this.

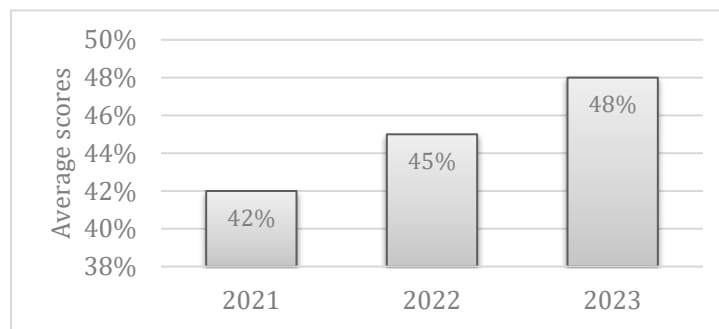


Figure 6 Comparison of levels of cumulative emotional quotient during 2021-2023 (made by authors)

Based on researched scales of EI, it is worth noting that that its development occurs through the formation of relevant competencies, in particular:

- 1) identification, verbal and non-verbal perception of own emotions;
- 2) detection of other people's emotions (empathy);
- 3) regulation of own emotions and emotions of other people;
- 4) the use of emotions in thinking and activity (creative thinking, attention switching and motivation, flexible planning).

For the effective development of emotional intelligence, researcher O. Veritova formulated special teaching principles aimed at developing the emotional intelligence of students of higher education. They include:

1. The principle of activity, which involves the formation of emotional competence of students through repeated performance of various emotionally coloured types of educational activities.
2. The principle of contextuality, which involves filling the professional training of future primary school teachers with various types of contextual activities: academic-type learning (educational activities with the leading role of lectures and seminars), quasi-professional activities (business game, special courses), actual professional activities (vocational practice, diploma and course design).
3. The principle of systematicity, which focuses on the formation of a systematic idea among students about future professional activity, about the role and place of emotional competence in this activity.
4. The principle of emotional variability, which involves the formation of future primary school teachers' abilities to make adequate decisions in choice situations, their preparation to overcome stressful pedagogical barriers, formation of the ability to choose the optimal option (Veritova, 2019).

Thus, taking into account the complex of the above-mentioned principles of the organisation of the educational process will fully ensure the development of the emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers.

Student age is characterised by significant variability of emotional reactions and ways of expressing emotional states. Experiencing certain emotions affects the personal and professional development of students. Understanding emotional states and adequate response to specific social factors is an important condition for effective educational and professional activity. That is why one of the pedagogical conditions for the development of EI is students' understanding of the essence of the notion of emotional intelligence and its importance in educational and professional activities. Fulfilment of the specified condition involves the formation of future teachers' knowledge about emotional intelligence as a personality trait that impacts the perception of oneself and others, communication skills, personal life and professional activity, helps to overcome problems and stressful situations. To ensure this condition, it is proposed to introduce the discipline "Emotional intelligence in education" (3 ECTS credits) into the educational program "Primary Education". The purpose of the course is to provide future primary school teachers with the knowledge, skills and abilities to use emotional intelligence and develop it in schoolchildren.

The tasks of the course are to give students an idea about the nature of "emotional intelligence" and its relationship to the professional environment; to make them aware of the internal and external components of "emotional intelligence" and the features of its perception as a dynamic system; to form students' ideas about the role of "emotional intelligence" as a decisive factor in the success of individual self-realization; acquiring skills to develop emotional intelligence. The modules of the discipline are focused on obtaining not only theoretical knowledge, but also practice-oriented information (Khadzhynova, 2022).

An important condition for the development of EI of future primary school teachers is the creation of a favourable educational environment in institutions of higher education. After all, a favourable psychological climate, an atmosphere of creativity, cooperation, support and partnership is the key to the effective development of EI. Emotionality in communication with classmates and professors creates openness in experiences and feelings. At the same time, the professor acts as a facilitator, combining the characteristics of a manager, leader and participant in the process of learning. The development of emotional intelligence is facilitated by the acceptance and understanding of the individuality of each student, which is facilitated by trust and respect, daily help and support, openness and constant readiness to help (Khadzhynova, 2024).

According to M. Shpak, the development of emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers can take place in various types of activities, especially in the process of organised education. Therefore, another condition for the development of students' emotional intelligence is the inclusion of active forms, methods and means of developing emotional intelligence in the educational process of a higher education institution. In addition, the development of

emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers is facilitated by their participation in various extracurricular activities, such as social projects and actions (Shpak, 2021).

Conclusions and discussion

So, the problem of developing emotional intelligence arouses the interest of researchers from various fields of scientific knowledge. That is why there are many approaches to defining the concept of “emotional intelligence”, its structure, as well as understanding the possibility of developing emotional intelligence in the process of learning at different age periods of an individual's life.

In our study, the factors of the EI development were characterised, which include biological, social and pedagogical factors. The principles of organising the process of developing emotional intelligence in a higher education institution are considered. They are principle of activity, the principle of contextuality, the principle of systematicity, and the principle of emotional variability.

It was determined that the level of emotional intelligence of Primary Education students is quite low and ranges from 42% to 48% on average. For the development of students' emotional intelligence, it is necessary to provide them with theoretical knowledge about emotional intelligence as a personality trait that affects the perception of oneself and others, communication skills, personal life and professional activity, helps to overcome problems and stressful situations. The next condition is the creation of favourable conditions in a higher education institution. A friendly psychological atmosphere, a student-centered approach, active learning and the use of emotions in the learning process, participation in extracurricular activities, emotional communication with classmates and teachers will ensure the formation of the necessary abilities for the development of emotional intelligence of future primary school teachers.

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