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DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The article highlights the theoretical and practical aspects of developing emotional intelligence and emotional competence among higher education students. It analyses the scientific approaches to the concepts of 'emotional intelligence' and 'emotional competence' proposed by both foreign and domestic researchers. The role of these constructs as key components of future specialists' professional and personal competence is substantiated. The essence of innovative practices for developing emotional intelligence is revealed, including the use of interactive and innovative technologies, emotional selfregulation platforms, and digital training programs. Here is emphasised that in the information society, developing emotional intelligence serves as one of the leading innovative goals of higher education, as it ensures the ability for effective communication, leadership, and psychological well-being. The conclusion is drawn that innovative technologies of emotional learning open new opportunities for self-awareness and professional realisation of higher education students.

Keywords: emotional intelligence; emotional competence; innovative practices; higher education students; self-regulation.

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INTRODUCTION

concept of sustainable development in higher The institutions involves education (HEIs) only not transformation of the individual but also of the educational process (Mospan, 2024). The Law on Higher Education of Ukraine defines the interconnectedness of various activities, innovative from scientific and to educational and communicative (Sysoieva & Mospan, 2015). Communication is a complex process that requires individuals to be aware of their own feelings and emotions, as well as to understand the states of others. The relevance of this article is driven by the need to identify and address the following contradictions: between the challenges of today and the professional competence required for developing the creative potential of higher education applicants; between accreditation expertise of educational programs and the practical training of students; between the development and implementation of a model for managing the development of an individual's creative potential and innovative development practices, and the actual content of professional training. The relevance is also reinforced by the requirements of the National Strategy for the Development of Higher Education in Ukraine (2022-2032), which emphasises the formation of emotional competence, creativity, soft skills, and students' psychological well-being. Therefore, there is a need to study emotional intelligence (EI) as a structural component of creative

potential (CP) and emotional competence (EC) as a prerequisite for the professional success of higher education students.

Thus, researching innovative practices of EI development in HEIs has both theoretical significance and practical value. Consequently, the development of new CP models and innovative practices for fostering EI and EC in higher education applicants will positively influence the organisation of the educational process, the quality of management, self-development, qualitative transformation, and personal growth of the individual, as well as their overall effectiveness.

BACKGROUND

The scholarly literature highlights the psychological conditions for the development of managerial competence, which is closely related to EC and an individual's psychological culture. Recent publications present theoretical and practical aspects of EI development as a set of self-aware abilities associated with the emotional sphere, as the capacity to perceive emotions, and as a factor influencing social and personal interaction. Contemporary studies identify mechanisms through which EI affects success in performing key life tasks (Bar-On, 2000); substantiate a psychological and pedagogical model for developing emotional competence in future psychologists and determine the influence of emotions on the effectiveness of intellectual and cognitive activity (Rakityanska, 2020); and develop emotional competencies as a teaching innovation in HEIs (Fernandez-Gavira et al., 2021).

Besides, Sysoieva and Mospan (2018) examine the issue of harmonising the educational thesaurus, which requires attention in the process of creating the European Higher Education Area and developing common educational standards.

Analysis of the scientific literature provides insight into the existing work on the formation of the phenomena of EI and EC as the interrelation between abilities and an individual's effectiveness and success. At the same time, the review of these studies suggests that there is a persistent problem regarding the examination of EC as an integration of awareness, the development of emotional skills, individual characteristics influencing success, and the practices for assessing EI and EC levels. These particular aspects require more detailed investigation. *The research objective* is to present the results of a theoretical analysis and interactive practices for developing an individual's creative potential (CP) and exploring the dynamics of individual transformation under conditions of constant social change by increasing levels of EI and EC, as well as examining technologies for their development.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical research methods (analysis, synthesis, generalisation, systematisation) were applied to scientific sources in psychology, pedagogy, and educology to define the concepts of 'emotional intelligence' and 'emotional competence,' and to determine their structure, components, and developmental determinants. A comparative-analytical method was used to examine

international and national experiences in implementing innovative EI development practices in HEIs. Empirical methods included observation, description, and modelling. Theoretical and empirical methods were employed to structure the acquired knowledge, investigate the ambiguous role of EI in managing the development of CP, and formulate conclusions regarding the understanding of this phenomenon within the structure of CP. Innovative technological methods were also introduced to model emotionally charged situations and train empathy. Thus, the issue of professionalism, teaching quality, and the implementation of innovative practices for developing EI and EC remains particularly relevant in the context of wartime and post-war conditions.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Scholars argue that EI inspires students to generate new ideas. It functions as a cognitive ability that meets correlational criteria, since practical training is an integral component of education that shapes the professional competence of higher education students, as well as their skills and abilities. Therefore, EC has been analysed as an integration of erudition, the development of emotional skills, and individual traits related to achievement and accomplishment.

Where can students acquire skills in self-awareness and selfregulation, empathy, and relationship management? How can they find the connection between their inner driving force and the ability to solve problems? Karpenko (2019, 60) states that self-understanding becomes the key to mutual understanding and therefore influences the practices of constructing interpersonal and broader social discourses. The development of self- and mutual understanding, as well as the unfolding of an individual's subjective potential, is made possible through emotional intelligence. Emotions determine the trajectory of success through conscious choice and the congruent identity of the individual. Marukhovska-Kartunova et al. (2023, 502) argue that in modern education, there are no clear recommendations regarding where emotional intelligence skills can be taught and acquired. An ideal option may be collaborative development projects (emotional intelligence development projects)... The instructor creates the conditions where a strong need for teamwork emerges, where a significant outcome is required, and where learning takes place over a sufficiently long period. Therefore, the process through which skills are practised is a significant element in forming the competencies of future professionals. Koroid (2025, 161) noted that an individual must find coping resources for achieving personal maturity, be able to choose methods of self-realisation, and strive for the development and implementation of their creative potential. EI is indeed a component of CP, and its levels provide individuals with the quality of social interaction and a sense of deep satisfaction and boundless joy. Thus, through the development of CP, both EC - as a component of professional competence – and EI are enhanced. Consequently, the impact on students' achievements manifests through CP development, indicators of EI/EC levels, and skills of control and constructive problem-solving.

What educational technologies can be applied for developing EI? Today, educational technologies aimed at developing EI focus on forming the abilities and skills necessary for understanding, recognising, and regulating one's own emotions, engaging in self-reflection, communicating effectively, and ensuring quality management of student groups as well as effective interaction with them (see Table 1). Therefore, EI is defined as an integrative characteristic of an individual that combines emotional-regulatory and communicative abilities.

Table 1

Educational Technologies of REI

Educational	Methods		
Technologies	Purpose of Use	1120113013	
Technology of Emotional Learning Design and Micro- Reflection	Development of self- understanding and self- regulation, emotional self- control and increased motivation, as well as collaboration skills	Video cases, reflective exercises, training, and emotion cards	
Technology for Developing Emotional Literacy (EL) and Storytelling Technology with Emotional Reflection	Recognition and expression of emotions, development of emotional vocabulary and self-expression skills	Emotion diary, podcasts, comics, "Emotional Barometer" exercises, video stories, analysis of literary and artistic images	
Art-Therapeutic Technologies and Media-Therapeutic Technologies	Self-Discovery through Creativity	Music Therapy, Drawing, Emotional Film Club: Viewing and Reflection, Discussion of Characters' Alternative Actions	
Project-Based Learning	Development of Social Responsibility	Volunteering, Social Projects	
Coaching and Reflective Technologies	Development of Self- Discovery and Self-Regulation	Self-Analysis, Coaching Sessions	
"Design Thinking for Emotions" Technology	Development of Emotional Empathy and Collaboration	Adaptation of the Design Thinking Methodology	
Interactive and Digital Technologies	Use of ICT for the Development of Self- Reflection	Online Platforms, Mobile Applications	

Under current conditions, the development of EI and EC has become a key factor in forming the psychological well-being of future professionals, and subsequently of those they will educate. Accordingly, "EI as a coping resource, as emotional selfproductivity in ensuring successful self-design of the individual, is capable of motivating and developing, influencing the challenges of today and the choice of coping strategies. Emotional understanding, awareness, and consciousness as intrapersonal competencies of EI are particularly significant for the development of creative potential. EI influences the effectiveness of an educational institution, its image, and above all, improves personal and professional relationships that harmonise with an innovative (Koroid, environment" 70). educational 2025, Similarly, (2021) described Fernandez-Gavira et al. an educational innovation for students based on Bisquerra's model of emotional competencies. The students demonstrated their abilities to and regulate emotions and their interpersonal recognise competencies, which contributed to engagement and motivation.

In the scholarly literature, several models of EI are presented: Goleman's mixed model (1995) and the ability model by Mayer and Salovey (1990). In particular, Bar-On's model (2000) is designed to conceptualise EI. His research argues that EI is a synergy present within intelligence, where overall intelligence is the sum of the intelligence quotient, the emotional quotient, and an undetermined quotient. To understand and measure the impact of EI, one must possess the skills and abilities to listen, observe, and feel. This

requires a focus on a competent individual and active investment through planning, analysis, reflection, and awareness. Mayer and Salovey (1990) defined EI as a set of mental abilities. Their model views EI as a collection of cognitive abilities related to emotions. EI and competence are interpreted through the category of ability, which encompasses alignment among awareness, emotions, skills, and capabilities. Regarding Goleman's mixed model (1995), it emphasises the popularisation of the EI concept by identifying key components that encompass both intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions. The author's model of EI is presented in Fig. 1:

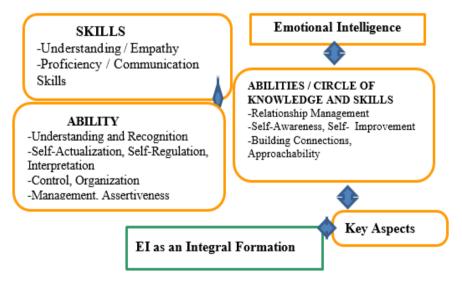


Figure 1. Components of Emotional Intelligence

International and Ukrainian scholars have recognised the importance of EI development, and therefore have examined it from various perspectives. Carthy et al. (2022) presented an analysis of an online EI coaching program for Irish students, focusing on its impact and student perceptions. This program enhanced self-awareness, self-regulation, and the perception of social support. Personalised coaching sessions combined with practical tasks proved particularly valuable. The results highlight the importance of adapting content to students' needs, showing that a combination of online modules with periodic coaching sessions yields better outcomes than passive courses alone. Therefore, identifying the factors influencing EI and EC in relation to the individual remains relevant and requires detailed examination. To develop students' self-understanding, self-regulation, emotional self-control, and motivation, we will examine a synthesised selection of scholars and their works related to educational technologies (Table 2):

Table 2
Research by Scholars on Educational Technologies for REI and the Development of EC

Scientist	Approach/Idea	Implementation	
J. Mayer, P. Salovey (USA)	EI Model as the Ability to Understand and Regulate Emotions	Emotional Training, Development of Empathy in Learning	
H. Gardner (USA)	Theory of Multiple Intelligences	Development of Self- Awareness and Collaboration	
C. Rogers (USA)	Humanistic Approach in Education	Personality-Oriented Technologies	
S. Denham (USA)	Research on EC for Preschool Children	Art-Therapeutic Technologies for Developing Emotional Sensitivity	
O. Pometun (Ukraine)	Interactive Learning Technologies: Stimulating the Development of Emotional Culture	Role-Playing Games, "Circle of Ideas" Technology for Developing Emotional Expressiveness	
N. Chepeleva (Ukraine)	Communicative-Dialogical Approach to Developing EC	Social-Psychological Trainings, Technologies for Developing Empathy through Dialogue	
N. Pidbutska, T. Sushchenko (Ukraine)	Study of Technologies for Developing EI in Pedagogical Education	Coaching and Reflective Technologies for Developing EI in Future Teachers	

As we can see, scholars study both EI and EC, since high levels of EI and EC influence professional competence, communication effectiveness, and overall success. Motivation and the mobilisation of active creative activity, the development of creative potential (CP) during the provision of educational empathy, regulation services, support, of emotional expressiveness, emotional control, and the development of emotional literacy should become key elements in professional training. Thus, innovative practices and modern educational innovations, as well as updates to learning objectives, require a competency-based approach. EC, as a set of acquired knowledge and skills, ensures an individual's competitive advantage under contemporary conditions through a redefinition of EI structure, which includes self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, selfdevelopment, and communication skills. Researchers of EC have not yet reached a consensus on the factors that determine its formation. However, Zabarovska (2024) attempted to identify the main components of an individual's EC, including knowledge, skills and abilities, experience, attitudes, and values. She notes that the concept of emotional competence is a distinct psychological construct, based on emotional intelligence, but fundamentally different in nature. Developed concepts of emotional competence consider it as a combination of abilities, the result of emotional development, emotional intelligence literacy, emotional awareness, and an integral psychological property.

Hulbs and Kobets (2021, 18) understood EC as the ability to recognise emotions, achieve and generate them in ways that promote understanding and management of emotions, thereby contributing to one's emotional and intellectual growth. Emotional competence is associated with abilities that include: accurately assessing and expressing emotions—both one's own and those of others; cognitively assimilating emotional experiences; recognising, understanding, and interpreting emotions. EC reflects the level of intrapersonal and interpersonal connections as well as EI, since EI ensures high effectiveness through the regulation of emotions, recognition of emotions in others, gaining experience, and professional problemsolving. Thus, EC is distinguished as the quality of identifying and emotions effectively recognising during interpersonal communication. Therefore, the implementation of models for managing the development of creative potential and innovative practices for developing EI and EC in higher education institutions serves as an indicator of ensuring students' competitiveness and a crucial factor in the development of human capital. In this context, there is a need to develop the theoretical foundations of EI and EC with regard to their capacity for emotion management.

How can EC be structurally conceptualised? Let us consider the author's model of EC: A combination of understanding, awareness, and management in the domain of emotions (Fig. 2):

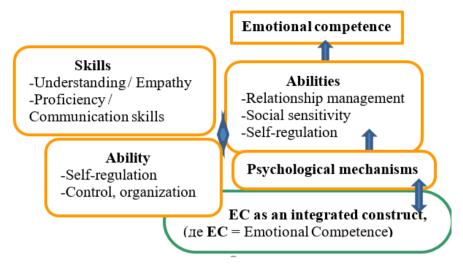


Figure 2. Components of Emotional Competence

Thus, innovative practices will play a decisive role in REI and EC. For example, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, together with the NAESU et al. (2021), recommend the collection of scholarly works "Modern Information Technologies and Innovative Teaching Methods in the Training of Specialists: Methodology, Theory, Experience, Problems." In this collection, well-known researchers and practising educators highlight modern innovative technologies and innovative teaching methods in the training of skilled workers, junior specialists, specialists, and master's degree students. In addition, Derstuhanova (2022) presented scholarly views on the development of the idea of the competency-based approach and the periodisation of the concept of 'competence,' developed by Australian and Ukrainian scholars. By comparing the work of international and domestic researchers, she concluded that, in addition to the existing interpretation of this

term as a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, ways of thinking, attitudes, values, and other personal qualities, competence may also be viewed as an evaluative category that has a quantitative dimension. Radkevych et al. (2018) conducted a review of the features of the development of vocational education and training systems in the countries of Western, Central, and Eastern Europe, as well as the Scandinavian countries, to use this for a comparative analysis of domestic and foreign models of managing the development of vocational education and training.

Thus, the direction of the vector of European education development has been established toward competencies as the target educational benchmark for training. Therefore, by comparative analysis of domestic conducting a and international views, achievements, and models, one can conclude that a competency-oriented approach should be applied to the development of key competencies of higher education institution students. Holmes et al. (2021) suggest that educators reach a shared understanding and interpretation of competency-based education and develop appropriate, authentic, and fair assessment processes. Besides, Mospan (2023) reveals trends in the development of global multilingual higher education during the decade preceding the COVID-19 pandemic, which could contribute to understanding this phenomenon during the pandemic. Therefore, here are

recommended REI innovative practices for students of the Faculty of Pedagogical Education (Table 3).

Table 3
Innovative REI Practices

Course	Practice	Work format	Result
Short daily practices of recognising one's own emotions at the beginning of classes	"Emotional check-in" technique	Digital platforms (Mentimeter, Padlet), mood cards, emo- diagrams	Development of emotional self- reflection skills and group emotional culture
Emotional regulation training	Scenarios of pedagogical situations	Situation analysis	Ability to act calmly and empathetically
Awareness of reactions, learning self-regulation and empathy	Emotional Coaching	Reflective journals, exercises for identifying emotions, and coaching sessions	Development of self- awareness and the ability to manage one's emotions in professional situations
Art Coaching and Creative Practices	Art Therapy, Music- Emotional Collages	Music, poetry, and drawing as a means of self- discovery and developing emotional sensitivity	Development of emotional expressiveness and self-regulation skills through creativity

Thus, attention is focused on awareness and self-regulation, empathy and social awareness. REI and EC have a positive impact on interpersonal relationships, reflection, and professional development. Herasymovych and Stakhova (2024, 236) note that emotional intelligence is extremely necessary in the social sphere of students' lives. The authors emphasise that the ability to empathise, regulate emotions, and build harmonious relationships with peers not only contributes to personal growth but also lays

the foundation for a successful future professional career. Popadynets and Podolian (2025, 364) assert that the effectiveness of methods for developing emotional intelligence increases significantly when regular practice is ensured (at least three times a week), when an individualised approach is applied, when feedback is received from a mentor or psychologist, and when the acquired skills are integrated into daily life. Besides, Raievska and Soliakova (2021, 129) emphasise that they view emotional competence as "the ability to recognise emotions – both one's own and those of others. People with a high level of emotional intelligence possess skills that allow them to feel more confident in society and achieve meaningful results.

REI and EC are, in fact, essential for an individual to acquire the experience needed for effective interaction, self-design, and creative growth. Emotional intelligence can be viewed as a core resource for the self-actualisation and self-realisation of future specialists, whereas emotional competence represents a synthesis of knowledge, practices, and the level of one's professionalism and moral self-understanding. Thus, a university instructor must also enhance their own REI, as they take on the role of a practitioner-psychologist and expert-consultant.

CONCLUSIONS

By implementing the most effective practices, the instructor ensures effective interaction, self-regulation, and psychological resilience among higher education students. The development of students' soft skills determines their competitiveness and success; therefore, innovative REI and EC practices for higher education students encompass a set of both psychological-pedagogical and technical solutions. Innovative practices facilitate the transition from knowledge-based to emotionally humanistic education, in which the student becomes an agent of self-development, and EC and EI become part of professional culture. Accordingly, a hybrid approach works best: scalability combined with practice yields the most stable results. Active methods, in particular, stimulate engagement, enhance motivation, and strengthen the ability to apply emotional intelligence. Therefore, further scientific inquiry will focus on examining the relationship between EI and academic success, leadership potential, and psychological well-being, as well as on the development of original courses and programs.

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ІННОВАЦІЙНІ ПРАКТИКИ РОЗВИТКУ ЕМОЦІЙНОГО ІНТЕЛЕКТУ Й ЕМОЦІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ ЗДОБУВАЧІВ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

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V статті висвітлено теоретичні та практичні аспекти проблеми розвитку емоційного інтелекту й емоційної компетентності здобувачів вишої освіти. Здійснено аналіз наукових підходів шодо «емоційний інтелект» та «емоційна компетентність» зарубіжних і вітчизняних науковців. Обгрунтовано їх роль як ключової складової професійної й особистісної компетентності майбутніх спеціалістів. Розкрито сутність інноваційних практик формування емоиійного інтелекту, зокрема використання інноваиійних інтерактивних технологій, також платформ емоційної саморегуляції й цифрових тренінгів. Наголошено, що в умовах інформаційного суспільства розвиток емоційного інтелекту виступає однією з провідних інноваційних цілей вищої освіти, тому як забезпечує здатність до ефективної комунікації, лідерства та психологічного благополуччя. Зроблено висновок, що інноваційні технології емоційного навчання відкривають нові можливості для самопізнання, професійної самореалізації здобувачів вищої освіти.

Ключові слова: емоційний інтелект, інноваційні практики, здобувачі вищої освіти, емоційна компетентність, інноваційні технології, емоційна культура, саморегуляція.

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