

CHARACTERISTICS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF TEACHERS IN LEBANESE PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the results of a comparative analysis of a study conducted in Lebanese educational institutions. The purpose of this article is to explore the level of emotional intelligence, empathy, and social stereotypes among teachers, to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence in contemporary schools, teaching strategies, and the training of future teachers. The paper includes a survey conducted with 104 participants in Lebanon through focus groups, individual meetings, and Google Forms, along with the retesting results before and after the training. The study involved teachers from various age groups and regions throughout Lebanon, who taught in different subject areas and cycles. Based on the statistical analysis of the research results, the article provides recommendations and guidelines for policy makers, for school leaders and educators, aimed at effectively incorporating emotional intelligence teaching in classrooms and professional workgroups.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, social stereotypes, mental health, pedagogical institutions, psychological training.*

INTRODUCTION

Schools prepare learners for the future and for tomorrow. The type of future that we aim to create dictates the type of education that we need to offer our learners. Tomorrow's workforce, schools, leaders, and citizens need to be prepared through today's curricula, teaching and learning strategies, and overall interactions that take place in the pedagogical institutions. The Harvard Review, in its 2021 research, states that emotional intelligence is an essential skill for individuals to succeed in 21st century life and the workforce. Nevertheless, social-emotional learning is a skill that is absent in the school national curricula in Lebanon. It is not found in the university courses that prepare teachers to be ready to educate the 3rd millennium changemakers.

If a skill is an essential requirement for life success and an imperative component in the global citizens of tomorrow, and yet absent in school curricula and teacher preparatory courses and programs, then how are our learners having the opportunity to acquire these skills and increase their chances of life success? We need to have policies set to have clear guidelines, roadmaps, and best practices in this matter to allow nationwide implementation of such programs.

Social skills the tool to resolve many of the problems in the community, offering adolescents the chance to move beyond egocentrism to build and maintain social skills with others. They elaborate that personality, culture, age, and neurological conditions affect social skills, and some have innate traits. Yet, there are methods that help improve and nurture these skills inside classrooms, such as role-playing, modeling, cooperative learning. Adolescents, at the stage of building their identity and becoming self-aware, need these skills to become the citizens of tomorrow and help create a more empathetic and tolerant world. Children and youth are our biggest capital, and we need to create sustainable societies for them and offer quality, inclusive, and equitable education (SDG4), along with promoting health and well-being for all (SDGS3).

Research Problem

A growing body of social science research is offering evidence that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in life success and personal happiness. Life pre- and post-COVID offered an opportunity to the world, to try and test the social skills theory in the social and education context as well. Understanding oneself, relating to others, facing challenges with a positive outlook, and resilience were all put to the test when learners and educators were physically apart. Educational systems underwent this same test to assess the learning, development, effective relationship, and survival skills that teachers offered to learners to face challenging times. Forbes magazine considered social skills a vital requirement for the leaders of the future.

Successful changemakers possess emotional intelligence, and these social skills give them an edge over other peers. Learners need to acquire skills that can support them in times of conflicts and challenges. These human capitals need to shed light on their strengths and emphasize them as tools to face life and its challenges. They need competencies that can allow them to move through hardship and pandemics while maintaining their mental health and emotional well-being. These life skills of self-knowledge, management, and motivation fall under the umbrella of Social Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL, according to CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning), is an educational approach that helps people develop social skills and awareness of themselves and others. School-based planned SEL programs can help students improve their academic and interpersonal performance.

SEL programs nurture growth mindset and positive solution-oriented culture within the school. SEL programs help set school-wide policies that nurture individual differences and allow

learners to reach their maximum potential. SEL supports learners, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at the large, as all stakeholders in the education system. Implementation of SEL curricula in schools promises hope on the larger scale of preparing lifelong learners, competent learners, who know themselves well, are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and are empathetic citizens in their society (CASEL, 2021).

Developing social and emotional skills can have many benefits for learners, improving mental health and well-being, reducing disruptive behaviors, and also positively affecting academic performance. Studies have shown that these skills help protect students from becoming targets of bullying and lower the risk of someone being bullied or even bullying others. Through SEL, students can develop empathy and resolve conflicts better. (Farrington, D; Ttofi, M; Zych, I.2019)

This research sheds light on the knowledge and awareness of social skills among teachers in Lebanon. It aims to investigate whether teachers possess emotional intelligence awareness which is the basis of social-emotional learning. It highlights the benefits of social-emotional learning programs in terms of combating social stereotypes and increasing tolerance in schools. The paper offers a sample of a teacher training module on emotional well-being and social-emotional learning that includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These best practices aim to teach learners skills such as emotional awareness, impulse control, stress management, adaptability, initiative-taking, and happiness. These life skills aim to future proof learners, giving them tools for a better quality of life as individuals, schools, and communities. The paper offers recommendations and guidelines for school leadership teams and policymakers that would aim to create more equity and tolerance inside their classrooms.

The Research Significance

Research on emotional intelligence and social skills has revealed various definitions and competencies, ranging from “self-awareness” to “leading one’s self” to understanding and leading others. Mayer and Salovey elaborate that emotion regulation follows emotional self-awareness. It is the ability to regulate emotions by understanding them, perceiving them, and also reasoning through them. Emotional self-awareness, along with self-regulation, creates a harmony in the mind and heart of the individual.

According to Mayer and Salovey (1993;1997), the first branch of emotional intelligence is perceiving emotions. It is the ability to identify and understand emotions from facial expressions, vocal cues, and even visual stimuli such as pictures. This branch also encompasses the capacity for individuals to recognize and interpret their own emotions. Labeling and understanding emotions serve as the foundation for utilizing this emotional "data" and taking appropriate action.

The second branch involves using emotions. This entails employing perceived emotions in decision-making, critical thinking, and problem-solving. When individuals harness their positive energy and motivation to enhance performance, they leverage their emotional state to benefit their personal and professional lives. Being aware of emotions and utilizing them effectively facilitates cognitive processes and enables better decision-making. The third branch of emotional intelligence involves the ability to understand emotions, including their causes, nature, and patterns. By identifying and labeling different emotions and discerning even subtle differences among them, individuals can better recognize how emotions evolve, what triggers them, and the factors that influence them. Consequently, they can more effectively channel their emotions towards constructive outcomes and implications.

The fourth branch entails a higher level of skill in managing emotions. Individuals at this stage can take control of their emotions and regulate them, allowing themselves to master the emotion rather than allowing emotions to dictate their decisions and behaviors. At this stage, individuals can direct emotions such as anger and disappointment towards more positive emotions such as motivation, thereby setting a framework for more productive outputs (Mayer, J. & Salovey, P., 1993, 1997).

Daniel Goleman explains that there's a new way of being intelligent beyond traditional IQ, which involves gaining self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Richard Boyatzis, in his Intentional Change Theory, emphasizes the importance of change, suggesting that when individuals, teams, and communities undergo intentional change, sustainable transformations occur, impacting organizations, countries, and the global community. Drawing from two decades of research, Goleman and Boyatzis provide evidence that emotional intelligence is essential for leaders and professionals in leadership roles to effectively navigate change and foster growth with a positive mindset (Boyatzis, Goleman, 1999).

Training and development emerge as crucial areas for further exploration when discussing emotional intelligence. Cherniss and Goleman advocate that EI competencies can be taught through the creation of supportive environments and sustained commitment and support. If emotional intelligence is considered a skill, then, akin to other skills and competencies, training becomes pivotal in amplifying the impact of these skills (Cherniss, Goleman, 2001).

In general, individuals aspire to create and live happy lives filled with satisfaction and joy. Social psychology research endeavors to understand how individuals are influenced in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors by their surroundings and the communities in which they exist. Just as employers seek the "right" employee suited to the role, task, and work culture, schools also strive to prepare the "right" citizens for the community and cultivate future leaders for the 21st century.

Research Objectives

SEL programs target learners, parents, teachers, administrators, and the broader community, encompassing all stakeholders within the education system. The implementation of SEL curricula in schools holds promise on a larger scale, aiming to prepare lifelong learners who are competent, self-aware, and empathetic citizens in their society. (CASEL, 2021)

SEL plays a crucial role in fostering equity within the community, providing a safe environment for all learners regardless of their abilities or background. By promoting collaboration and effective communication, these programs contribute to a supportive learning environment. Moreover, SEL initiatives enhance academic performance, boost learners' self-esteem, and improve their ability to form lasting, meaningful relationships. This interdisciplinary approach, which integrates academic content with essential life skills, offers a framework for investigating and understanding its profound implications.

It is imperative to examine emotional intelligence through the perspectives of both education and psychology, at both national and international levels. Developing social and emotional skills has the potential to foster greater equity in education, while also improving mental health and well-being, increasing tolerance levels, reducing disruptive behaviors, and positively impacting academic performance. Studies have demonstrated that these skills serve as protective factors, reducing the likelihood of students becoming targets of bullying and decreasing the risk of either being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviors themselves. Through Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), students can cultivate empathy and enhance their ability to resolve conflicts effectively (Farrington, D; Ttofi, M; Zych, I, 2019).

The study provides a sample of a teacher training module on emotional well-being and social-emotional learning, encompassing skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The current research seeks to explore the awareness and preparedness of teachers regarding social-emotional learning and to propose an effective program to assist teachers in introducing these essential skills into classrooms and school cultures.

METHODOLOGY

The survey tool was shared across various social media networks of teachers, who voluntarily filled the form. The initial section of the Google Form distributed to all participants focused on collecting demographic information. A total of 87 females and 17 males participated in the study. The participants' ages were diverse, as were their years of experience in teaching. The second section of the study consisted of N. Hall's tool that's used for assessing "emotional intelligence" (EQ questionnaire) 09.02.2017 Irina Andreeva 9 N. Hall's method for assessing "emotional intelligence" (EQ questionnaire) // E.I. Ilyin. Emotions and feelings. – St. Petersburg: Peter, 2001. – S. 633-634. N.

Hall's technique is proposed to identify the ability to understand the relationship of the individual, represented in emotions and manage the emotional sphere on the basis of decision-making. It consists of 30 statements and contains 5 scales: 1) emotional awareness, 2) management of emotions (rather it is emotional outgoing, emotional non-rigidity), 3) self-motivation (rather, it is just arbitrary control of one's emotions, excluding paragraph 14), 4) empathy, 5) recognition of emotions of other people (rather – the ability to influence the emotional state of others). Participants wrote a number to the right of each statement Completely disagree – (-3 points); Mostly disagree — (-2 points); Partially disagree — (-1 point); Partially agree – (+ 1 point); Mostly agree – (+2 points); Completely agree – (+ 3 points).

The second tool used in Social Skills section was Boyko Empathy test-questionnaire. Methodology for diagnosing the level of empathic abilities. instructions. It allowed them to identify the type or empathy presence whether low, medium or high in various domains.

The diagnostic methodology of **"Empathic ability level" proposed by V. Boyko** aims to assess an individual's empathic abilities. Empathy refers to the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, and it plays a crucial role in human social interactions and relationships. Boyko's diagnostic methodology involves a comprehensive assessment process that combines self-report measures, behavioral observations, and physiological measurements. The goal is to provide a holistic understanding of an individual's empathic abilities across different dimensions.

FINDINGS

The Hall's tool was utilized to measure the emotional awareness of the participants. Upon comparison between males and females, it was found that females exhibited higher levels of self-awareness compared to males, who scored lower on this aspect. Female teachers exhibited a higher level of self-awareness compared to male teachers. However, across the entire population, whether male or female, a majority (67%) demonstrated high levels of self-awareness and self-knowledge, with 15% exhibiting medium levels, and only 18% displaying low self-awareness.

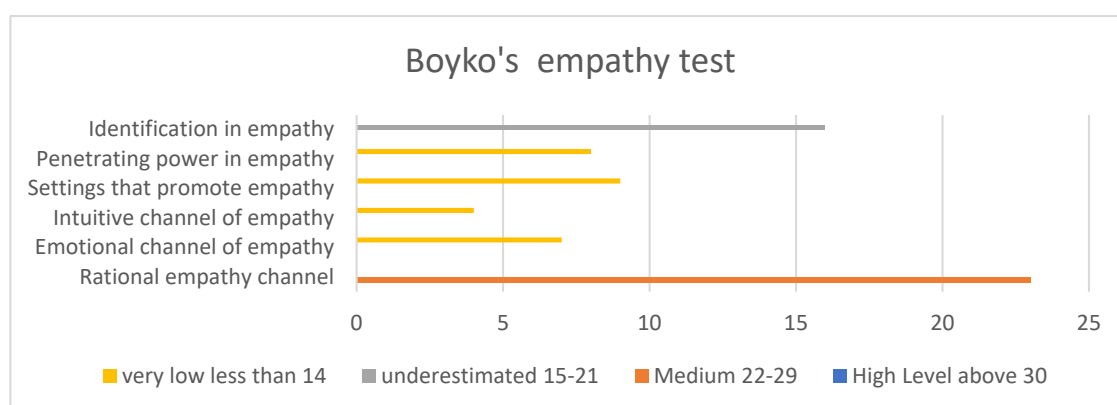
Similarly, in terms of emotion management, women tended to have higher levels of emotion control and regulation compared to men. Overall, the analysis of emotion management skills revealed that 59% of participants demonstrated high levels of emotion regulation, 22% exhibited medium levels, and the remaining 19% displayed low emotion regulation skills.

The third aspect measured by Hall's tool was self-motivation. The results remained consistent with the previous components. The majority of teachers demonstrated high levels of motivation (56%), with 16% exhibiting medium levels, and 28% displaying low motivation.

The next section of the Hall's tool measured the social skills and interpersonal capabilities. The results differed from those of the first section, which focused on intrapersonal skills and personal attributes. Forty-three percent of females and 64% of males scored low on empathy, while

the overall scores were consistent with the detailed description. On average, 53% of the general population scored low on empathy. Specifically, 46% of the participants scored low on empathy, 32% scored medium, and only 22% scored high. The final component aimed to evaluate individuals' capacity to recognize emotions in others. The results indicated that 59% of females and 53% of males scored low in their ability to recognize and interpret emotions in others. Overall, 56% of participants demonstrated a low score in these skills. Fifty six percent of overall participants showed the low score in these skills.

Boyko's diagnostic methodology broke down the empathy into more measurable terms such as rational empathy, emotional, intuitive. It elaborated on the source such as availability of settings that promote empathy, penetrating power or identification in empathy.



Graph 1: Boyko's Empathy levels

The survey showed further evidence on the overall low level of empathy found in the total participants. The intuitive and emotional empathy was the lowest, next penetrating power and settings available, followed highest by identification of empathy and scored highly on rational empathy.

The Boyko's empathy assessment showed overall very low to underestimated to medium level of empathy found in the 104 participants.

These findings raised concerns about the current situation. In response, a new training course was developed by the researcher, drawing upon various research in the field, including resources from CASEL and Daniel Goleman's theory. The training module was based on a literature review and the researcher's teaching and training experience. It was then offered to a group of participants to enhance their emotional intelligence. These findings highlighted the need for a training to teachers to help elevate the level of empathy. Empathy is the skill needed for teachers to be able to bond with learners and help elevate the level and the quality of teaching learning experiences.

	High Level above 30	Medium 22-29	underestimated 15-21	very low less than 14
<i>Rational empathy channel</i>		23		
<i>Emotional channel of empathy</i>				7
<i>Intuitive channel of empathy</i>				4
Settings that promote empathy				9
<i>Penetrating power in empathy</i>				8
<i>Identification in empathy</i>			16	

Table 2. Empathy detailed levels of participants using Boyko's tool

Second data were collected post-training after three months to compare results and assess the potential benefits of such training modules for teachers. The participants in the training were all females with varying years of experience in teaching.

Post training analysis of the results were as follows: The Hall's tool

Pre training Self-Awareness		Post training Self-Awareness
High	67	68.5
Medium	15	15.5
Low	18	16

Table 3. Self-awareness levels of participants pre and post training using Hall's tool

Management of emotions showed slight improvement as well.

Management of emotions		Post training Management of emotions
High	59	61
Medium	22	22
Low	19	17

Table 4. Self-management levels of participants pre and post training using Hall's tool

Nevertheless, the interesting part was about motivation.

Motivation		Post training Motivation
High	56	27.4
Medium	16	53
Low	28	19.6

Table 5. *Motivation levels of participants pre and post training using Hall's tool*

Next, empathy was measured. The analysis revealed that prior to training, 46% of teachers scored low on empathy. However, following the training, only 3.9% scored low on empathy. Additionally, the percentages of medium and high levels of empathy increased from 32% and 22% respectively before training to 49% and 47.1% post-training.

Empathy		Post training Empathy
High	22	47.1
Medium	32	49
Low	46	3.9

Table 6. *Empathy levels of participants pre and post training using Hall's tool*

The next section provided insight into recognizing emotions in others, also known as "reading" emotions, as an additional competency in emotional intelligence.

Recognizing emotions in others		Post training Recognizing emotions in others
High	23	41.3
Medium	32	50.9
Low	45	7.8

Table 7. *Recognizing emotions in others levels of participants pre and post training using Hall's tool*

The low levels decreased from 45% to 7.8%, while the medium and high levels increased. Boyko's tool offered an in-depth insight about the change in the empathy level.

Rational empathy and intuitive empath were elevated after the training, along with identification of empathy.

	High Level above 30	Medium 22-29	underestimated 15-21	very low less than 14
<i>Rational empathy channel</i>	65			
<i>Emotional channel of empathy</i>				7
<i>Intuitive channel of empathy</i>	92			
Settings that promote empathy				5
<i>Penetrating power in empathy</i>				6
<i>Identification in empathy</i>	79			

Table 8. Boyko's in-depth analysis of empathy post training

DISCUSSION

Evidence shows that teachers are self-aware and have effective skills to manage and regulate their emotions. This is in terms of personal competencies of knowing the self and regulating themselves where they can lead and motivate themselves.

However, their empathy level and their ability to understand and read emotions of others is a very significant and indispensable skill. This is a huge area of concerns because teaching and learning processes have empathy and understanding the other at their core. If schools aim to improve the academic performance and offer learners the boost and head start of social skills, then teachers are the agents to make that come true. If teachers are to lead by example, then they have to possess the ability to put themselves in others' shoes and read them emotions to show empathy and kindness.

The post training documented decrease in the motivation level was another alarming finding. This could be explained by the burnout that teachers are facing in Lebanon. That would also mean that they are currently in an exhausted situation, had to show resilience for so long to

survive the pandemic, the war and Beirut explosion. Teachers are demotivated, losing interest in their jobs and that resulted in huge number of teachers leaving the profession. They are unable to show empathy towards others, unless they are offered trainings and workshops to become more alert about this situation and then, do their best to show empathy.

Teacher burnout according to the National Education “is often a more temporary condition in which an educator has exhausted the personal and professional resources necessary to do the job. Demoralization occurs when an educator believes she is unable to perform the work in ways that uphold the high standards of the profession.” (Walker, 2021)

According to the Executive Magazine, due the extreme depreciation of the Lebanese pound, teachers have watched the value of their salaries go down by 98% since 2019 and that is demotivating teachers and pushing them away from teaching. It is estimated that three quarters of teachers are planning to Lebanon.

It is important to identify the teachers need for these skills in pre-teaching and in-service teaching tracks. It is vital to offer teachers trainings and professional development opportunities to improve social emotional and emotional intelligence skills so that they are ready to implement any curricula and nationwide framework. It is also very important to introduce social emotional learning and emotional intelligence into teacher preparatory courses and programs to ensure that empathetic teachers are ready to enter classrooms and show empathy towards learners and initiate teaching strategies and relationships that aim to plan structure and implement emotional wellbeing improvement techniques.

Social Emotional Learning curriculum and framework are being currently prepared by the ministry of education for the national level, however it is not yet disseminated to all schools in Lebanon. When these curricula reach teachers, then they will need unique courses to prepare them for effective implementation.

The research showed that training such as the one administered throughout the research, is able to improve teachers’ empathy level and allow them to build and maintain healthy social skills.

Therefore, teachers who are already inside classrooms, will need training to implement these skills in forms of trainings, workshops, courses. As for student-teachers, these courses need to be in their teaching diploma courses, where they learn about philosophy and psychology of education and then they are equipped with lesson planning and classroom management skills to implement effective teaching that is fit for the 21st century learner.

Targeting pre service and in service teachers is an effective way to train teachers on emotional intelligence and empathy so that they can cater to the de-motivated learners, the emotionally unbalanced youth and help the whole society heal, recover and move forward.

Appendix 1- Course Outline

MODULE 1: Introduction to Emotional Intelligence

- What is Emotional Intelligence? Effects of Emotions in our life
- Benefits of Emotional Intelligence at a workplace

MODULE 2: Self Awareness

- Know Yourself : Identify dreams, passion, values and beliefs
- Performa SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

MODULE 3: Self-Regulation

- Science of Emotions and how it works
- Self-Control and Managing Emotions Techniques

MODULE 4: Motivation

- Self-Motivation: Understanding Optimism and Pessimism
- How to motivate others as a teacher-leader?

MODULE 5- Empathy

- Importance of Empathy as a teacher
- Developing your Empathy and that of your learners

MODULE 6- Social Skills

- What are social skills? Making a powerful impact

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ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ

ՀՈՒՉԱԿԱՆ ԻՆՏԵԼԵԿՏԻ ԱՌԱՋՆԱՀԱՏԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԼԻՔԱՆԱՆՅԱՆ ԿՐԹԱԿԱՆ ՀԱՄԱԿԱՐԳԵՐՈՒՄ ԴԱՍԱՎԱՆԴՈՂ ՄԱՆԿԱՎԱՐԺՆԵՐԻ ՄՈՏ ՂԱԶԱՐԵԱՆ Մ. Ե.

Հոդվածում ներկայացվում է Լիբանանյան մանկավարժական հաստատություններում իրականացրած հետազոտության համեմատական վերլուծության արդյունքները: Սույն հոդվածի նպատակն է ուսումնասիրել ուսուցիչների հուզական ինտելեկտի, կարեկցանքի, և սոցիալական կարծրատիպերի դրսևորման մակարդակը, ներկայացնել հուզական ինտելեկտի կարևորությունը ժամանակակից դպրոցներում, ուսուցման ռազմավարություններում և ապագա ուսուցիչների պատրաստման գործում: Աշխատանքում ներկայացվում է Լիբանանում՝ ֆոկլուս խմբերի, անհատական հանդիպումների և Google Forms-ի միջոցով 104 մասնակիցների հարցումը, և նրանց հետ իրականացրած հետազոտության ռեֆլեքտիվորման արդյունքները՝ թրեյնինգից առաջ և թրեյնինգի իրականացումից հետո: Հետազոտությանը մասնակցել են տարբեր տարիքային խմբերի և տարբեր շրջանների ուսուցիչներ, ովքեր դասավանդում էին տարբեր առարկաներ: Հետազոտության վիճակագրական վերլուծության արդյունքների հիման վրա հոդվածում ներկայացվում են առաջարկություններ և ուղեցույցներ դպրոցների համար, որոնք նպատակ ունեն արդյունավետ կերպով ներկայացնել հուզական ինտելեկտի ուսուցումը դասարաններում, մասնագիտական աշխատախմբերում:

***Բանալի բառեր՝** հուզական ինտելեկտ, սոցիալական կարծրատիպեր, հոգեկան առողջություն, մանկավարժական հաստատություններ, հոգեբանական թրեյնինգ:*

РЕЗЮМЕ

ОСОБЕННОСТИ ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОГО ИНТЕЛЛЕКТА ПЕДАГОГОВ ПРЕПОДАЮЩИХ В СИСТЕМАХ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ ЛИВАНА

КАЗАРЕАН М. Е.

В статье представлены результаты сравнительного анализа исследования, проведенного в педагогических учреждениях Ливана. Целью данной статьи является изучение уровня эмоционального интеллекта, эмпатии и социальных стереотипов, проявляемых учителями, а также представление важности эмоционального интеллекта в современных школах, стратегиях обучения и подготовке будущих учителей. В статье представлен опрос 104 участников в Ливане, проведенный с помощью фокус-групп, индивидуальных встреч и Google-форм, а также результаты повторного тестирования опроса, проведенного с ними до и после обучения. В исследовании приняли участие учителя разных возрастных групп и регионов, преподававшие разные предметы. На основе результатов статистического анализа исследования в статье представлены рекомендации и руководства для школ, направленные на эффективное внедрение обучения эмоциональному интеллекту в классы и профессиональные рабочие группы.

Ключевые слова: эмоциональный интеллект, социальные стереотипы, психологическое здоровье, педагогические учреждения, психологический тренинг.

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