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IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN THE MODERN UNIVERSITY: GOING BEYOND AN ACADEMIC EDUCATION

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Summary

Introduction. The article deals with current issues of preserving and maintaining the mental and physical health of education seekers in today's conditions, including through the implementation of socio-emotional learning in higher education institutions.
Aim. To analyse national and international research on the potential of targeted socio-emotional learning for students to maintain and preserve their health; to identify the relationship between developed socio-emotional skills, students' mental and physical health and their academic performance; to identify socio-emotional learning practices that can be used in the educational process of higher education institutions.
Materials and methods. The methods of systemic and structural-genetic analysis of the concept of socio-emotional development and learning of the personality, the method of generalisation of key empirical data were used. The data were collected through meta-analysis of empirical data from Ukrainian and foreign sources.
Results. The developed emotional intelligence contributes comprehensively to a person. In 2011, a group of researchers conducted a meta-analysis that convincingly demonstrated that in education institutions, where social and emotional skills were developed comprehensively and intensively, there was a decrease in antisocial behaviour and bullying, an increase in prosocial behaviour and improved academic performance. Today, socio-emotional learning is a distinct branch of education that aims to develop emotional intelligence using appropriate educational tools and technologies. Today, the global experience of solving the outlined issue is quite diverse. In recent years, Ukrainian education has also demonstrated an understanding of the importance of developing education seekers' socio-emotional skills to maintain their physical and mental health.
Conclusions. The ability of Ukrainian higher education to implement SEL in the educational process is quite high, on the other hand, the resources of accredited educational programmes in terms of socio-emotional learning are quite limited; the basis of socio-emotional learning is an attention focus on the students' ability to take care of themselves and others in terms of social, emotional and mental health; SEL is a set of interrelated processes based on the principles of empathy for oneself and others, self-help, requiring developed physical literacy and attention; social-emotional learning practices can be introduced into the educational process of all higher education institutions in Ukraine right now, without waiting for corresponding changes in the legal framework.

Keywords: **social-emotional intelligence, physical and mental health, practices of socio-emotional personality's development, theory of socio-emotional personality's development, socio-emotional learning, socio-emotional skills**

INTRODUCTION

In today's transgressive world, traditional stereotypes are changing rapidly in all spheres of society. The objective determinants of such processes were globalisation, European integration, as well as a full-scale war on the territory of our country. Education, as one of the basic

institutions of society, is reorienting the vector of its development «from education based on the cognitive sphere of the individual to education based on socio-emotional intelligence and aimed at the development of «soft skills», which are the most in-demand universal skills of the 21st century or the skills of the future. The analytical review of possibilities of implementing socio-emotional learning within the framework of the «New Ukrainian School» reform notes that a large amount of academic knowledge, which has largely ensured the effectiveness of learning so far, does not guarantee successful self-realisation of the personality. Instead, a system of values, a life resilience, the ability to control oneself and take responsibility, the ability to communicate and work in a team, to solve complex problems and not to cower in the face of difficulties are the basis for personal development and career growth [1]. Such a synthesis of emotional and social abilities, according to the well-known Israeli psychologist Reuven Bar-On, author of the model of emotional and social intelligence, ensures a person's ability to recognise, understand and express emotions and feelings; to understand what other people feel and maintain relationships with them; to manage their own emotions, to keep them under control; to be a change manager, to adapt to them, to solve personal and interpersonal problems; to generate positive emotions and motivate themselves [43].

There is a scientific position of Ukrainian (L. Hrynevych, O. Elkin) and foreign (A. E. Boyle, D. Goleman, J. A. Durlak, J. L. Mahoney) scholars that this format of developing a personality in the XXI century can be implemented within the framework of socio-emotional learning (SEL), the introduction of which in the Ukrainian education system is becoming increasingly relevant.

AIM

To analyse national and international research on the potential of targeted socio-emotional learning for education seekers to maintain and preserve their health. To reveal the relationship between developed socio-emotional skills, such as emotional and body literacy, attentiveness to bodily manifestations and needs, the ability to self-help in stressful situations, mental and physical health of education seekers and their academic performance. To identify the practices of socio-emotional learning that can be used in the educational process of higher education institutions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methods of systemic and structural-genetic analysis of the concept of socio-emotional development and learning of the individual, the method of generalisation of key empirical data were used. The data was collected through meta-analysis of empirical data from domestic and foreign sources obtained from the source databases Scopus, SpringerLink and ProQuest Dissertations. The materials were some published results of empirical studies, analytical reviews and reports, and regulatory documents of Ukraine on the possibility of introducing socio-emotional learning in educational institutions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Crisis phenomena, instability, uncertainty of modern society against the background of the added urgency of post-Covid and war times increase the general neuroticism, frustration and psycho-emotional fragility of Ukrainian citizens. There are statistics presented in the analytical report of the sociological company Gradus Research Company (2024) that 77 % of the population of Ukraine feel stress and severe nervousness, another 52 % – anxiety and tension, 47 % of respondents have a bad mood and observe deterioration of sleep, the feeling of constant fatigue was noted by 39 %, loss of appetite – 18 % [2]. And this is only a small part of the data, which convincingly testify to the threatening trends in the deterioration of the physical and mental health of Ukrainians. This makes it necessary to review and transform all aspects of education on the basis of a holistic impact on the personality, in particular shifting the focus of educational programs to his / her emotional and intellectual sphere [10].

For example, foreign experience of implementing a trauma-informed approach to education is based on the idea that the educational process and educational environment should be trauma-sensitive, i.e. take into account the impact of trauma on a person [4]. Moreover, the researchers point out that the same event may not be experienced as traumatic by everyone. It is worth noting that many studies present the implementation of a trauma-informed approach through the prism of socio-emotional learning, as researchers recognise the risks of repeated or secondary traumatisation and prioritise the emotional safety of the learner [19, 13, 17, 4].

The ability to experience and express emotions is developing in early childhood, in parallel with physical and cognitive development [44]. Research in the field of neuroscience, carried out in the early 21st century, has shown that the same neural circuits involved in the regulation of emotions coincide with those responsible for cognitive brain functions [15, 25, 36]. Emotions can both support a cognitive development, if they are well regulated, and vice versa, hinder it [32, 41]. Thus, understanding and regulation of emotions is a predictor of an academic competence [33, 40, 18, 27, 37]. Insufficiently developed skills in identifying and regulating emotions lead to an increase in fear, a decrease in empathy and antisocial behavior [21, 40, 24]. Thus, emotional intelligence is an important foundation for a person's emotional health, and emotional difficulties in early childhood are predictors of anxiety disorders and depression in older age [16, 29].

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to perceive and understand a personality's emotional manifestations and to manage emotions using intellectual processes [9]. The developed emotional intelligence comprehensively shapes a human well-being [5]. Therefore, it is not surprising that social-emotional learning as a framework approach to the development of social-emotional skills has gained wide popularity in Western education in the last two decades. In 2011 a group of researchers conducted a meta-analysis that convincingly proved that in education institutions where socio-emotional skills were developed comprehensively and intensively, a decrease in the level of antisocial behavior and bullying (by 10 %), an increase in the level of prosocial behavior (by 10 %) and an improvement in academic performance were observed (by 11 %) [28].

One of such conceptual ideas and practices is SEL – socio-emotional learning [20, 45, 26, 11]. Today, socio-emotional learning is an independent branch of education aimed at the development of emotional intelligence with the help of appropriate educational tools and technologies. The global experience of solving the outlined problem is quite diverse today. This system is not new, its history goes back to ancient times, in particular, Plato in his famous work «The Republic» proposed a holistic curriculum, which, supporting a healthy education system, raised citizens with good character. The modern exponential development of social-emotional learning began in 1960 with the James Comer School Development Program (SSDP), developed by Comer and his colleagues at the Yale School of Medicine. The researcher established a close connection between the purposeful psychosocial development of disadvantaged students and the increase in their academic outcomes. The results of many years of research by the team implementing the Programme formed the basis of the new K-12 education standards (USA), designed, among other things, to protect the mental and physical health, and well-being of the modern child in education [23]. Since the early 1990s, social-emotional learning (SEL) has expanded in American education, becoming a major thematic and programmatic focus of many programs. This was due, on the one hand, to concerns about the vulnerability of children and youth to various social and psychological problems, and on the other hand, to an understanding of the potential role of schools in reducing such risks (for example, the New Haven Social Project of 1987 «Behavior Problems Have Common Roots»).

Between 1987 and 1992, under the auspices of the W. T. Grant Consortium and the organisation for promoting a social competence in schools, a number of positive school programmes were developed for young people with various addictions: drug abuse (Scheier, L. M. and Grenard, J. L., 2010) [39]; sexual addiction (Piotrowsky & Hedeker, 2016) [35] and others. However, none of these programs have revealed a true understanding of the root causes of a variety of behavioral and emotional problems in young people. In 1994, the international CASEL community was established with the goal of making social and emotional learning part of high-quality, equitable and health-conscious education. With the publication of Goleman (1995) «Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ» and Elias et al. (1997) «Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators», the idea of developing social and emotional intelligence in different contexts, ranging from business to education, has become widely popularised, and interest in SEL among educators and policy makers has grown significantly.

According to some estimates, more than 200 types of classroom SEL programmes are used in US schools [22]. Although most of them are a supplement to the curriculum, there are a number of more comprehensive approaches that focus on social and emotional learning as foundation of the educational process.

In the foreign educational space, the idea of socio-emotional development of the personality through specially organized training is quite widely represented in the scientific discourse. In particular, the research of Ford (Brett Q. Ford) and Gross (James J. Gross) is dedicated to the study of theoretical aspects of social-emotional learning, which, in our opinion, is one of the most fundamental studies of the structure of emotional beliefs, emotional reactions, emotional regulation and their meaning for the personality's long-term emotional health [30]. Another theoretical work is the work of the American researcher Miller-Graff (Laura E. Miller-Graff), dedicated to a narrative review of research on resilience, in particular, its taxonomic structure [34]. We note that these two scientific findings are extremely important in the context of our study, as they directly demonstrate the interdependence between the socio-emotional development of a personality and his / her mental health.

Aspects of the ideas for implementing a socio-emotional learning programme are presented in the work of Becker (Becker B. E.) and Luthar (Luthar S. S.), «Social-Emotional Factors Affecting Achievement Outcomes Among Disadvantaged Students: Closing the Achievement Gap» (2002). Researchers have found that curricula aimed at fostering students' emotional attachment to school and engagement in the classroom yield positive results in terms of student achievement, especially for socially disadvantaged students [42].

The analytical report by the international team of researchers from Italy, Ireland and Malta analysed the results of the implementation of socio-emotional training programmes in educational institutions in 10 EU countries: Austria, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, Finland and Sweden. The results of the meta-analysis of the data for the period 2001-2018

allowed us to conclude on the positive impact of the programme in reducing the level of victimisation, bullying, and anxiety among young people, improving the physical and mental health and well-being of students, confirming once again the correlation with academic performance, self-regulation, resilience and pro-social behavior [46].

The investigation of the role of emotional intelligence in the education of education seekers, in particular the connection between emotional intelligence and educational motivation of primary school pupils, is dedicated to the investigation of Spanish scientists Julia Arias, Jorge G. Soto-Carballo & Margarita R. Pino-Juste [12]. A quasi-experiment with a random sample of 541 students from community centres in the province of Pontevedera (Spain) also demonstrated a correlation between high levels of EI and academic motivation of pupils.

Measuring the social-emotional level of primary school children development, whose preparation included aspects of social-emotional learning, allowed researchers Fronda, J. & Dolandolan, P. (2022) to summarise that strengthening the resilience of children who are exposed to adverse experiences at a young age prevents numerous problems associated with health and well-being in adulthood. [31].

In general, the issue of measuring various aspects of social-emotional learning is also receiving considerable attention from researchers. Thus, Jaap Scheerens, Greetje van der Werf & Hester de Boer set themselves the goal of more clearly illustrating what «soft skills» are and how exactly they are measured within the framework of the trend of developing social-emotional skills in education [39], and Boon-Falleur, M., Bouguen, A., Charpentier, A., Algan, Y., Huillery, E., Chevallier, C. investigated the reliability of different methods for measuring social-emotional skills of education seekers [14].

In recent years, Ukrainian education has also demonstrated an understanding of the importance of developing education seekers' social and emotional skills to maintain their physical and mental health.

According to Ukrainian researchers Leila Hasanova and Oksana Kravchenko (2023), the priority is to develop pupil youth' value skills, as they have the most positive impact on the formation of socio-emotional competences. These include: motivation for success and personal development; self-organisation and planning skills; independence and self-confidence; academic skills and scholarship [8].

The problem of developing the socio-emotional intelligence of a future teacher is the subject of a study by Nataliia Lavrychenko (2022). In determining the level of development of future teachers' readiness to implement social-emotional learning at school, the author starts from the thesis that «a teacher cannot effectively develop social-emotional intelligence in pupils if he or she does not possess it» [7].

Foreign experience in implementing a programme of socio-emotional learning in primary schools is examined by Ukrainian researchers Liudmyla Havrylova and Alina Rysiukova (2023). In the article of the same name, the authors analyse and summarise more than 16 different scientific sources on the issue of socio-emotional learning, identify 4 main areas of foreign research on SEL and forecast their possible use in Ukrainian education [3].

The necessity and appropriateness of implementing social-emotional learning into the Ukrainian education system, in particular its rethought and expanded version – social-emotional and ethical learning – is discussed in the article by Oleksandr Elkin, the Chair of the Board of the EdCamp Ukraine Professional Community (2023) «Socio-Emotional Learning as an Essential Mechanism of Developing Soft Skills in Students: Modern Challenges and Ukrainian Experience» [6]. The author presents the results of a sociological survey conducted in 2021 with 3657 educators, who convincingly demonstrated the demand for socio-emotional skills and related training among teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The ability of Ukrainian higher education to introduce SEL into the educational process is quite high, which is confirmed by the readiness of Ukrainian teachers for socio-emotional development of education seekers and the results of researching the methodology of higher education standards, presented in the fifth section of the analytical review «Opportunities for the implementation of socio-emotional learning within the framework of reform the New Ukrainian School» [1]. However, an analysis of the current regulatory framework proves that there are currently only two basic documents in Ukraine that higher education institutions can take into account when developing educational programmes – the Professional Teacher Standard and the Standard of Higher Education in Specialty 013 Primary Education of the First (Bachelor) Level. The resources of the recently accredited educational programmes also turned out to be quite limited in the field of socio-emotional learning, although the higher education institutions, within their autonomy, may well choose socio-emotional learning as a key content vector of their programmes, which would be appropriate in terms of preserving the physical and mental health of young people in the context of crisis transformations.

2. The aspect analysis of the works of the mentioned scientists made it possible to attribute the main features of SEL. Thus, social-emotional learning is a set of processes by which apprenticeship and adults acquire and effectively use the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage their emotions, feel and empathise with others, set and achieve positive goals, develop and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions – all in order to manage oneself,

relationships with others, work effectively and ethically. At the heart of socio-emotional learning, it is a focus on teaching pupils to care about themselves and others in terms of social, emotional and mental health.

3. Social-emotional learning is based on the principles of empathy for oneself and others, and self-help. The ability to empathise is formed in the process of developing emotional literacy (understanding, attributing and regulating emotions), and the ability to help oneself requires the development of mindfulness and body literacy. The main tools for implementing the tasks of socio-emotional development of children and young people are their own example, care and pedagogical facilitation.

4. The practices of socio-emotional learning can be implemented into the educational process of all higher education institutions of Ukraine right now, without waiting for the corresponding changes in the legal framework. These are short-term exercises that can be used at the beginning and at the end of the class in different formats. These practices include:

– 7 exercises to train the brain. The purpose of the practise is to develop the education seekers' conscious activity – mindfulness, concentration and determination. Supporting Resources – videos https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJt6ORwxKmE

– 3-minute meditative/breathing mindfulness practices. The purpose of the practices is to develop the ability to «scan» your own body and its needs, relax your body and focus your brain. Supporting Resources – audio instructions for the practice https://www.mindful.org/a-3-minute-body-scan-meditation-to-cultivate-mindfulness/

– Empatico is a free tool for developing emotional, cognitive and behavioral components of empathy. The purpose of the practice is to develop empathy skills, to understand others and an ability to communicate with other people from different cultures and communities. Supporting Resources – platforms https://empatico.org/

– The Social Express program is an interactive animation platform for the development of key social skills. Purpose of practice: development of orientation skills in society; building healthy relationships with peers and the social climate around them; career search; managing well-being, maintaining health and well-being. Supporting Resources – platforms https://brightenlearning.com/

– Web Game – SuperBetter. The purpose of the practice is to strengthen the mental health, emotional well-being, social relationships and physical resilience of the education seekers through a library of more than 40 tasks (drinking water, resisting nail biting, TV detox, etc.). Student self-improvement is translated into quests and missions that earn points, levels and bonuses. Supporting Resource – web game platform https://superbetter.com/

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COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

In this study, the authors adhered to the Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects outlined in the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki (WMA, 1964 p.) and current Ukrainian regulations. The study protocol was approved by the Ethics Committee of the L.I. Medved's Research Centre of Preventive Toxicology, Food and Chemical Safety of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. Animals were not used.

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Резюме

УПРОВАДЖЕННЯ СОЦІАЛЬНО-ЕМОЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ В СУЧАСНОМУ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІ: ВИХІД ЗА МЕЖІ АКАДЕМІЧНОГО НАВЧАННЯ

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Вступ. У статті розглянуто актуальні питання збереження і підтримки ментального й фізичного здоров'я здобувачів освіти в умовах сьогодення, в тому числі через упровадження соціально-емоційного навчання в закладах вищої освіти.
Мета. Проаналізувати вітчизняні та світові дослідження щодо потенціалу цілеспрямованого соціально-емоційного навчання здобувачів освіти для підтримки та збереження їх здоров'я. Розкрити взаємозв'язок між розвинутими соціально-емоційними навичками, ментальним і фізичним здоров'ям здобувачів освіти та їх академічною успішністю. Виокремити практики соціально-емоційного навчання, які можуть використовуватися в освітньому процесі ЗВО.
Матеріали та методи. Використано методи системного та структурно-генетичного аналізу концепції соціально-емоційного розвитку й навчання особистості, метод узагальнення ключових емпіричних даних. Збір даних проведено шляхом метааналізу емпіричних даних вітчизняних та зарубіжних джерел.
Результати. Розвинений емоційний інтелект комплексно формує благополуччя людини. У 2011 р. групою дослідників було проведено метааналіз, який переконливо довів, що у закладах освіти, де соціально-емоційні навички розвивались комплексно та інтенсивно, спостерігалося зниження рівня антисоціальної поведінки й булінгу, підвищення рівня просоціальної поведінки й покращення академічної успішності. Соціально-емоційне навчання на сьогодні є самостійним розгалуженим напрямом освіти, що націлений на розвиток емоційного інтелекту за допомогою відповідних освітніх інструментів і технологій. Світовий досвід вирішення окресленого питання на сьогодні є достатньо різноманітним. В останні роки українська освіта так само демонструє розуміння важливості розвитку соціально-емоційних навичок здобувачів освіти для збереження їх фізичного та ментального здоров'я.
Висновки. Здатність української вищої освіти впровадити СЕН в освітній процес є доволі високою, натомість ресурс акредитованих освітніх програм є досить обмеженим в плані соціально-емоційного навчання; в основі соціально-емоційного навчання лежить фокус уваги на умінні студентів турбуватися про себе та інших в розрізі соціального, емоційного та ментального здоров'я; СЕН – це сукупність взаємопов'язаних процесів, які базуються на принципах співпереживання до себе та інших, самозарадництва, потребують розвиненої тілесної грамотності та уважності; практики соціально-емоційного навчання можуть бути впроваджені в освітній процес усіх ЗВО України вже зараз, не чекаючи відповідних змін у нормативно-правовій базі.

Ключові слова: **соціальний та емоційний інтелект, фізичне та ментальне здоров'я, практики соціально-емоційного розвитку особистості, теорія соціально-емоційного розвитку особистості, соціально-емоційне навчання, соціально-емоційні навички**