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INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ENHANCEMENT ON THE SOCIAL STEREOTYPICAL PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATORS *

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The goal of the given study was to investigate the role of emotional intelligence — particularly empathy — in mitigating social stereotypes held by teachers, with a focus on those related to age, professional identity, and education within school environments. The research addresses the pressing issue of bias and social stereotypes in educational settings and explores how enhancing emotional intelligence can serve as a strategy for promoting inclusivity.

The methodology included a literature review of previous research, followed by correlational research conducted through surveys and questionnaires administered to educators. The study examined the relationship between levels of emotional intelligence and the presence of social stereotypes among teachers. The findings indicate a significant negative correlation, suggesting that educators with higher emotional intelligence are less likely to hold or act on social biases.

Based on these results, the article offers targeted recommendations for educators, school administrators, and policymakers, emphasizing the integration of emotional intelligence training to foster more empathetic, inclusive, and equitable educational communities.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, empathy, educational environment, teachers, social stereotypes, bias, equity, inclusion.*

Introduction

Education transforms lives and communities and since schools are microcosms of the societies, examining emotional intelligence and social stereotypes within the context of schools is an effective way to understand their impact on the process of shaping the citizens of tomorrow. Research in the field of education and psychology seeks to understand how to prepare the successful and happy citizens for the future. What skills will future leaders need? How can schools effectively prepare students for life beyond the classroom? More than a decade ago, Goleman highlighted the importance of emotional

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intelligence in leadership, stating the Harvard Business Review "The most effective leaders are all alike in one crucial way: They all have a high degree of what has come to be known as emotional intelligence". (Goleman 1995)

The process of preparing leaders is increasingly supported by a growing body of social science research focusing on mental health and emotional wellbeing and is offering evidence that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in life success and personal happiness. Phrases such as *know your emotions, manage your emotions, recognize and read emotions in others* are often heard during job interviews highlighting the expectation that individuals possess and demonstrate these skills. However, despite their importance, such competencies are rarely taught in schools or during university education.

Life pre and post pandemic offered an opportunity to the world, to try and test the social skills theory in the social and education context as well. Self-awareness, the ability to relate to others, maintaining a positive outlook, and demonstrating resilience were all put to the test when learners and educators were physically apart. Educational systems faced the same challenge revealing the extent to which teachers were able to support students' learning, development, relationships, and survival skills during this difficult period.

Harvard review in its 2021 research states that social emotional learning (SEL) is an essential skill for individuals to succeed in the 21st century workforce. 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 SEL can help students improve their academic and interpersonal performance. It focuses on the positive behaviors of students instead of the negative behaviors to promote healthy youth development. It helps to set school-wide policies that nurture individual differences and allow learners to reach their maximum potential. SEL targets 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 (Brackett & Katulak 2006).

SEL also helps to create a safe haven for all learners, despite their capabilities and background, allowing collaboration and effective communication. These programs improve academic performance, raise self-esteem of learners and increase their chance of building and maintaining effective lifelong relationships. These skills and competencies enable all learners — regardless of social background, gender, or abilities — to engage in meaningful experiences within the school environment that prepare them for life beyond the classroom, ultimately shaping them into solution-oriented, active citizens. Social Emotional learning is introduced to schools through school wide policies, and teacher trainings, along with preparation of resources. It is done through specific sessions pre-planned for SEL activities along with instructional strategies that target the emotional wellbeing of learners and allows them to practice these skills and master them.

Emotional competencies can be divided into personal competencies such as self-awareness where accurate self-assessment is crucial and offering learners opportunities to identify their strengths weaknesses dreams and goals along with answering questions of who they are, can yield self-confidence. Self-management on the other hand focuses mainly on how individuals can practice self-control, become trustworthy, predictable, transparent citizens that are able to change and adapt where needed, as well as inspire trust in relationships. They are individuals who are aware of their triggers and motives and know how to regulate their thoughts, words and actions. These emotionally intelligent learners are motivated and know how to elevate their own level of energy along with that of those in their surrounding communities.

Social competencies on the other hand, focus on individuals serving others and their society, through empathetic approach, offering support and growth mindset. It is in social skills that emotional intelligence is evident through the actions of individuals in the community, such as building teamwork and collaboration spirit, communicating growth, developing each other and leading change, through becoming catalysts that embrace change and lead others towards new horizons (Chernis, Goleman 2001).

Can personal and social competencies manifested through self-awareness and regulation on one hand and empathy, motivation and emotional coaching on the other hand be learned and acquired? If the answer to that question is yes by Mathew and Deary (2009), and Goleman (1995, 1998) then the next question would be: *Where do these skills need to be ideally taught?* Mayer and Salovey (1997) declare that a valid response to this question may be schools, the best sites to introduce social skills at early ages. They explain that ideally, human beings need to be introduced to emotional intelligence as early as they start school and learn skills like any other skill through educational institutions and curricula.

Problem Statement

First, emotional intelligence was discussed as a thought and an added skill and luxury to one's life until the 21st century where it is considered a vital and essential component for life success and career performance. United Nations stated that "mental health is no more a luxury" it is rather a basic need according to the 2030 sustainable development goals.

According to research, emotional intelligence/Social Emotional learning creates positivity and tolerance at schools and minimizes social stereotype manifestations such as bullying. Thorough research on the website of the Ministry of Education in Lebanon until December 2022, showed that the Lebanese Ministry of Education, in all its curricula in languages, sciences, math and various arts, has not allocated a specific subject to be taught at schools. The education system followed in all public schools does not allocate sessions to target these skills nor does it give teachers guidelines, scope or sequence of objectives to follow and teach. Research revealed that for these skills to be taught effectively at schools and yield highest results teachers need to know about them, learn about them at the teacher preparatory courses, practice tools to introduce them in lesson planning and preparation and implement them in parallel to the academic work.

Schools as organizations, also evolved from the classic teacher centered traditional ones, to more contemporary modern digital phase. Taylor's theory explains that stereotypes are cognitive structures that represent general beliefs and expectations about a particular group of people. These beliefs are often based on limited information and used as mental "shortcuts" to help individuals process information quickly and make sense of the world around them. (Fiske, Taylor 2020).

Relevance

The study reveals the connection and interdependence between social stereotypes and emotional intelligence. It also uncovers those higher expressions of empathy led to a reduction in the manifestation of social stereotypes.

Empathy is the promised solution to the social problem of stereotypes. It aims to minimize intergroup and intragroup differences and allows the focus to be on similarities and common grounds, looking towards shared goals as communities rather than focusing on differences. Empathetic individuals understand different perspectives, recognize the feelings of others, and foster acceptance, thereby reducing discrimination.

Objectives

Empathy is 'the ability to experience affective and cognitive states of another person, whilst maintaining a distinct self, in order to understand the other'. This is consistent with the understanding that empathy includes at least two key dimensions: cognition and affect (Decety 2011). If cognitive empathy can be conceptualized as 'I understand how you feel', affective empathy is conceptualized as 'I feel what you feel' (Hein and Singer 2008).

Intersubjectivity refers to the shared understanding or mutual awareness that people develop when they engage with one another. It's the process through which individuals connect, align, and make sense of each other's thoughts, emotions and perspectives. In a social context, it involves recognizing that others have their own subjective experiences and viewpoints, and being able to relate to or understand them. Intersubjectivity helps facilitate empathy, communication, and cooperation by creating common ground between people.

In research like that of Sheng and Han (2012), intersubjectivity is often used to describe situations where group members, despite differences in race, gender, or background, begin to see each other as part of a shared experience or goal. This mutual understanding can reduce biases and enhance empathic responses to others.

Guthridge, M., Penovic, T., Kirkman, M. *et al.* 2023 acknowledge that empathy is not a cure for all stereotypes in the social content, yet it allows individuals to put themselves in others' shoes, feel with them and understand their feelings, thus leading to a less prejudice and discrimination. Empathy is a promised hope to creating more sustainable communities based on equality, tolerance and acceptance, thus minimizing the manifestation of stereotypes in these societies.

The study aimed to present a background knowledge and literature review on the importance of emotional intelligence and social emotional learning in lives of teachers as they prepare the leaders of tomorrow. It aimed to highlight the presence of a negative relationship between these attributes and propose recommendation on effective ways of introducing SEL programs into pedagogical institutions.

The study:
1. carried out an analysis of the literature devoted to the preparation of the leaders of the future,
2. presented an overview about emotional intelligence of teachers in these schools,
3. studied and investigated the correlation of stereotypes and emotional intelligence among educators.

Methodology

The N. Hall's tool was used for assessing "emotional intelligence" (EQ questionnaire).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.

The Boyko Test-Questionnaire (Boyko's Empathy Test: Methodology for Diagnosing the Level of Empathic Abilities) was used to identify the presence and type of empathy, categorizing it as low, medium, or high across 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. It broke down the empathy into more measurable terms such as rational empath, emotional, intuitive. It elaborated on the source such as availability of settings that promote empathy, penetrating power or identification in empathy.

An empathy assessment tool was used in conjunction with tools for evaluating social stereotypes. The research developed and administered instruments to investigate social stereotypes within the target population. One of these tools was a questionnaire designed to assess age-related and teacher-specific stereotypes. Participants were asked to evaluate the presence or absence of certain characteristics in young, experienced, and older teachers.

Findings

The first section of the google form that was shared with all participants was the demographics of the participants. Eighty-seven females and 17 males representing different age groups.

The Hall's tool was used to measure the emotional awareness of the participants. When comparing males to females, females had higher self-awareness compared to males who scored less. When checked the overall self-awareness, the results were as follows:
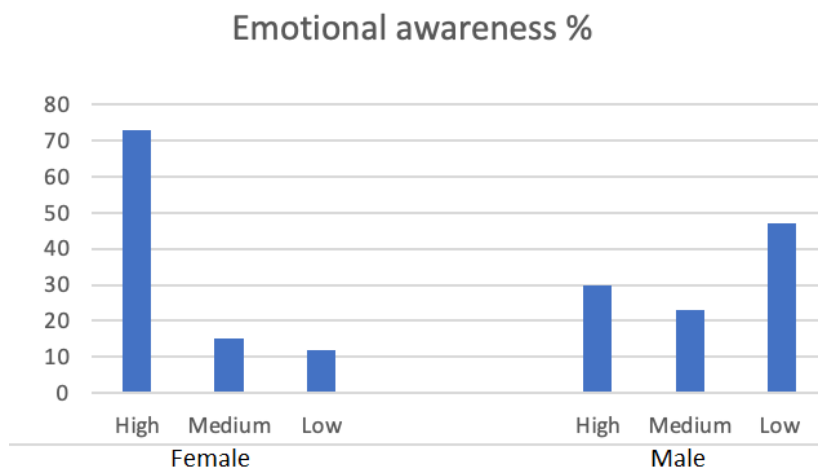
Graph 1: self awareness of teachers on Hall's questionaire

The teachers in these schools whether male or female, had high level (67%) and medium (15%) of self-awareness and self-knowledge.

The second aspect that was measured by Hall's tool was management of emotions. Similar results were found in terms of women having higher emotion control and regulation compared to men.

Management of emotions %
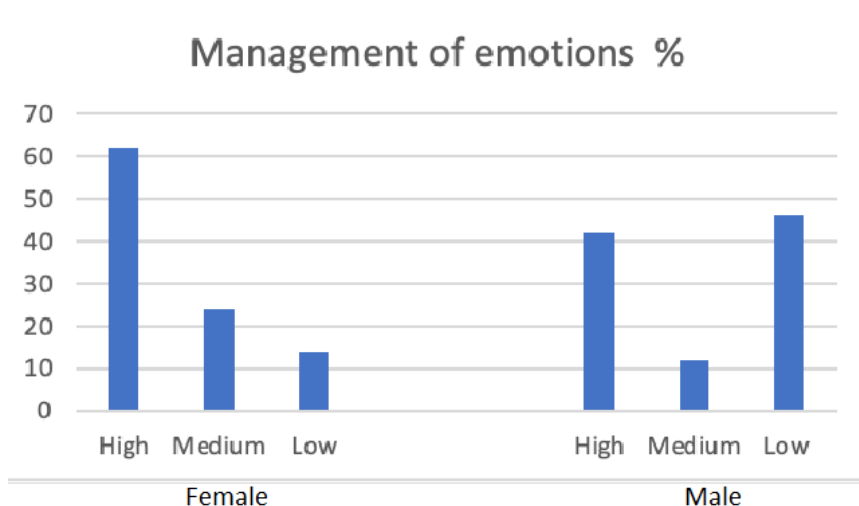
Graph 2: Management of emotions of teachers using Hall's questionnaire

Nevertheless, the general analysis of emotion management yielded overall, high level of emotion regulation ranging high 59% of participants, 22 medium emotion regulation skills and the remaining low emotion regulation skills of 19%.

The third aspect that was measured by Hall's tool was self-motivation. The results did not vary from the previous two components. Fifty six percent of the participants were highly motivated, while medium motivation and low motivation were shown by 16 and 28 percent respectively.
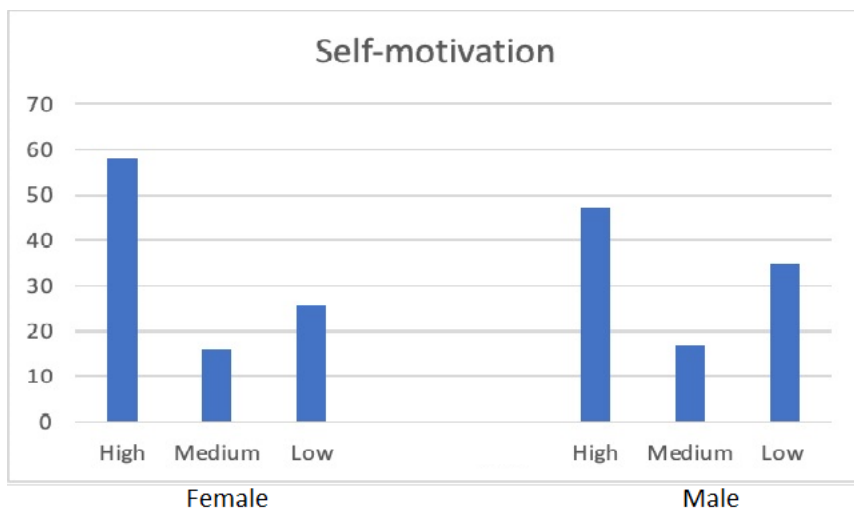
Self-motivation

Graph 3: Motivation of teachers using Hall's questionnaire

The next section of the Hall's tool measured the social skills and the interpersonal capabilities.
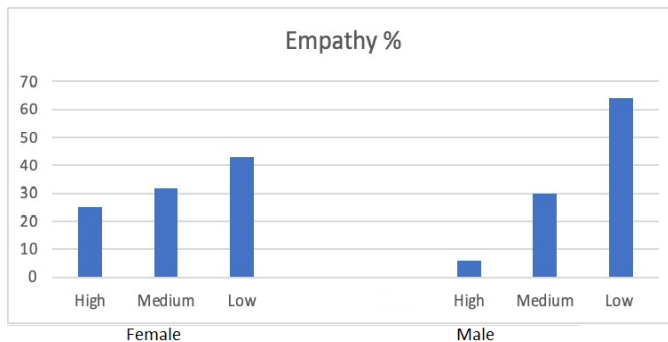
Graph 4: Empathy of teachers using Hall's questionnaire

Results there were different than the first section of intrapersonal skills and personal attributes: 43% of females and 64% of males scored low empathy while scored overall was similar to the detailed description. An average of 53% of the general population scored low on empathy. Overall, 46% of the participants scored low on empathy, 32% medium and only 22% high.
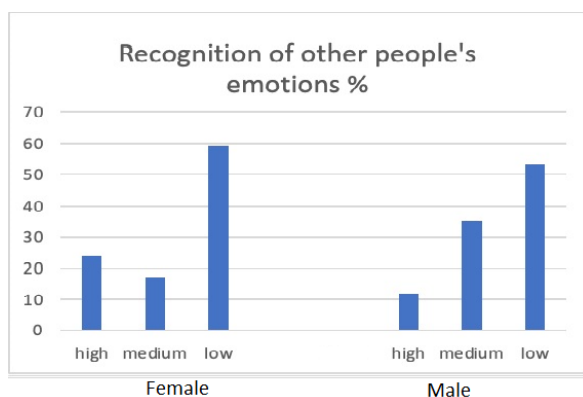
Graph 5: Recognition of teachers of others emotions using Hall's questionnaire

The final component was to evaluate the individual's capacity to recognize emotions in others. The results were as follows: 59% of females and 53% of males scored low ability to recognize and read emotions in others. Fifty six percent of overall participants showed the low score in these skills and their need for improving the overall social skills.

Boyko's Empathy test was used next with social stereotypes (authored tools for this research). Pearson's correlation test also revealed that there were significant, negative, and medium to large correlation between Boyko's empathy and social stereotypes related to teacher's profession; $r = -.46$, $p < .001$ (*one-tailed*). As such, hypothesis which states that there is a negative association between Boyko's empathy and social stereotypes related to teacher's profession, was supported.

		Social stereotype age related	Social stereotype teacher related
Empathy Boyko's	Pearson Correlation	-.195	-.456
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.042	.000
	N	104	104

Table 1: Pearson Correlation between Empathy Boyko's questionnaire and social stereotypes

Discussion

Evidence shows that teachers are self-aware and have effective skills to manage and regulate their emotions in terms of personal competencies of knowing the self and regulating themselves where they can lead and motivate themselves. Self-aware and emotion regulating individuals are able to lead themselves and stay motivated to build and maintain healthy relationships with others.

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 their emotions to show empathy and kindness. After the covid pandemic, teacher burnout is the major pandemic and if we are not able to cater to the mental health of educators, and offer tools for self-care, motivation and empathy, they will not be able to survive in the challenging profession.

Kindness and empathy are the requirements for the future leaders and if we do not train our children on empathy and social skills, they will suffer making their way. As educators, it is our responsibility, to propose tools for teachers and pioneer as change catalysts and agents for growth. This project needs various components to be present:

✓ Teacher Personal Mental Health: Teachers who are not feeling well emotionally, physically, psychologically and socially, are not able to relate to learners and be able to show empathy and compassion to target lessons to the relevance of learners and for their benefit.

✓ Teaching resources and strategies: Helping teachers identify tools to effectively introduce social Emotional learning inside classrooms. Teachers need apart from training, resources and materials to be able to use them effectively inside classrooms, integrated with their academic work.

✓ Overall school wide policies: Teachers are the main agents to start the change and create compassionate classrooms, yet they cannot do it alone. They need school leaders who believe in social emotional learning and support this work and together create a roadmap that caters to their wellbeing as individuals and also supports and nurtures the growth of empathetic learners.

Conclusion

The research underscores the crucial role that emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and empathy play in the effectiveness of teachers as leaders and motivators within educational settings. Evidence suggests that teachers who possess these personal competencies—understanding themselves and regulating their emotions—are better equipped to lead by example and maintain healthy relationships with their students. This emotional intelligence, particularly empathy, is an indispensable skill for fostering an environment conducive to learning and growth.

As education systems continue to evolve, it is vital to recognize that teachers are not just academic instructors but also mentors who shape the social and emotional development of their students. After the global challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, teacher burnout has emerged as a significant concern, emphasizing the need to support educators' mental health, motivation, and emotional well-being. If teachers are to be effective agents of change and instill empathy and kindness in their students, they must first be empowered with the tools and strategies necessary for self-care and emotional regulation.

Moving forward it is clear that improving teachers' emotional intelligence is a multifaceted endeavor. Key components for success include promoting personal mental health, providing the right resources and teaching strategies for social-emotional learning, and establishing school-wide policies that foster a supportive, empathetic environment. Ultimately, teachers must be supported by school leaders who are committed to the growth and well-being of both educators and students. By addressing these interconnected areas, we can ensure that educators are equipped to guide the next generation in developing the social and emotional skills they need to thrive in an increasingly complex world.

Recommendations and Future Research Directions

It is through such professional development opportunities that the effective framework would be complimented and implemented so that emotional intelligence and empathy through education can create equity in the society where self-aware and confident individuals aim to be motivated to build and maintain healthy relationships, tolerating those who are different, accepting those with special needs and creating a more inclusive and sustainable societies with lifelong learners.

Readiness on the level of policy makers is the key when discussing the concept of Emotional intelligence and social skills. It is vital to ensure that leaders of the education systems, organizations and schools understand the long-term benefits of developing SEL programs and experience their own competencies of Emotional Intelligence in order to communicate the purpose and the importance of such programs. The leaders of the schools and national educators on the ministry level need to monitor, evaluate and offer ongoing feedback on the development of the competencies in their personal development plans as well as the impact of these programs inside schools.

In order to proceed into such programs, educational leaders need to have a clear assessment of their own strengths and limitations, so that they can improve their status, before becoming themselves change catalysts in the organizations. These leaders would emphasize self-development and development of teachers on these vital skills, offering them evidence in science, psychology and education, so teachers buy in and join the action. When organizations plan such changes inside the spirit and the culture of schools, it is crucial that communication is clear, objective, honest and scientific. (Chernis, Goleman 2001)

Bracket & Katulak (2006) explain that introducing any new change to school curricula ideally starts with teacher's education and then administration support and then only results may be seen on the level of learners. Teachers are advised to be trained with knowledge basis and practical tools to be able to integrate any new concept and skill to education. They both argue that before teachers enter the classroom, they need to attend proper workshops and training in order to be able to create a "safe, caring, satisfying and productive school environment". According to them, proper preparatory courses should give teachers a theoretical background as well as practical tools to implement and bring innovation to their daily classrooms.

Finally, if one is to realistically start the advocacy through preservice and Inservice teacher trainings, then comes the national framework and curricula for universities and also for schools.

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ՄԵՐԻ ՂԱԶԱՐՅԱՆ
Խ. Աբովյանի անվան Հայաստանի պետական մանկավարժական համալսարանի
Մ. Մազմանյանի անվան հոգեբանության ամբիոնի հայցորդ,
ք. Բեյրութ, Լիբանան

Այս հետազոտության նպատակն է ուսումնասիրել Էմոցիոնալ ինտելեկտի, մասնավորապես՝ Էմպատիայի դերը ուսուցիչների շրջանում առկա սոցիալական ստերեոտիպերը մեղմացնելու գործընթացում՝ ուշադրություն դարձնելով տարիքային, մասնագիտական ինքնության և կրթական միջավայրում առկա ստերեոտիպերին: Հետազոտությունը անդրադառնում է կրթական միջավայրում կողմնակալության և սոցիալական ստերեոտիպերի հրատապ խնդրին և ուսումնասիրում է, թե ինչպես Էմոցիոնալ ինտելեկտի զարգացումը կարող է ծառայել որպես ներառականության խթանման ռազմավարություն:

Օգտագործված մեթոդաբանությունը ներառում է գիտական գրականության վերանայում հիմնված նախորդ հետազոտությունների վրա, ինչպես նաև կապային (կորելյացիոն) հետազոտություն՝ ուսուցիչների շրջանում անցկացված հարցումների և հարցաթերթիկների միջոցով: Հետազոտությունը վերլուծել է Էմոցիոնալ ինտելեկտի մակարդակների և ուսուցիչների սոցիալական ստերեոտիպերի առկայության միջև կապը: Արդյունքները ցույց են տվել զգալիորեն բացասական կապ, ինչը վկայում է, որ

բարձր Էմոցիոնալ ինտելեկտ ունեցող ուսուցիչներն ավելի քիչ են հակված ունենալու կամ դրսևորելու սոցիալական կողմնակալություններ:

Այս արդյունքների հիման վրա հոդվածը ներկայացնում է նպատակային առաջարկություններ ուսուցիչների, դպրոցական ադմինիստրատորների և քաղաքականություն մշակողների համար՝ շեշտելով Էմոցիոնալ ինտելեկտի ուսուցման ներառումը՝ նպաստելու ավելի Էմպատիկ, ներառական և արդար կրթական համայնքների ձևավորմանը:

Հիմնաբառեր՝ *Էմոցիոնալ ինտելեկտ, Էմպատիա, կրթական միջավայր, ուսուցիչներ, սոցիալական ստերեոտիպեր, կողմնակալություն, հավասարություն, ներառականություն:*

ВЛИЯНИЕ РАЗВИТИЯ ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОГО ИНТЕЛЛЕКТА НА ПРОЯВЛЕНИЕ СОЦИАЛЬНЫХ СТЕРЕОТИПОВ У ПЕДАГОГОВ

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Целью данного исследования стало изучить роль эмоционального интеллекта, в особенности эмпатии, в снижении социальных стереотипов среди учителей, с акцентом на стереотипы, связанные с возрастом, профессиональной идентичностью и образованием в школьной среде. Исследование затрагивает актуальную проблему предвзятости и социальных стереотипов в образовательных учреждениях и рассматривает развитие эмоционального интеллекта как стратегию продвижения инклюзивности.

Методология включала обзор научной литературы по исследованиям этой проблемы, а также корреляционное исследование с использованием опросов и анкетирования среди педагогов. В статье анализируется взаимосвязь между уровнем эмоционального интеллекта и наличием социальных стереотипов у учителей. Полученные результаты указывают на существенную отрицательную корреляцию, что свидетельствует о том, что педагоги с более высоким уровнем эмоционального интеллекта менее склонны придерживаться или действовать на основе социальных предубеждений.

На основе этих данных в статье предлагаются целевые рекомендации для учителей, школьных администраторов и разработчиков образовательной политики подчеркивая необходимость интеграции обучения эмоциональному интеллекту для формирования более эмпатичных, инклюзивных и справедливых образовательных сообществ.

Ключевые слова: *эмоциональный интеллект, эмпатия, образовательная среда, учителя, социальные стереотипы, предвзятость, равенство, инклюзивность.*