

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to examine the importance of developing emotional intelligence in primary school students. It analyzes the impact of emotional intelligence on personal, social, and academic development, incorporating pedagogical and psychological perspectives. The research findings indicate that fostering emotional intelligence helps children build essential skills such as self-regulation, empathy, social adaptability, and motivation. The article also provides recommendations for educators and parents on promoting emotional intelligence.

Keywords

primary education, emotional intelligence, personal development, social skills, pedagogical methods, motivation.

INTRODUCTION. The contemporary education system places significant emphasis not only on imparting knowledge but also on fostering students' personal, social, and emotional development. Within the framework of 21st-century competencies, **emotional intelligence (EI)**- developing the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions, communicate effectively with others, and cultivate empathy and social skills – is recognized as a key competence.

Primary school age is considered the most sensitive and receptive period for learning in a child's life [1]. Therefore, developing their emotional intelligence is viewed as an integral part of the educational process.

Furthermore, nurturing emotional intelligence in young children plays a crucial role in improving the social climate, preventing conflicts, and strengthening peer relationships. Consequently, the development of emotional intelligence among primary school students is both a relevant and a scientifically and practically significant issue in modern education.

The development of emotional intelligence in primary school students is a highly relevant issue today [2]. This can be attributed to several key reasons:

1. **Global education trends and 21st-century skills.** Modern education systems increasingly focus not only on knowledge acquisition but also on students' personal development. Within the framework of 21st-century competencies, emotional intelligence (EI) - which includes understanding one's own emotions, communicating effectively with others, and managing stress—is recognized as a core skill. Forming these skills during primary school age lays a crucial foundation for successful development in subsequent educational stages [3].

2. **Social and psychological development.** Children with well-developed emotional intelligence can collaborate effectively with peers, resolve conflicts peacefully, and possess strong self-regulation. This contributes to fostering a healthier social environment in school and strengthening relationships based on friendship and cooperation [4].

3. **Impact on academic success.** Research indicates that children with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate greater learning motivation, a stronger drive for knowledge, and an enhanced ability to concentrate and focus [5]. Consequently, emotional intelligence positively influences academic outcomes.

4. **Supporting stress management and mental well-being.** Given the intense pace and competitive nature of modern life, children frequently encounter stress and anxiety. Emotional intelligence equips them with the tools to manage their emotions, resolve problems constructively, and maintain psychological resilience.

5. **Strengthening social skills in a high-tech era.** As children spend more time in digital environments, cultivating real-world social skills, empathy, and communication abilities is paramount. Emotional intelligence serves as the essential vehicle for developing these competencies [6].

Today, the development of emotional intelligence in primary school students holds significant importance not only for their personal and social development but also for their academic success, psychological stability, and the formation of essential life skills [7]. Consequently, prioritizing the instruction and cultivation of emotional intelligence within the educational process is regarded as a critical imperative.

LITERATURE REVIEW. The conceptual framework of emotional intelligence (EI) was developed by psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer in the late 20th century, yet its widespread popularization and practical application are largely attributed to Daniel Goleman's seminal work, *Emotional Intelligence* (1995). According to Goleman, emotional intelligence encompasses an individual's

capacity to recognize and manage personal emotions, sustain motivation, and cultivate empathy and social skills [8].

The importance of developing Emotional Intelligence (EI) when working with primary school students has been emphasized in numerous scholarly studies:

1. **Impact on academic performance.** Research by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004) indicates that children with developed emotional intelligence possess a greater capacity for focused attention, resilience in the face of setbacks, and sustained motivation for learning, all of which contribute to enhanced academic achievement.

2. **Social and emotional development.** The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020) demonstrates that emotional intelligence training increases social skills, empathy, and conflict resolution abilities in school-age children [9].

3. **Practical research in primary education.** Studies by Mayer (2008), based on triangular models of EI, reveal that games, role-playing exercises, and group work are effective methods for fostering emotional awareness in children [10]. Furthermore, cultivating emotional intelligence improves a child's self-regulation and social adaptability. Collectively, these studies confirm that developing EI helps children build essential skills in self-management, social adaptation, motivation, and stress tolerance.

4. **Recent inquiries in local contexts.** Recent investigations include research on fostering emotional intelligence in schools of Uzbekistan. For instance, X. Yo'ldoshev (2021) emphasizes that the emotional intelligence of primary school students can be effectively developed through structured psychological training and educational methodologies [11]. Concurrently, this development serves to improve the school's social climate and enhance students' psychological stability.

The literature review demonstrates that cultivating emotional intelligence is crucial not only for personal and social development but also for academic success. Establishing these skills in primary school holds significant importance in ensuring students' social, psychological, and academic well-being. Consequently, prioritizing the development of emotional intelligence within the educational process is a matter of both contemporary relevance and practical significance.

METHODS: The study employed historical, retrospective, and theoretical-methodological source analysis, along with the synthesis and critical interpretation of data, observation, interviews, questionnaires, content analysis, qualimetry, and expert evaluation.

DISCUSSION. The issue of developing emotional intelligence in primary school students holds significant importance from both psychological and

pedagogical perspectives. Research conducted by Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, and Goleman from the early 20th century onwards demonstrates that a student's emotional intelligence significantly influences their social adaptability, self-regulation, and academic success [12].

Emotional intelligence and academic development. In the learning process, children with developed emotional intelligence can better concentrate by managing their emotions and exhibit greater resilience in the face of challenges and setbacks. This, in turn, enhances their learning motivation and knowledge acquisition efficiency. From this perspective, incorporating activities specifically designed to foster emotional intelligence into school curricula is pedagogically essential.

Impact on social and emotional development. Emotional intelligence enables children to communicate effectively, demonstrate empathy, and resolve conflicts constructively. Cultivating these skills in primary school serves not only to strengthen relationships based on friendship and cooperation but also to establish a healthy social environment.

Pedagogical games, role-playing exercises, group work, and interactive methods are effective tools for developing children's emotional intelligence [13]. Concurrently, teaching children to express and regulate their emotions through collaboration between educators and parents enhances their emotional stability.

Developing emotional intelligence allows for a positive influence on the personal and social growth of primary school students. This contributes to a more effective educational process and prepares children to be adaptable and successful in future complex situations. Therefore, the integration of emotional intelligence development into the pedagogical process is of critical importance.

RESULTS. The study identified factors influencing the development of emotional intelligence in primary school students and analyzed their correlation with personal, social, and academic growth. The research findings revealed the following:

1. **Self-awareness and self-regulation.** A significant proportion of participants demonstrated a need to develop their ability to identify personal emotions and adjust their behavior accordingly. Improvements in self-regulation skills enabled students to remain calm in stressful situations and concentrate more effectively on learning tasks.

2. **Social skills and empathy.** The study confirmed that children with higher emotional intelligence possess a greater capacity for effective peer communication, cooperation, and peaceful conflict resolution. Furthermore, group work and interactive exercises were shown to significantly enhance students' social competencies.

3. **Motivation and learning engagement.** The development of emotional intelligence was found to increase students' interest in learning and intrinsic motivation. Participants reported feeling more successful and demonstrated a heightened drive to learn by managing positive emotions more effectively.

The core conclusion of the study is that fostering emotional intelligence exerts a substantial positive influence on the personal, social, and academic development of primary school students. Therefore, methodological approaches aimed at cultivating emotional intelligence—such as games, role-playing exercises, group work, and psychological training—should be systematically integrated into the educational process as effective pedagogical tools.

CONCLUSION. The findings of this study indicate that developing emotional intelligence in primary school students plays a crucial role in their personal, social, and academic growth. Through emotional intelligence, children cultivate the ability to recognize and manage their own emotions, communicate effectively, demonstrate empathy, and resolve conflicts constructively.

From the perspective of primary education pedagogy, games, role-playing exercises, group work, and interactive methods constitute effective tools for fostering emotional intelligence. Furthermore, collaboration between educators and parents contributes significantly to enhancing children's emotional stability.

In summary, cultivating emotional intelligence holds significant importance not only for improving academic success and the social environment within schools but also for nurturing children into adaptable and successful individuals capable of navigating complex future life situations. Consequently, the task of developing emotional intelligence in primary school students is both a relevant and a matter of practical importance in the current educational landscape.

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Pedagogical Recommendations:

- Focus on developing emotional intelligence in primary school classrooms by integrating games, role-playing exercises, group work, and interactive methodologies.
- Educators should employ daily reflective exercises and structured activities designed to strengthen children's skills in identifying and managing their emotions.
- Instruct students in empathy and communication strategies to effectively resolve interpersonal conflicts and disagreements.

2. Recommendations for Parents:

- Engage children in dialogue at home regarding the expression and regulation of emotions, fostering a supportive environment for emotional learning.

- Strengthen children's social competencies by encouraging participation in social activities, group games, and collaborative projects.

3. Systemic and Methodological Recommendations:

- Incorporate modules specifically oriented toward emotional and social development into school curricula.
- Organize specialized training sessions and workshops on developing emotional intelligence to enhance educators' professional competencies in this area.

In conclusion, fostering emotional intelligence significantly influences the personal, social, and academic development of primary school students. Therefore, it is crucial for educators, parents, and the educational system to collaborate and prioritize strengthening children's emotional stability and social competencies.

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