

Research of the Level of Emotional Intelligence of Preschool Teachers-Methodologists

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Abstract: The objective of this study was to find out the level of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers-methodologists with the purpose of further professional advancement (enhancing their emotional competence). Tools applied for collecting and processing statistics were the following: survey results, methodologist's checklists of observation of conducting classes by the teacher, N. Hall's Emotional Intelligence Test, questionnaires for parents. There was also a survey of training participants followed by written feedback. STATA software was used for data processing, and the online TextAnalyzer utility was used to process free responses from the parent questionnaires. It is found that the system of formation of emotional intelligence, based on the training we have developed, has a positive impact on the development of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers-methodologists. The above approach enhances the knowledge of preschool teachers about their emotions, senses and feelings, contributing to the development of their ability to understand their own emotions. After the training, 7.14% of the participants showed a low level as opposed to the initial level of 33.33%. The medium level rose significantly, from 60.0% to 78.6%. And the high level of awareness of emotional intelligence in teachers has increased more than twice - from 6.67% to 14.29%. The arithmetical mean for raw scores also increased - from 43.87 to 57.54, thus confirming that the system used in training allows developing strategies for modulation of their emotions, introducing the training participants to the techniques of expression of their emotions and developing a range of emotional competency skills aimed at overcoming emotive situations. Since during the analysis of the lessons by the methodologist the teacher had to respect both the positive and negative response of the methodologist and since respect is a component of leadership, we can say that the feedback contributed to the development of leadership qualities of teachers. Regarding pedagogical skills, provided that the teacher constantly works on self-improvement of emotional intelligence, we state that the level of the teacher's pedagogical skills also improves. We consider it reasonable to further explore the possibilities of developing the competence of emotional intelligence in future teachers during their study in higher educational institutions and preschool teachers.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, teachers-methodologists, emotional awareness, modulation of emotions, self-motivation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Understanding the features and developed emotional intelligence in preschool teachers methodologists (e.g. modulation of their personal feelings and experiences, developing the ability to express both positive and negative feelings correctly, a set of mental skills that are involved in awareness and understanding of the own emotions and the emotions of those around them) became an essential component of the psychological competence of preschool teachers; that is currently requiring proper attention [1-3].

Mastering the principles of developing and self-developing of emotional intelligence for teachers is also important because it will help to develop better

relationships between children and adults and help to stabilize psychological comfort at the preschool educational institutions, which in turn affects the success and quality of education [4-7].

1.1. Development of Emotional Intelligence in Preschoolers through the Example of Adults

The development of emotional intelligence in children is one of the critical places in the New Ukrainian School Concept [8]. It is considered as a primary task of the preschool educational institution in general and a teacher in particular [9, 10]. The literature review revealed that people with high levels of emotional intelligence have a clear understanding of their emotions and feelings of others and can modulate their sphere of emotional direction. Therefore, their behaviour is more adaptive in society, and they more easily achieve their goals in interaction with others [11-15].

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So, adults need to give children an example of modulating their emotions, ways to reflect and understand their feelings from preschool age [16]. In terms of education, this means that adults need to understand their children’s feelings, be able to feel for them, comfort and guide them, that is, provide skilled assistance to a child at different ages [17]. It will preserve child’s emotional health (the ability to understand, express and modulate his/her feelings), including his/her emotional, social, personal, mental, physical, moral, psychological health and help the child to master the fundamental wealth of emotional palette, the basics of sentiment culture. It will be easier for him/her to live and succeed [18, 19].

Therefore, the study of the level of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers-methodologists with the purpose of their further professional advancement (enhancement of their emotional competence) is an urgent task which determined the *objective* of this research, in particular, the influence of the participation of teachers in the training we developed on their ability of emotional self-modulation in interaction with children.

2. METHODS AND RESEARCH PROCEDURE

This study was quantitative, lasting from the second half of 2018 to the first half of 2019, covered 30 preschool institutions and was arranged in four stages: Stage 1 – preparatory or theoretical; Stage 2 – summative; Stage 3 – formative, consisting of two sets of training; Stage 4 – control. The empirical part of the study was based on, 1) a *summative* assessment, which aimed at identifying the level of awareness of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers-methodologists; 2) a *formative* assessment aimed at

revealing the features of the influence of a specially developed training (a selected set of exercises), which would contribute to the expansion of knowledge of preschool teachers regarding emotional intelligence, namely, emotional awareness and modulation of their own emotions; observation of the children of the groups where the teachers who participated in the training worked; 3) a *control* assessment intended to test the working group of preschool teachers and to compare the results obtained in the summative assessment. In addition, the parents were surveyed to comment on changes they observed in the emotional self-modulation of the teachers in interactions with their children.

Let us present the organizational structure of the study in the form of a chart (see Figure 1).

The training was held during the formative assessment, which included two meetings with the group members taking place once a month. The purpose of this training was to broaden the knowledge and skills of the emotional competence of preschool teachers-methodologists by increasing the level of emotional awareness development and modulating their own emotions.

The objectives of the training were to:

1. Improve knowledge of own emotions, senses and feelings;
2. Promote the development of the ability to understand their own emotions;
3. Develop strategies for modulating emotions.

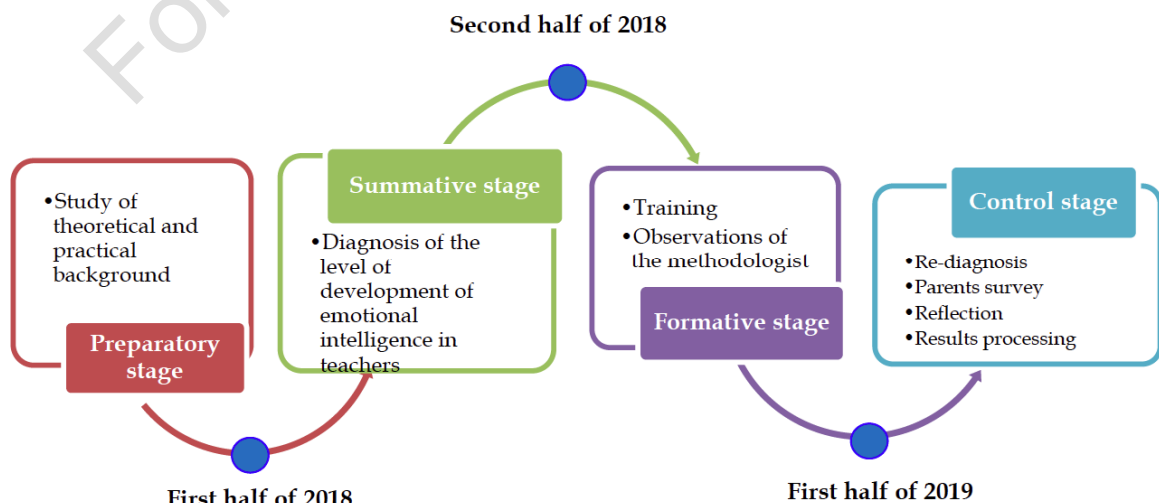


Figure 1: Organizational structure of the study.

4. Extend the range of emotional competence skills to show adaptive behaviour in emotive situations.
5. Get acquainted with the techniques of expression of sentiments.

2.1. Data Collection Tools

The following tools were used: survey results, survey results, methodologist's checklists of observation of conducting classes by the teacher (Appendix A), N. Hall's Emotional Intelligence Test [20], questionnaires for parents. There was also a survey of training participants followed by written feedback. STATA Software [21] was used for data processing, and the online TextAnalyzer utility was used to process free responses from the questionnaires for parents.

2.2. Sample Formation

To carry out a summative assessment, a group of investigated teachers-methodologists of 30 preschool educational institutions of the Solomenskyi district of Kyiv was selected (a group of 30 female teachers aged 28 to 48. In the formative assessment, 30 people participated in the first training, 28 - in the second, 8 of which participated in only 1 training out of 2. The control assessment involved 28 people. To increase the significance of the results of the evaluation, 17 parents and children's groups where the mentioned teachers-methodologists worked were involved at the summative stage.

Total 95 diagnostic surveys were performed during the empirical phase of the study (taking into account repeated surveys). The grouping of the subjects is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Grouping of Subjects (n=95)

Group of subjects	Group code	Number of people	% of the total number of surveys	Number of repeated surveys
Teachers-methodologists - 1 st survey – summative assessment	PVM-1	30	51.72%	17
Teachers-methodologists – 2 nd survey – control assessment	PVM-2	28	48.28%	20
Total		58	100%	37
Total diagnostic survey				95

Questionnaire for Survey Participants

1. My emotional state depends on...
2. How important is my emotional state as for a person in everyday life?
3. How important is my emotional state as for a teacher?

Questionnaire for Parents

1. What qualities of your child's teacher do you value most?
2. Do you think the teacher has established emotional contact with your child?
3. Does your child complain that the teacher is not fair to him/her or offends him/her?
4. Is the teacher always discreet to your child's whims?
5. Have you noticed any recent changes in the teacher's behavioural patterns regarding the relationship with your child?

The processing of the responses to the questionnaire was based on tracking the use of the following keywords, such as: "emotional stability," "restraint," "self-control," "stress," "emotional contact."

3. RESULTS

The results of the assessment confirmed the effectiveness of our approach. Answering the first question of our survey and applying the methods of N. Hall's Emotional Intelligence Test in the summative assessment of our empirical study, we found that in

Table 2: The Results of the Emotional Intelligence Development by Levels - the Total Indicator – of Group PVM-1 in the Summative Assessment (n = 30)

Low level		Medium level		High level		Arithmetical mean for the group
Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	
10	33.33	18	60	2	6.67	43.87

terms of total indicators, 6.67% of respondents have a high level of emotional intelligence, 60% have a medium level, and 33.33% of the subjects have a low one.

Here is a consolidated result of the total indicator of emotional intelligence of the group members (see Table 2).

Since this technique uses 5 basic scales (emotional awareness, modulation of one’s emotions, self-motivation, empathy, recognition of other people’s emotions), each corresponding to the structural component of emotional intelligence of the individual, we provide a detailed presentation of the results of determining the development of emotional intelligence by the levels among the members of Group PVM-1.

Thus, the presented results allow concluding that preschool teachers-methodologists mostly recognize their emotions not bad 40% + 30% = 70% (this is the sum of high and medium indicator), but only 13.33% can modulate them (3.33 + 10% - high and medium indicator). That is, the teachers-methodologists having a low level of modulating their emotions have a very high indicator (86.67%). As regards a “self-motivation” scale, more than half of the respondents, namely 53.3%, have a medium level of self-motivation, a fifth of

the respondents (20%) have a high level, and the rest have a low level. Almost half of the respondents (46.67%) also have high levels of empathy, 36.67% have a medium level of empathy, and 16.67% have a low level of empathy. This indicates that most teachers-methodologists who participated in our pilot survey are people who are compassionate and attentive to others - 83.34% (high and medium combined). The “other people’s emotions recognition” scale showed that 83.33% of the respondents had high and medium indicators (33.33% and 50%, respectively), and only 16.67% of our group’s teachers had difficulties with recognizing other people’s emotions. The overall integral index of emotional intelligence evidenced a high level of emotional intelligence in only 6.67% of surveyed teachers-methodologists, the medium level - in 60%, and the low level - in one-third of our group’s teachers.

3.1. Questionnaire for Survey Participants

Summarizing the answers to the questionnaire allowed drawing the following conclusions:

- 1) My emotional state depends on...

As regards the first question (“My emotional state depends on ...”), almost everyone thinks that their emotional state depends on others: people,

Table 3: The Results of the Development of Emotional Intelligence by Scales in Group PVM-1 in the Summative Experiment (n = 30)

Item No.	Scale	Low level		Medium level		High level		Arithmetical mean for the group
		Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	
1.	Emotional awareness	9	30	9	30	12	40	11.7
2.	Modulation of one’s emotions	26	86.67	3	10	1	3.33	0.13
3.	Self-motivation	8	26.67	16	53.33	3	20	9.17
4.	Empathy	5	16.67	11	36.67	14	46.67	12.23
5.	Recognition of other people’s emotions	5	16.67	15	50	10	33.33	11.27

circumstances, relationships, and so on. A small proportion of teachers (4 persons – 13.33% of all respondents) said that their emotional state might depend on themselves, namely, self-control, intelligence, keeping their temper in conflict situations, on understanding events. That is, these teachers made a focus on themselves, not on external causes, unlike other teachers.

- 2) How important is my emotional state as a person in everyday life?
- 3) How important is my emotional state as a teacher?

The answers to the 2nd (“How important is my emotional state as a person in everyday life?”) and the 3rd question (“How important is my emotional state as a teacher?”) showed that teachers-methodologists pay great attention to their emotional state and understand how important it is in their daily routine and at work. They understand that their health, the mood of those around them at home and at work, which affects social well-being, psychological comfort, performance and relationships, depending on the way they understand/cope with their emotions, on whether or not they can modulate them. But not everyone can understand and modulate emotions.

The analysis of the summative assessment helped us to realize that we can proceed to a formative assessment that will help participants of the selected group of preschool teachers to promote, in the course of training, knowledge of emotional intelligence, namely, emotional awareness and control of emotions – these are the parameters that need priority influence.

Assessing the result obtained from the testing and questionnaire of teachers-methodologists, we came to the agreement that, first of all, it is necessary to provide teachers with knowledge and assistance regarding the scale of “Modulation of one’s emotions”, where they had the greatest difficulties. For this purpose, training was developed (the exercises were selected) to increase the level of knowledge of teachers-methodologists in the field of emotional awareness and

modulation of their emotions. Emphasis was placed on modulating one’s emotions (the indicator that showed the highest value in the lowest result).

At the end of the training, a repeated control of the development of emotional intelligence was carried out according to N. Hall’s Emotional Intelligence Test, which we used in the summative assessment at the beginning. We were interested in the general indicators of the emotional intelligence of teachers-methodologists, and indicators by scales, especially “emotional awareness” and “managing one’s emotions” – it was these two last parameters that our training aimed at.

It is worth noting that the second training was attended by 28 teachers-methodologists, 8 of whom did not participate in the previous training. We can say that the data below is a “dirty” experiment.

Table 4 contains the result of the overall indicator of the development of emotional intelligence of the group participants in the retest, after the training during the formative assessment.

From the experimental data we received from our respondents, it is evident that two persons from all participants of the training (7.14%) showed a low level of recognition of their own emotions. The medium level was shown by 78.6% of teachers, and the high level – by 14.29%.

At the same time, the five main scales that make up the structure of emotional intelligence of personality in the second diagnosis are presented in Table 5.

As we can see in “emotional awareness”, a low level of this parameter became characteristic of only one person, which made up 3.58% of the respondents of Group PVM-2, those who participated in the second survey at the end of the formative assessment. The medium level was shown by 12 people (42.86%), and the high level - by 53.58%, namely 15 teachers.

An indicator of the “Modulation of one’s emotions” scale showed that 46.43% of teachers-methodologists have a low level. This is a reasonably high figure, but

Table 4: The Results of the Development of Emotional Intelligence - Total Indicator – of Group PVM-2 in the Control Assessment (n=28)

Low level		Medium level		High level		Arithmetical mean for the group
Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	
2	7.14	22	78.6	4	14.29	64.5

Table 5: The Results of the Development of Emotional Intelligence by Scales in Group PVM-2 in the Control Assessment (n = 28)

Item No.	Scale	Low level		Medium level		High level		Arithmetical mean for the group
		Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%	
1.	Emotional awareness	1	3.58	12	42.86	15	53.58	14.7
2.	Modulation of one's emotions	13	46.43	7	25	8	28.57	11.2
3.	Self-motivation	4	4.29	18	4.29	6	21.43	12.2
4.	Empathy	4	4.29	9	2.14	15	53.58	13.5
5.	Recognition of other people's emotions	3	0.71	15	3.58	10	35.71	12.9

we think that the vast majority of those people are teachers who came to our training for the first time, i.e. did not attend the previous one - the eight people we mentioned above. This can, of course, be only our assumption. 25% of those involved in the study shifted to an average level and 28.57% - to a high one.

As concerns the "self-motivation" scale, 14.29% of teachers had low level, 64.29% - medium level, 21.43% - high level.

On the empathy scale, we received the following distribution of indicators: a low level was scored by 14.29% of teachers, the average level - by 32.14%, 53.58% of teachers-methodologists demonstrated a high level.

The fifth scale – "recognition of other people's emotions" showed the following results: 10.71% of teachers-methodologists demonstrated a low level, 53.58% had a medium level, and 35.71% had a high level.

The next stage of our scientific research was to conduct a comparative analysis of testing of a group of training participants before the formative assessment and after.

The overall integral indicator of the development of emotional intelligence of teachers-methodologists is graphically presented in the chart below (see Figure 2).

As we can see from the chart above (Figure 2), even considering eight people who were absent at the summative assessment and did not pass the first training and attended only the second training, the picture changed significantly. After the training, 7.14% of the participants showed a low level as opposed to the initial level, which reached 33.33%. The medium level rose significantly, from 60.0% to 78.6%. And the high level of awareness of emotional intelligence in teachers has increased from 6.67% to 14.29%, more than twice. The arithmetical mean for raw scores also increased from 43.87 to 57.54.

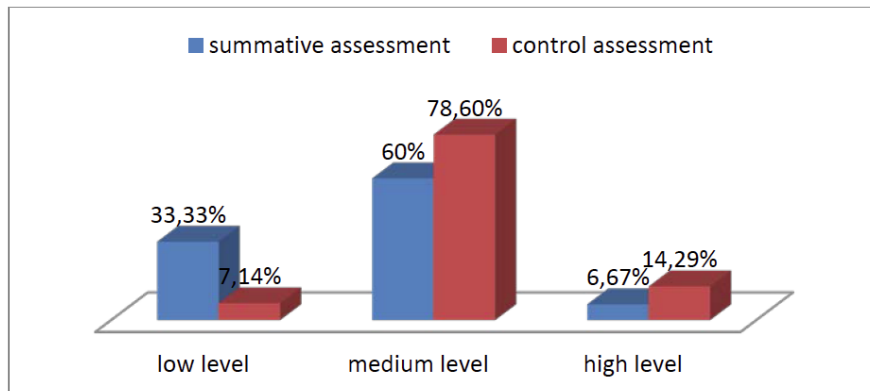


Figure 2: Comparative analysis of the integral indicator of emotional intelligence development before and after the assessment.

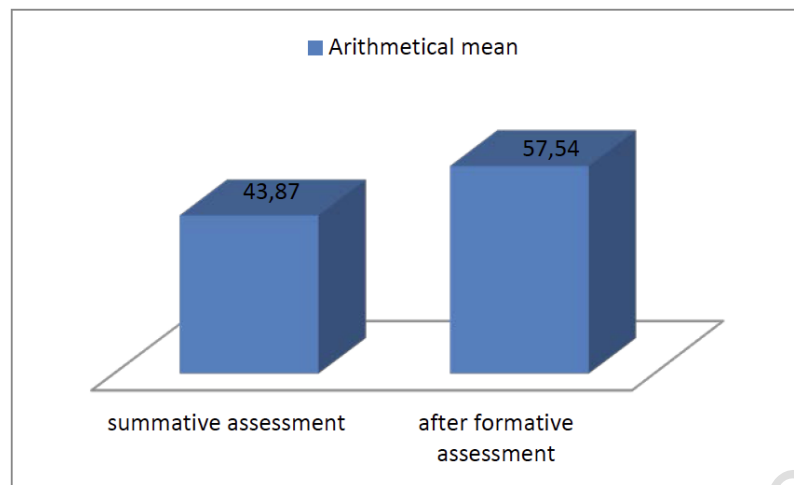


Figure 3: Comparison of the arithmetic mean of EI of 2 tests: summative and control in the “dirty” experiment.

As we can see, the chart demonstrated positive dynamics of changes in skills with EI in the group of teachers.

The feedback from the participants at the very end of the training was also valuable in our research. Respondents noted the following: it became much easier; I reached emotional calm; I received useful information; I received information that can be applied in communication with colleagues; I learned about the complexity of modulating one’s emotions and those of others; the training showed that my knowledge was correct, I only adjusted it; I received positive emotional satisfaction; I understood that with emotions one can live, take positive, benefit and enjoy; I found cause for my doubts and hesitation; there were things I already knew and things I didn’t know; I am an emotional person by nature, I am learning to modulate my emotions and I will teach my subordinates; I will work on myself; there was a lot of interesting information; I will no longer be selfish in my family; I will try to use the knowledge acquired during the training; I came to the conclusion that I could help myself by mastering emotional intelligence; acquired knowledge will help me at work and at home; I began to look at the “negative” emotions differently, realized that they were also important; I felt that I can control my emotions, so that they do not control me; I realized that much depends on me in terms of emotions; it was a pleasure to realize that I could learn to express my feelings without harming myself; I acquired the knowledge that it is possible to tell a person even something not very pleasant without offending him/her; the training was very helpful for me.

The previous comparative analysis concerned the participants in the training, who represented a “dirty”

experiment. It is implied that 20 teachers after pre-training and testing participated in the summative assessment, that is, they were fully involved in the summative assessment, and eight teachers-methodologists did not undergo this procedure and came to the second training and control assessment.

And now we will present the results of comparative analysis for two measurements of those teachers who participated in both pieces of training (in the full-scale formative assessment) and in the summative and control assessment, that is, at the beginning of our study and at the end. First of all, we will present the results of the general integral indicator of emotional intelligence (see Figure 4).

As we can see, the chart demonstrated positive dynamics of changes in acquiring skills with EI in the group of teachers. So, the low level was inherent in 33.33% of teachers-methodologists at the beginning of the experiment and was reduced to 0 after training, i.e. the difference is 33.33%. The participants of the training who showed the medium level were by 20% more in the controlled assessment than in the summative one (80% -60% = 20%). The high level also increased from 6.67% to 20%, i.e. by 13.33%. That is, we can argue that training has helped teachers-methodologists to improve their emotional competence.

The arithmetic mean of this indicator confirmed these dynamics (see Figure 5).

The arithmetic mean showed a significant increase in the value of emotional intelligence between 1st and 2nd teacher testing, from 43.87 to 64.50 - by 20.63 units.

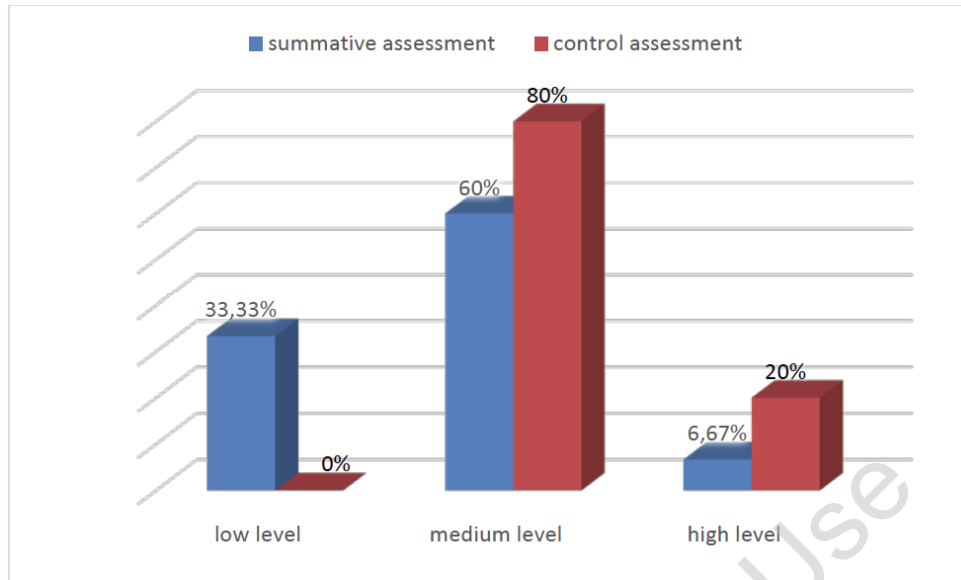


Figure 4: Comparative analysis of the integral indicator of the development of emotional intelligence of pure experiment.

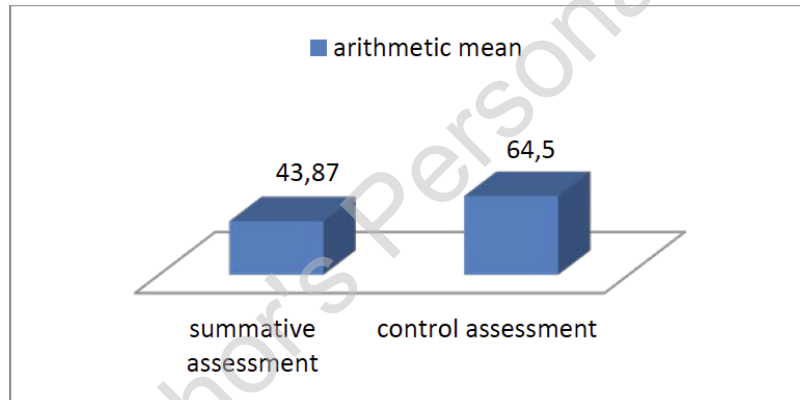


Figure 5: The arithmetic mean of the integral indicator of emotional intelligence in a "pure" experiment.

3.2. Results of the Survey of Parents

1. **What qualities of your child’s teacher do you value most?** Such qualities as "optimism", "emotional stability", "responsiveness", "sense of humour", "tact", "restraint", "self-control" were mostly mentioned.
2. **Do you think the teacher has established emotional contact with your child?** 13 people answered yes and the rest (4) said no.
3. **Does your child complain that the teacher is not fair to him/her or offends him/her?** 9 people said yes, and 8 said no.
4. **Is the teacher always discreet to your child’s whims?** 13 parents confirmed, while 4 people complained that no.

5. **Have you noticed any recent changes in the teacher’s behavioural patterns regarding the relationship with your child?** 14 people noted a shift (after our training).

The effectiveness of our training was confirmed by the results of methodologist’s observation of conducting classes by the teacher.

Student’s criterion was applied to determine the reliability of the above results using the formula below.

$$t = \frac{x - y}{\sqrt{\frac{Qx^2}{Nx} + \frac{Qy^2}{Ny}}}$$

Note: *t* - the criterion for the reliability of the results; *x* and *y* - the mean values for the samples; *Qx* - the number of respondents in the CG who have low,

medium, and high level of emotional intelligence; Q_y - the number of respondents in the EG who have low, medium, and high level of emotional intelligence; N_x - the total number of people in the CG; N_y - the total number of people in the EG.

At the pre-treatment stage, t value was 0,01. The coefficient for the EG was 3,937, while for the CG it was 3,947. After the treatment, t value increased, reaching 0.22. The coefficient for the EG increased and then it was 4,891, while for the CG it was 4,671. Thus, the significance of differences in variables by all criteria in both the CG and EG upon completion the experiment was 95% (Student's t-test value was 4,891 in the EG given that the critical value could be 4,30).

Based on the above, the statistical analysis of the obtained experimental data can serve sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of the developed methodology of training of preschool teachers-methodologists in the aspects of the emotional intelligence, which seemed suggestive in concluding its effectiveness.

4. DISCUSSION

This practice-oriented scientific research allowed finding out that preschool teachers mainly believe that their emotional state depends on others: people, circumstances, relationships, etc. However, only a small proportion (13.33%) of all respondents associate their emotional state with self-control, intelligence, self-command in conflict or critical situations, with an understanding of events.

Although teachers-methodologists pay a lot of attention to their emotional state, they understand how important it is in everyday life, and at work. They understand that their health, the mood of those around them at home and at work, which affects social well-being, psychological comfort, performance and relationships, depend on the way they understand/cope with their emotions, on whether or not they are able to modulate them, but not all are able of understanding emotions and modulate them, and not all are ready and willing to change something in this area.

This research has contributed to the study of the level of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers with the purpose of their further professional advancement (enhancement of their emotional competence). First, research has expanded previous research on the implementation of conceptual

foundations for the formation of emotional intelligence through appropriate changes in the curriculum of preschool institutions (after particular training of teachers) [22]; study of the influence of the teacher's emotions on children's behaviour [23]; building the competence of emotional intelligence in teachers [24]; teaching emotional and social competence in higher educational institutions [25].

We believe that this project had an indirect positive impact on the development of leadership qualities of teachers and optimized their pedagogical skills. Since during the analysis of the lessons by the methodologist the teacher had to respect both the positive and negative response of the methodologist and since respect is a component of leadership, we can say that the feedback contributed to the development of leadership qualities of teachers. Regarding pedagogical skills, provided that the teacher constantly works on self-improvement of emotional intelligence, we state that the level of the teacher's pedagogical skills also improves.

Overall, this study confirmed the effectiveness of our proposed approach to the development of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers.

4.1. Limitations of the Study

Participation in this study of only teachers-methodologists of 30 preschool educational institutions is a major limitation. Among others, we may consider the ownership of educational institutions, the number of teachers who participated in the experiment and the duration of the training program.

5. CONCLUSION

Thus, it has been found that such a system has a positive effect on the formation of emotional intelligence of preschool teachers. The above approach deepens teachers' knowledge of their emotions, senses and feelings, which promotes their ability to understand their own emotions. The training system used allows developing strategies for modulating one's emotions, familiarizing students with the techniques of expression of their feelings and developing a range of emotional competence skills aimed at overcoming emotive situations. Additionally, we have confirmed the claim that the development of emotional intelligence is lifelong.

This study also implies that the preschool teachers-methodologists are supposed to acquire skills to

express their emotion verbally and non-verbally appropriately, to train the teachers to overcome their negative emotional states, to increase their awareness of how to deal with stress and project optimism when interacting with children.

We consider it reasonable to further explore the possibility of developing the competence of emotional intelligence in future teachers during their study in higher education institutions and in teachers working with preschool children.

APPENDIX A

Methodologist's checklist of observation of conducting classes by the teacher

No		Yes	No	Comment
1	The purpose of the lesson has been achieved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	The course of the lesson is logical and consistent with the purpose of the lesson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Methods and techniques of the lesson corresponded to the main purpose of the lesson and age-specific features of children's development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	There were difficulties in the process of using different methods and techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5	The teacher coped with difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6	The teacher managed to adapt during the lesson, as required by the situation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7	The teacher managed to create an atmosphere of cooperation, to cause feelings of empathy in the children, joy for their success and the success of their friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8	Recommendations to the teacher			

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