

## MOTIVATIONAL MECHANISMS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPMENT IN PRACTICING PSYCHOLOGISTS

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the features of emotional intelligence and analysis of factors that influence its development. Classical theories that give rise to the study of emotional intelligence and the latest developments of modern researchers are considered. Emotional intelligence is an important component of the personality of workers of helping professions, including psychologists. Although the issue of the development of emotional intelligence is quite well studied, only a small part of research covered the motivational factors that affect its level. The article draws attention to the motivational components of personality, as possible factors in the development of emotional intelligence. The novelty of the study is the identification of motivational factors that affect the emotional intelligence of practical psychologists. The aim of the article was to find out the features of emotional intelligence of practicing psychologists and the factors that affect its level in this group of subjects. The study was conducted through an electronic anonymous survey. A set of diagnostic methods was chosen, with quantitative and qualitative methods used for their processing (Statistica 16). It was found that the medium and high level of development of components of emotional intelligence dominate in subjects, and its development is significantly influenced by the components of prosocial motivation of an individual. We see the prospect of further research in a more detailed study of the peculiarities of the development of emotional intelligence of workers of various helping professions.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, Motivational factors, Practicing psychologists, Prosocial motivation.

### 1 Introduction

In the modern world, a rational attitude to life is actively developing, which involves the improvement of mental capabilities, detailed analysis of one's own mistakes, focus on the thinking process, rather than the emotional world. However, understanding and the ability to express one's own emotions is an important component of human social development, because the rejection of one's own emotions leads to their displacement, and the inability to effectively deal with emotional situations, in turn, leads to negative consequences for the personality, which can manifest themselves in a wide range of problems – psychosomatic disorders, communication difficulties, problems in professional growth or even manifestations of deviant behaviour. Therefore, the development of emotional intelligence, which involves the ability to understand and modulate emotions, both one's own and the emotions of other people, is important for the mental well-being of human. The development of emotional intelligence is especially important for practicing psychologists, as workers of helping professions, because understanding other people's emotions and empathy are part of their job. The level of emotional intelligence of practical psychologists affects not only their mental health, but also indirectly – the mental health of their clients, because the ability to understand and interpret the emotional states of others is one of the foundations of a successful practicing psychologist.

This study is the first to consider motivational factors as those influencing the emotional intelligence of psychologists. In particular, the focus is made on the prosocial motivation of practicing psychologists.

The hypothesis of the study is the assumption that the components of motivation of social psychologists have an impact on the level of their emotional intelligence.

The aim of the article is to find out the motivating factors that can affect the level of emotional intelligence of practical psychologists. This determines the following objectives: 1) find out the features of the development of emotional intelligence and its components in practicing psychologists; 2) study which aspects of prosocial motivation are related to the components of emotional intelligence; 3) find out those motivational tendencies that influence the emotional intelligence level of practicing psychologists.

Emotions, as an evolutionarily earlier mechanism for regulating behaviour than the mind, have a significant impact on human behaviour and health. They affect the ability to resolve conflicts, cope with stress, performance, mood, etc. The ability to manage one's own emotional state determine one's own motivation, professional performance, and performance of the organization as a whole. That is why the term "emotional intelligence" has recently become increasingly popular [18]. The review of literature on the subject under research showed that the foundation for the study of emotional intelligence was laid in 1988, when physiologist Reuven Bar-On used the term "Emotional Coefficient" [28]. Two years later, the authors of [20] introduced the term "emotional intelligence" into scientific circulation by publishing an article of the same name. Let us formulate some more definitions of emotional intelligence from works for the last 4-5 years:

- This is an integral category in the structure of the intellectual and emotional-volitional sphere of an individual, which determines the success of his/her activities and relationships with others [8];
- This is an integrative unit that provides awareness, understanding, and regulation of one's own emotions and the emotions of others, allowing for successful interpersonal interaction [5];
- This is an internal emotional resource of human emotional regulation, which allows the subject to control his/her behaviour, keep emotions under control in problematic situations and achieve economic well-being [14].

Thus, despite the difference in definitions, it is proposed to associate emotional intelligence in the most general sense with the ability of an individual to interpret emotions – one's own and other people's emotions, as the basis for organizing effective interaction in society. The content of the term allows clarifying the essential features of emotional intelligence. These include the ability to manage inducing emotions, the ability to understand the emotions of others, emotional awareness, the ability to influence the emotions of others, the ability to distinguish between real emotions and their simulation, the ability to identify the causes and consequences of emotions [24].

Speaking of emotional intelligence (EI), it should be noted that there is no consensus among foreign and domestic researchers on what benefits can a person have with this type of intelligence. According to [10], such people are socially active, and their activities are productive; they are successful; their life is full of events; they are not overwhelmed by anxious thoughts; they are in contact with others, they adhere to ethical principles. Those whose emotional intelligence is underdeveloped are prone to mood swings, which ultimately affects productivity.

According to [19], emotional intelligence allows an individual to be more adaptable to changes in society through the ability to control internal impulses. A group of American psychologists [6, 11] believe that a highly developed ability to interpret the emotions of others, as well as increased sensitivity to positive as well as negative emotional states lead to depression. Other researchers [26] believe that emotional intelligence in itself is

not a “harbinger of success”, although it can be the same springboard that is necessary to achieve significant professional results.

The process of emotions flows functionally reflects the algorithm of emotional intelligence, which consists of the following stages [1]: perception and understanding of emotions, their experiences and behavioural reactions. On this basis, there are three levels of functioning of EI: cognitive, emotional, and behavioural.

The cognitive level of EI is the processing and systematization of emotional information. Emotional information is understood as the meaning of individual emotions, their combination, sequence, and evaluation of the relationships they reflect. A characteristic feature of awareness is the inclusion of the received signals in the system of information (about oneself, about the world, about emotions), arranged in accordance with the socially produced system of values assimilated by the individual.

Emotional competencies shape a person’s emotional experience, which is defined in the psychological literature as a system of emotions and feelings that a person experienced at different periods of his/her life, having different levels of influence on the present and future [27].

The basis of professional performance of practicing psychologists is competent communication, which includes not only communication skills, knowledge and abilities, but also the willingness to interact with others, adapt to new conditions, defend own views, understand and take into account the feelings and opinions of others [13, 21].

## 2 Materials and Methods

To find out the motivational components that can affect the emotional intelligence of practicing psychologists, 300 people aged 25-55 were selected and included in the Ukrainian Union of Psychotherapists Register (which also registers psychologists who officially practice a particular method of psychotherapy). The study was conducted anonymously using electronic forms of questionnaires. The following methods were used: Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire by [25], N. Hall’s Emotional Intelligence Test adapted by Y. P. Ilin [26], methods of research of prosocial motivation of specialists of socio-economic professions [27], Milman’s method for diagnostics of motivational structure of personality [28].

Hall’s method for determining the level of emotional intelligence contains 30 questions and the following instructions: “You are offered statements that reflect different aspects of life in one way or another. Write a number based on your degree of agreement with it to the right of each statement: strongly disagree (-3 points); generally disagree (-2 points); partially disagree (-1 point); partially agree (+1 point); mostly agree (+2 points); completely agree (+3 points). The results of the method are reflected in such scales as emotional awareness, modulation of one’s own emotions, self-motivation, empathy, recognition of other people’s emotions and an integrated scale.

The EmIn Questionnaire contains 46 questions and the following instructions: “Read each statement carefully and evaluate its relevance to your life on a scale of 0 – strongly disagree, 1 – rather disagree, 2 – more likely to agree, 3 – fully agree.” The questionnaire contains the following scales: interpersonal EI (MEI), intrapersonal EI (VEI), PE scale (understanding of emotions), UE scale (modulation of emotions).

*MEI scale (interpersonal EI).* Ability to understand other people’s emotions and modulate them.

*VEI scale (intrapersonal EI).* Ability to understand and modulate one’s emotions.

*PE scale (understanding of emotions).* Ability to understand one’s own and other people’s emotions.

*UE scale (modulation of emotions).* Ability to control one’s own and other people’s emotions.

The method of studying prosocial motivation of specialists of socio-economic professions contains 45 questions and is reflected in the following scales: professional prosocial motives, broad humanistic motives, altruistic motives, prosocial motivation in interpersonal communication.

The Millman’s method of diagnosing motivational structure contains 14 questions that should be answered according to a certain gradation from “no, completely disagree” to “yes, completely agree” (8 answer options). The results are reflected for such scales as life-support (satisfaction of basic life needs), comfort (convenience of life), social status (its importance for the subjects), communication (aspiration to it), general activity (vital activity), creative activity (tendencies to creativity) and social usefulness (the desire to be useful to society).

Respondents were interviewed by e-mailing questionnaires. Processing of the received questionnaires, that is calculation of results on various scales of questionnaires, was carried out by means of calculation formulas of Excel. Data analysis involved the use of quantitative and qualitative methods of data processing. The discriminant analysis was chosen among the statistical methods of data processing, which allows determining the most important factors influencing the division of the respondents by levels of emotional intelligence, and Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient, which allows identifying relationships between two independent traits in the same group.

## 3 Results

Interpretation of the results obtained through the N. Hall’s test to determine the level of emotional intelligence was carried out by high, low and medium values on six scales. Table 1 shows the results of processing the data obtained in the test.

Table 1: General data on the results of the N. Hall’s test in the study group

Scale/level	Low	Medium	High
Emotional awareness	13.5	48.6	37.8
Modulating one’s own emotions	37.8	35.1	27
Self-motivation	24.3	40.5	35.1
Empathy	29.7	34	24.3
Recognizing other people’s emotions	21.6	46	16.2
Integrative level	27	43.2	29.7

The general indicators in the group of practicing psychologists are high enough on all scales. All this indicates a fairly high overall level of emotional intelligence in this group. Understanding and recognizing other people’s emotions is important for a practical psychologist, but it is impossible without awareness and acceptance of one’s own emotions, so the subjects actively develop their own emotional awareness and replenish their emotional vocabulary. Another important aspect of the work of practicing psychologists is the ability to modulate their behaviour and emotions, as working with clients can cause them their own experiences, which in turn can affect the process of psychological care, so it is advisable to pay attention to self-motivation.

In general, practical psychologists are able to empathize, recognize other people’s emotions quite well, they have a well-developed motivational sphere, and in particular self-motivation, which is important in their profession.

The EmIn questionnaire has slightly different scales and allows finding out the peculiarities of the development of emotional intelligence in the subjects by the level of their understanding of emotions, modulation of emotions, as well as the scales of interpersonal EI (MEI) and intrapersonal EI (VEI).

A certain level of scales shows the extent to which a particular respondent is able to understand the emotional state of other people, as well as the extent of his/her ability to control other people’s emotional processes. High scores on the scales indicate developed empathic and communicative abilities. Such subjects

easily recognize the emotional state of other people through the “reading” of their facial expressions or gestures, the tone of voice, etc. Understanding the emotions of another person allows them to more successfully establish emotional contact with the interlocutor, and if desired – to evoke certain emotions. People with a high level of emotional intelligence are able to reduce the intensity of unwanted, in their opinion, emotions as well as manipulate or control the communicative situation.

Table 2: The results of EmIn in the subjects

Levels of EI/scales	MEI	VEI	UE	PE
Very low	12.2%	12.2%	6.1%	4%
Low	14.3%	8.3%	18.3%	10.3%
Medium	24.5%	26.6%	36.8%	20.4%
High	34.7%	30.7%	24.5%	36.7%
Very high	14.3%	12.2%	14.3%	28.6%

As one can see from Table 2, medium and high indicators of emotional intelligence dominate in the subjects. Subjects have a well-developed ability to understand and modulate their own emotions, which is important for the practical activities of a psychologist, as well as a good understanding of other people's emotions, and can control them. It is important for the work of a practicing psychologist to develop all components of emotional intelligence, because it helps to better understand the psycho-emotional state of the client and help him/her on request.

The following results were obtained according to the method of research of prosocial motivation of specialists of socioeconomic professions (Figure 1).

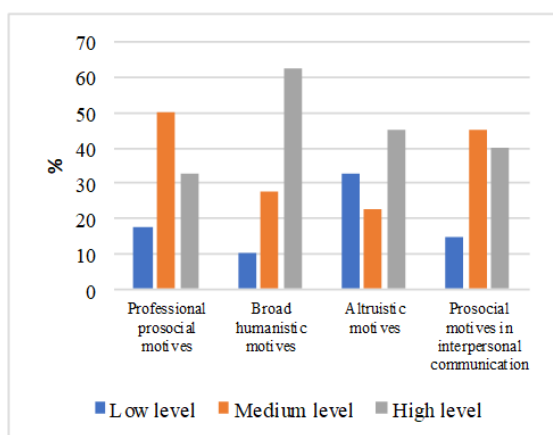


Figure 1 – Distribution of indicators of prosocial motivation of practicing psychologists

The subjects are moderately striving for professional development and growth, but there is a steady trend towards such motives. We can assume that this result is due to the specifics of the group of subjects who are professionally self-fulfilled to some extent and, accordingly, do not have a clear desire to do so.

Practicing psychologists have considerably developed broad humanistic motives, that is orientation in the life and professional activity regarding values of love, responsibility, justice, care, mercy, compassion. Focusing on these values is an important component of the psychologist's personality, as they help him/her to be more tolerant and compassionate in his/her work.

Altruistic motives, that is the desire to help other people, selfless activities within their profession, are also inherent in a large part of the subjects. Psychologists are often volunteers in psychological services or emergency psychological centres (which, for example, temporarily operate in emergency areas), so the significant development of such motives is a fairly natural result, which describes the personality of a practicing psychologist.

Analysis of the motivational structure of the subjects studied by Millman's method revealed the predominance of such motives as social status, creative activity and social usefulness (Figure 2).

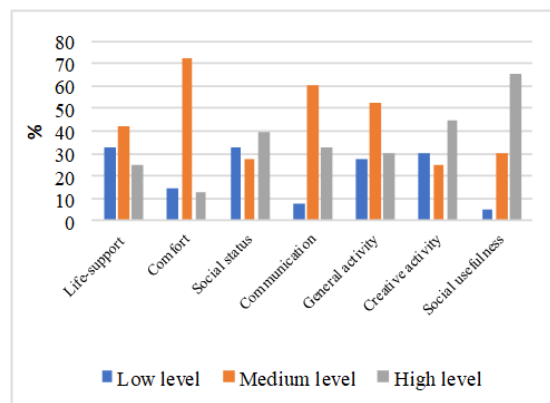


Figure 2 – Distribution of motivational indicators of practicing psychologists

It is worth noting the significant predominance of indicators of social usefulness, that is, it is crucial for the subjects to feel that their work is important for society, tangible in it and really necessary. At the same time, social recognition of their profession and activity is important to them, that is, on the one hand, they trace certain motives of serving other people, but, on the other hand, there are tendencies to receive feedback that will support and stimulate further work.

It is important for the subjects to maintain their own comfort zone, because they are well aware that to effectively care for other people, they first need to take care of themselves. Practicing psychologists like to interact with people around them, to communicate with them, but they do not always need it and may want to take a break and be alone.

This result is quite natural, because communication with other people is the basis of the work of practicing psychologists and they need rest from this type of “activity”.

Correlation analysis revealed whether there are relationships between indicators of emotional intelligence and motivational components of the subjects. Numerous correlations between the components of emotional intelligence and the motives of the respondents were revealed.

Professional prosocial motives are directly related to such components of emotional intelligence as self-motivation ( $r=0.351, p \leq 0.001$ , N. Hall's method), modulation of emotions ( $r=0.567, p \leq 0.001$ ), and intrapersonal emotional intelligence ( $r=0.632, p \leq 0.001$ ). The more respondents seek to help other people in their professional life and be useful to them, the more they develop emotional detachment, emotional flexibility, that is, they can arbitrarily control their emotions, as well as the emotions of others.

The scales “communication”, “understanding of emotions”, “empathy”, “altruistic motives” and “interpersonal emotional intelligence” form a stable chain of relationships. The higher the indicators of the subjects' ability to understand and modulate their own emotions, the higher their desire to communicate ( $r=0.391, p \leq 0.001$ ) and selfless help to other people ( $r=0.435, p \leq 0.001$ ); conversely, a decrease in the desire to communicate with and help other people leads to a decreasing ability to understand and manage their emotions.

Indicators of empathy of practicing psychologists also directly correlate with indicators of communication ( $r=0.683, p \leq 0.001$ ) and altruistic motives ( $r=0.532, p \leq 0.001$ ). The better the subjects have a developed understanding of other people's emotions, the ability to empathize with the current emotional state of another

person, as well as a willingness to provide support, the more they tend to interact with other people and selflessly help them.

The ability to understand emotions is associated with the same motives of communication ( $r=0.534$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and altruistic help ( $r=0.473$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). The better these motives are developed by practicing psychologists, the better they can distinguish emotions, find the reasons for their occurrence both in themselves and in other people.

The next step of the study was the use of discriminant analysis, which allows determining which indicators have the most significant impact on the level of emotional intelligence of the subjects. The scale "Integral level" from the N. Hall's method was chosen as the scale according to which the subjects were divided, because it reflects the general level of development of emotional intelligence (low, medium, or high). The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: The results of discriminant analysis

N=300	Discriminant function analysis summary (diansta)					
	Grouping: EI (3 grps) Wilks Lambda: .10453 approx. F(34,98) = 6.0326 p.0000					
	Wilks lambda	Partial lambda	F remove (2,49)	p-level	Toler.	F-tober (R-Sqr.)
Prof. proso. motives	0.405664	0.257683	5.57797	0.00000	0.479895	0.520104
Broad humanistic m.	0.128636	0.812627	5.64914	0.006199	0.390039	0.600961
Altruistic motives	0.131372	0.795702	6.29041	0.003702	0.641233	0.358767
Social usefulness	0.121770	0.858442	4.04006	0.023764	0.705364	0.294637
Communication	0.119718	0.873159	3.55905	0.036040	0.508648	0.49152
Proso. in interpersonal com.	0.128112	0.815945	5.52655	0.006850	0.455712	0.544288
Life-support	0.111736	0.935533	1.68828	0.195410	0.472716	0.527284
Comfort	0.115343	0.906275	2.53375	0.089715	0.543162	0.456838
Social status	0.112215	0.931537	1.80061	0.175957	0.543079	0.456921
General activity	0.111165	0.940341	1.55438	0.221561	0.448919	0.551082
Creative activity	0.114798	0.910579	2.40896	0.100758	0.572585	0.427416

As the results of the analysis show, the most important factors influencing the level of emotional intelligence are professional prosocial motives, broad humanistic motives, altruistic motives, prosocial motives in interpersonal communication, social usefulness and communication. As we can see, the factors of influence included all scales from the method of studying prosocial motivation of specialists of socioeconomic professions and two scales from the Millman's Motivational Structure Questionnaire. Prosocial motivation is a multidimensional formation, and its development indicates the individual's propensity to help other people and care for them, which is a characteristic feature of workers in socioeconomic professions. Caring for and helping others involves understanding the needs of another person, which in turn requires a high level of emotional intelligence and, as we see from the results of discriminant analysis, affects the development of emotional intelligence.

The impact of the scale "social usefulness" is close in terms of the explanation, if practical psychologists want to do important and recognized actions for other people, they have to understand well the needs of other people.

Discriminant analysis revealed that the prosocial motives of the subjects not only have a relationship with the indicators of emotional intelligence, but have a significant impact on its development.

#### 4 Discussion

The understanding of emotions is based on intellectual operations, which are carried out in the form of verbalisation of emotions, based on their understanding and differentiation. Cognitive mediation is a necessary condition for the emergence of emotions. The determinants of assessment are both situational

factors and dispositional ones, that is personality traits. Hence, the same situation causes different people to have different assessments and, as a result, different emotional reactions.

Given the fact that the work of practical psychologists is closely linked to socio-psychological interaction, understanding emotions is the key to the effectiveness of professional activities for these specialists [12]. Understanding one's own emotions helps to adequately assess oneself, one's true needs and desires. People with a developed ability to identify their own emotional reactions, who clearly understand and evaluate their thoughts in severe and even stressful situations, are much less likely to show cognitive difficulties and act more effectively.

Understanding other people's emotions contributes to the acceptance of people as they are, objective assessment of the situation, definition of professional tasks and areas of further work, correction of their actions if necessary [2, 22].

It is extremely important to ensure the development of emotional resources that will allow to adequately express one's emotions for the successful implementation of professional activities. In this context, special attention should be paid to the concept of health, which is interpreted in the psychological dictionary as a state of complete physical, spiritual, and social well-being, not just the absence of disease or physical defects [27, 21]. As we can see from the results of the study, most practical psychologists have high levels of emotional intelligence and its components, which is associated with the previously described studies.

Professional activity in the man-to-man system has its specifics, because it is necessary to take into account not only the purpose of activity, but also the psycho-emotional states of an individual. The following qualities are important for workers of helping professions: the ability to fully and correctly perceive a person; actively interact, achieve mutual understanding in performing professional functions, understand people's behaviour, understand their emotional state and needs, provide emotional support, find individual approaches, emotionally respond to anger, dissatisfaction, criticism from others, maintain balance in conflict situations, that is, to be prepared for effective communication. Researchers note that professionally important qualities of a practical psychologist are his/her interest in another person, humanity, tact, empathy, ability to understand another person's condition. In fact, the development of emotional intelligence is one of the key points in the development of the psychologist's personality, as it allows to better understand own emotional states and experiences, and to better understand the client and help him/her through their processing [26].

People with a developed ability to identify their own emotional reactions, who are clearly understand and evaluate their thoughts in severe and even stressful situations, are much less likely to show cognitive difficulties, and act more effectively [14]. Understanding the emotions of other people contributes to the acceptance of people as they are, an objective assessment of the situation, the definition of professional tasks and areas of further work, correction of one's own actions, if necessary [28].

The results of the study according to N. Hall's method indicate a fairly high overall level of emotional intelligence in the respondents. Practicing psychologists are able to empathize, recognize other people's emotions quite well, they have a well-developed motivational sphere, and, in particular, self-motivation, which is important in their profession. Similar results were obtained through the EmIn method. An important condition for the healthy functioning of the individual is the lack of suppression of emotions and feelings that arise, understanding their importance and developing the ability to express them adequately [8]. Emotions are an integral part of our lives and have a significant impact on it, even when we try to suppress and displace them.

The importance of the development of emotional intelligence is that an individual can objectively assess himself/herself and others in the process of professional activity (which is important

for the work of practicing psychologists), clarify contradictions in interpersonal relationships, find solutions to the situation [6].

Experiencing emotions, understanding their real meaning and choosing adequate situations of emotional and regulatory strategies contribute to the effective functioning of the individual and his/her inner well-being. This is because emotions reflect the connection between the inner world of an individual and his/her behaviour and interaction with reality. Only in the case of significant development of various aspects of emotional intelligence, we can talk about the possibility of adequate emotional response and decision-making.

The predominance of such prosocial motives as broad humanistic motives and altruistic motives was revealed in the subjects. Professional and prosocial motives in interpersonal communication are expressed at a medium level in the vast majority of subjects.

The analysis of the motivational structure of the subjects (according to Milman's method) revealed that the respondents have predominant motives of social status, creative activity and social usefulness. Motives of life-support, comfort, communication and general activity are expressed at a medium level. The low level of manifestation was not found for any of the motives.

Professional prosocial motives are directly related to such components of emotional intelligence as self-motivation, modulation of emotions, and intrapersonal emotional intelligence. The scales "communication", "understanding of emotions", "empathy", "altruistic motives", and "interpersonal emotional intelligence" form a stable line of relationships.

Discriminant analysis revealed the most important factors influencing the level of emotional intelligence: professional prosocial motives, broad humanistic motives, altruistic motives, prosocial motives in interpersonal communication, social utility and communication. As we can see, prosocial motivation is an important factor in the development of emotional intelligence of practicing psychologists.

## 5 Conclusion

The ability to recognize emotions, understand their nature, the ability to modulate and correct them due to appropriate behaviour (both one's own and other people's) is an important skill for the work of practicing psychologists. It is established that the subjects have a medium and high level of both emotional intelligence and prosocial motivation of an individual. The results of the study show that prosocial motivation is not only related to emotional intelligence, but also has a direct impact on its development. We see the prospect of further research in an in-depth study of the features of emotional intelligence of workers of various helping professions and clarifying the features of its relationship with the prosocial motivation of an individual.

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**Primary Paper Section: A**

**Secondary Paper Section: AN**