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# **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN HUMAN LIFE – CASE STUDY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Introduction.** Emotional intelligence is a set of abilities used for processing emotional information that underpins the development of social and emotional competence. Knowing one's own emotional intelligence is a valuable element of the individual's self-knowledge which allows to develop further and improve weaknesses through social training.

**Aim of the study.** To study the profile of emotional intelligence and to identify the developmental needs of the researched man.

**Case report.** The study was conducted on a 33 year old man, a computer scientist with 11 years of work experience. A qualitative research methodology was used - a case study. The Popular Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire was used to determine the overall level of emotional intelligence and its four components. The results of the study are presented with reference to sten standards. With a probability of 85%, the true test result for an overall level of emotional intelligence is in the range of 7 to 8 and can be considered as at least average and possibly even high. The researched man achieved high scores on emotional scales (from 8 to 10) and emotional control (from 7 to 10), with slightly lower scores on emotional acceptance scales (6 to 9 stens) and empathy (5 to 8 stens). The results of the strategic emotional intelligence components are statistically significantly higher than the experimental emotional intelligence components.

**Conclusions.** Obtained results indicate that the studied man has at least average, perhaps even high general level of emotional intelligence and the predominance of strategic emotional intelligence over experimental emotional intelligence.

**Keywords.** emotional intelligence, ability, emotions, thinking

## **Introduction**

The term "emotional intelligence" appeared in psychological literature in the 1960s, most often in the clinical context. As the literature review shows, Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer are considered to be the creators of this term in the currently accepted sense [1-2]. Emotional intelligence Salovey and Mayer define as "a set of abilities to cognitively manipulate emotional information (carried by emotions or concerning emotions), in particular - to recognize and regulate by man's own and other emotions and use them to guide thinking and acting" [1-2]. Howard Gardner is commonly regarded as a direct precursor of the concept of emotional intelligence [1]. As the creator of the theory of "multiple intelligences", he included personal intelligence, which determines the accuracy of self-knowledge and the ability to understand other people, and then distinguished in its area interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence [1, 3-5]. Particular attention was paid to intrapersonal intelligence, which is associated with the ability to distinguish between one's feelings and, consequently, understanding oneself and having self-knowledge [5]. As emphasized by Anna Matczak and Katarzyna A. Knopp - to a large extent, the intrapersonal intelligence presented by Gardner coincides semantically with the scope of the concept of emotional intelligence [1]. In the literature on the subject, reflections on the importance of emotional intelligence take place in the so-called mixed models or ability models [6-8]. Among the mixed models, Daniel Goleman's and Reuven Bar-Ona's models gained the greatest popularity [6-8]. Goleman believes that emotional intelligence consists of self-control, enthusiasm, persistence and the ability to motivate. In his work he writes about five basic areas: understanding emotions, recognizing other people's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself and maintaining interpersonal relations [1, 7-10]. Bar-Ona concept defined emotional intelligence as "a series of non-cognitive abilities, competences and skills that enable the individual to effectively deal with environmental requirements and pressures" [1, 7-8, 11]. According to the representatives of the skills model of Salovey and Mayer, emotional intelligence is understood as a set of emotional abilities [7-8]. Researchers have proven that emotional intelligence includes: "the ability to accurately perceive, evaluate and express emotions, the ability to assimilate emotions into cognitive processes, the ability to understand and analyze emotions and the use of emotional knowledge, as well as the ability to regulate emotions and emotional control" [6-8, 12]. The analysis of the literature shows that emotional intelligence is understood in at least four different ways [1]. The first method is derived from the ideas of Salovey and Mayer. According to the assumptions, emotional intelligence is understood as a set of emotional abilities [1]. In the second case, emotional intelligence is understood as a set of skills or

emotional competence [1]. For many authors the terms intelligence and competences, as well as abilities and skills are often used interchangeably. There are also those who do not share such a view [13-14]. Jaworowska and Matczak claim that "capacities are cognitive conditioning of competences, which, however, depend also on other, non-intellectual factors" [15]. Emotional intelligence understood as a set of personality traits was included in the Bar-Ona concept [11, 16]. Petrides and Furnham argue that the components of emotional intelligence have many characteristic personality traits (e.g. self-esteem, low impulsiveness, optimism) [17-18]. Some researchers believe that emotional intelligence is also understood as a sense of emotional self-efficacy. This group includes the previously mentioned Petrides and Furnham. In their scientific studies, Jaworowska and Matczak argue that conviction about self-efficacy can be an important determinant of intelligent emotional functioning [1]. Emotional intelligence and related social and emotional competences are not the only, or even the most important, predictors of life successes [15]. However, the greatest predictive power is attributed to emotional intelligence in relation to the possibility of predicting the effectiveness of school and vocational functioning [1].

### **Assumptions, aims and research questions**

In this study, emotional intelligence is understood in accordance with the model of Salovey and Mayer. Emotional intelligence Salovey and Mayer define as a set of abilities to read emotional meanings and include them in reasoning and problem solving: "the ability to gain access to feelings or to generate them when they facilitate thinking; the ability to understand emotions and acquire emotional knowledge; the ability to regulate emotions for the benefit of emotional and intellectual development" [1, 15]. The research assumes the existence of two components, which were defined as "experiential" and "strategic" emotional intelligence [1, 15]. The first component is interpreted as the ability to perceive emotions (own and of others), to respect them and to accept them, the second as the ability to understand emotions and manage emotions [15]. The aim of the study was to get to know the profile of emotional intelligence and to determine the developmental needs of the examined man. For the purpose of this work, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the overall level of emotional intelligence in the person being examined?
2. Does the tested person function better in the strategic component of emotional intelligence or the component of experiential intelligence?

## Case study

The study was conducted in December 2016. The study was attended by a 33 years old man, unmarried, living in a provincial city, with higher education, IT specialist with 11 years of experience. Currently, the man works as a specialist in IT services. He plans to apply for a managerial position in the near future. The man was informed about the purpose and scope of the study, he had the opportunity to ask questions and obtain explanations, he expressed his informed consent to participate in the study. The study was conducted in accordance with accepted standards of professional ethics, it did not violate the dignity of the examined person and his right to privacy. A qualitative research method was used - a case study. To determine the general level of emotional intelligence, as well as its four components, the Popular Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (PKIE) by A. Matczak, A. Jaworowska, A. Ciechanowicz, J. Stańczak, and E. Zalewska was used [15]. The questionnaire consists of 94 items, statements formulated in the first person of the singular. Answers are scored on a scale of 1 - 5. The respondent each time assessed the extent to which he agrees that the statement applies to him: 1 - I strongly disagree, 2 - I rather disagree, 3 - hard to say, 4 - I rather agree, 5 - I definitely agree. The general result of PIKIE is the sum of points obtained for the replies to all items of the questionnaire. The minimum score is 94 points, the maximum is 470. The AKC scale is about accepting, expressing and using one's own emotions in action, it consists of 15 items. The minimum result on this scale is 15, maximum is 75. The EMP scale is about empathy, that is understanding and recognizing the emotions of other people, it consists of 18 items. The minimum result on this scale is 18, maximum is 90. The KON scale concerns control, also cognitive, over own emotions, it consists of 11 items. The minimum result on this scale is 11, maximum is 55. The ROZ scale is about understanding and realizing your own emotions, it consists of 10 items. The minimum score on this scale is 10, maximum is 50. PKIE also measures two types of emotional intelligence: experiential emotional intelligence and strategic emotional intelligence. High scores in scales corresponding to experiential emotional intelligence include results in AKC and EMP, with much lower scores of KON and ROZ. High scores in scales corresponding to the "strategic" emotional intelligence include the results in KON and ROZ, with much lower scores in the AKC and EMP scales. In the standardized study, the internal compliance ratios for the overall result are in the range of 0.89 - 0.94, for the 0.65 - 0.88 scale (higher for adults than for students). Standard measurement errors for the overall result are 9 - 10 points, for scales 3 - 4 points. For each of the four scales and for the general result, sten norms (separately for men and women from each of two age groups) were developed. The raw results from four scales and the overall result were

converted into standardized units, which were interpreted according to the sten scale, which is the scale of the psychological test normalized so that the average in the population is 5.5 and the standard deviation is 2.0. The sten scale has 10 units. The results in stens were interpreted according to the following categorization: 1 - 3 stens - low, stens 4 - 7 - average, stens 8 - 10 - high scores. After calculating the raw results, the range was estimated in which – with similar probability (85%) - is the real result of the examined person. The limits of the range obtained in this way were compared to the sten standards [15]. Based on the analysis of the collected empirical material, with a probability of 85%, it can be considered that the real result of the examined person ranges from 7 to 8 sten for the general level of emotional intelligence, 6 to 9 stens for AKC, 5 to 8 stens for EMP, from 7 to 10 stens for KON and from 8 to 10 stens for ROZ. The results of the analyzes showed that the strategic emotional intelligence component scores are statistically higher than the experiential emotional intelligence component scores. The EMP score is statistically significantly lower than on the KON scale and the ROZ scale. The result of the AKC scale is also lower than the result of the ROZ scale (Table 1).

Table 1. Psychometric interpretation of the results (PKIE)

PKIE Scores				
Scale	Raw score	The limit of intervals 85%	Stens - the limit of intervals 85%	Statistical interpretation - scores
AKC	62	56(62)68	6(8)9	average or high
EMP	72	67(72)77	5(6)8	average or high
KON	44	39(44)49	7(9)10	average or high
ROZ	46	42(46)50	8(10)10	high
Total score	374	360(374)388	7(8)8	average or high
PIKE scores profile EMP < [KON = ROZ], AKC AKC < ROZ IE strategic > IE experiential				

Explanation:

IE – emotional intelligence

AKC - Accepting, expressing and using your own emotions in action

EMP - Empathy, understanding and recognizing the emotions of other people

KON - Control, also cognitive, over emotions

ROZ - Understanding and realizing your own emotions

The data shows that at least the average (and perhaps even high) general results of the examined man may indicate that he is aware of both pleasurable and unpleasant emotions. Experiences can be an opportunity for him to reflect on the world, himself and relationships with other people. Studied man can make emotions not interfere with his actions. Knowledge about your feelings and sensations can easily be used to mobilize, overcome difficulties and achieve goals. He can reveal his feelings, but at the same time, when the situation requires it, he is able to control their manifestations. He is able to encourage others to be active, to show interest and enthusiasm, which may have a beneficial effect on his relations with other people. The high score obtained by the respondent in the ROZ scale can indicate that the man understands his emotions very well, has the ability to name them and distinguish their intensity, which can affect the rapid recognition of the causes of their own emotional states. At least the average (and perhaps even high) score on the KON scale may indicate that the subject is also good at controlling his emotions. Consciously, they can control and guide their course. He can skillfully silence both unwanted emotions and arouse desirable emotions, he can express his feelings adequately to the situation and control the degree of their openness. The results obtained by the respondent in the AKC scale is at least average and can indicate that he can easily show his emotional states, both positive and negative, to others. This can have an impact on relationships with other people. Respondent can use knowledge about his emotional states and their consequences to carry out various tasks. The result obtained in the EMP scale is at least average and may indicate that the man easily and accurately recognizes the emotions experienced by other people and accurately reads their intentions. This may affect the quality of interpersonal relationships. It is worth pointing out that the results obtained on the EMP scale in the examined man are slightly lower compared to the results on other scales of emotional intelligence. This may indicate a slightly weaker ability to understand and recognize the emotions of other people in comparison with other skills. The examined man obtained high scores in the ROZ and KON scales with slightly lower results in the AKC and EMP scales, which indicate the superiority of the "strategic" emotional intelligence over the emotional "experiential" intelligence. This means that the man is dominated by the ability to understand emotions and manage emotions. In practice, he can easily be aware of what he is experiencing at a given moment, he can easily call the feelings he experiences and not confuse similar feelings. He can easily identify the causes of experienced emotions and consciously control his emotions, for example, do not allow excessive stimulation. His abilities may also allow a man to adapt the ways of expressing feelings to the requirements of the situation and to control the degree of their disclosure. A

man having knowledge about emotional states that are conducive to or not conducive to the effective performance of particular types of activities can use this knowledge in practice.

## **Discussion**

The overall level of emotional intelligence of the respondent is at least average, and perhaps even high. Obtaining at least average or high results in the study in all scales indicates that the strength of the subject is to have the ability to very well understand and become aware of his own emotions, naming them and distinguishing their intensity. Matczak and Knopp point to the results of studies by various authors, which prove that people with higher emotional abilities are better at working life, are more effective leaders, and better at job interviews [1, 8]. Researchers pay attention to the cognitive and social aspect of human functioning in the environment of teaching, education and work [1, 8]. They explain the relationships between emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of functioning in a school or professional environment. They believe that the efficient processing of emotional information and its use in the thinking process favors the acquisition of new skills, the acquisition of knowledge and the solution of cognitive problems. This translates into generating ideas and creativity [1, 8]. In the social aspect, studied man is highly open to his own emotions and other people, more easily establishes relationships, overcomes difficulties and more efficiently solves problems [1, 8]. The school and work environment may additionally support the development of the emotional intelligence of the individual [1, 8]. In studies conducted by M. Wosek it was assumed that service work is a kind of social training through close contact with another human being. The hypothesis was confirmed that the work environment and the implementation of tasks related to the fulfillment of a specific professional role may stimulate the development of emotional intelligence [1, 22]. Empirical data prove that people with higher emotional abilities cope better in the work environment and are more likely to be successful [19-21]. Goleman draws attention to five skills included in the emotional competence that contributes to achieving success at work. They include: self-awareness, motivation, empathy, self-regulation and social skills [10]. In the study, a man may not fully show others what he feels, what he is experiencing. He may not fully express and use his own emotions in action. Therefore, other people in the test environment may have some difficulty in understanding what is going through it and not always respond adequately. In addition, the results indicate that the subject may have lower abilities to fully understand and recognize the emotions experienced by other people, as well as not fully distinguish honest and insincere feelings, as well as imagine what feelings are causing his behavior in



others. The literature on the subject also includes an opinion on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction [23]. In other studies, it has been shown that the level of emotional intelligence can have a positive effect on the health of people in managerial positions [24]. It is worth paying attention to the reflections of Matczak and Knopp on emotional intelligence, which indicate that "there is no doubt that emotional intelligence can be treated as one of many factors influencing functioning" [1]. The PIKE measurement profile obtained in the study allowed us to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the respondent. Identified weaker points indicate that training interactions should be primarily focused on shaping skills related to emotional openness in order to follow the voice of emotions.

### **Conclusions**

1. The overall level of emotional intelligence in the examined person is at least average, and perhaps even high.
2. High scores on the ROZ and KON scales with slightly lower AKC and EMP scores indicate the "strategic" advantage over the "experiential" emotional intelligence.
3. It is worth to consider a participation in social trainings related to the development of social and emotional competences aimed at understanding and recognizing the emotions of other people and accepting, expressing and using their own emotions in action.

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