E s t e r a   T w a r d o w s k a - S t a s z e k
ORCID: 0000-0001-5499-7393
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

M a ł g o r z a t a   A l b e r s k a
ORCID: 0000-0002-2021-4888
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow

Emotional Intelligence and Social Competences of Special School Teachers

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the subject of emotional intelligence and social competences of teachers. After a theoretical introduction, methodological assumptions and research results have been presented. The subject of the research was emotional intelligence and social competences of the teachers of special schools for children and young people with intellectual disabilities. The aim of the research was to determine the level of individual aspects of emotional intelligence and social competences of the examined teachers, and its assessment. Therefore, the basic research problem is the following question: How is the level of emotional intelligence and social competences of the surveyed teachers shaped? The research has been conducted using two standardized research tools: Popularny Kwestionariusz Inteligencji Emocjonalnej (PKIE) (in English: Popular Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire) and Profil Kompetencji Społecznych (PROPOS) (in English: Social Competences Profile). The study involved 100 teachers working in special schools or educational centres for children and young people with intellectual disabilities (90 % women, 10% men; average age 45 years). The results of the research indicate that the overall level of emotional intelligence and social competences of the teachers

Case Reports

surveyed is at an average level (6.61 sten; 6.19). As far as the individual aspects of emotional intelligence are concerned, the respondents who were examined obtained high scores regarding the scale of control of their own emotional states (7.15 sten). Given that the level of teachers' emotional and social competences is related to the level of these competences in students, it is recommended to promote the development of these competences in teachers as early as at the level of academic.

Introduction

Scientific research has shown that emotional intelligence and social competences of teachers are related to educational and professional achievements of students. Taking this into account, it seems that the role of emotional intelligence and social competences is crucial, not only from the point of view of teachers, but, first of all, from the perspective of students themselves. What is more, teaching another person the basic knowledge, skills and competences requires mastering them to such an extent that it is possible to transmit them further (Kwiatkowski 2015a).

Both UNESCO and OECD emphasize the necessity to implement innovative solutions in academic teaching. Such solutions should take into account emotional intelligence and social competences (Llorent, Zych, Varo-Millán 2020). For many years, certain countries (e.g. the USA or some Western European countries) have been taking political initiatives to include the elements of education in emotional-social competences into the academic curriculum for future teachers. Unfortunately, such initiatives have not always been successful. A team of American researchers (Brackett, Reyes, Rivers, Elbertson and Salovey 2011, quoted in Kwiatkowski 2015a) emphasize that despite strong scientific grounds, the system of university education is still unable to implement the changes they postulate within this scope.

The development of emotional-social competences begins at the moment of birth. The first teachers are our parents. Then, along with the extension of social space, kindergarten teachers and primary education teachers join the process. All these people should provide the child not only with knowledge, but also with the ability to recognize and cope with his/her own emotions, the ability to understand and

regulate the emotions of other people, and the ability to face various challenges at different stages of his/her life. If those adults manage to provide the child with such skills, he/she will be given the opportunity to achieve success not only at school or work, but also in his/her personal life.

Taking into account that the level of emotional-social competences of teachers correlates with the level of students' competences (Sutton, Wheatley 2003), it is important to carry out scientific research concerning the level of these competences and factors that influence their increase among teachers. That is why, the basic objective of this research is specifying the general level of some aspects of emotional intelligence and social competences among teachers of special schools for children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities, as well as assessing such aspects and competences. The knowledge of emotional intelligence and social competences, and, in particular, the deficiencies in these areas, is very important, as it may help understand the sources of difficulties experienced in professional work that requires close social interactions. What is more, the awareness of one's shortages in this respect is useful taking into account the fact that both competences can be developed and improved.

Emotional intelligence

Both researchers and psychologists-practitioners are getting more and more convinced that intelligence should be perceived as a broader construct that includes the abilities which determine good social functioning.

The concept of emotional intelligence was introduced at the beginning of 1990s by Peter Salovey and Jack Mayer (1990), and it became popular after publishing the book by Daniel Goleman: *Emotional Intelligence* (1995; 1997). Since then, it has become very popular both in scientific publications and in colloquial language.

In scientific books, two main models of emotional intelligence can be distinguished: the first one, specified by Salovey and Mayer, is a skill-model according to which emotional intelligence is a skill or a set of skills. The second one, by Goleman and Reuven Bar-On, is a mixed model that refers emotional intelligence to competences or a collection of personality traits (Sadowska, Brachowicz 2008).

In the first model, emotional intelligence is defined as

(…) the skill that consists in the proper perception, evaluation and expression of emotions, the access to feelings and the ability to generate them when they can support thinking, the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, as well as the ability to regulate emotions to support emotional and intellectual development (Salovey, Mayer 1999: 34).

Thus, according to the authors, emotional intelligence means: (a) the ability to recognize and express emotions; (b) the ability to assimilate emotions into the course of cognitive processes, i.e. to support thinking emotionally; (c) the ability to understand and analyse emotions; and d) the ability to direct emotions—to control and regulate them. The above-mentioned four components of emotional intelligence are the basis for adequate emotional reactions and for coping with various social situations.

In Goleman's concept, emotional intelligence is specified as

(…) wisdom, which is the basis for other structures in one's psyche. It includes motivation and persistence in aiming at goals despite failures, the ability to control instincts and postpone one's satisfaction, the ability to regulate one's mood and overcome worries that hinder thinking processes, and the ability to sympathize with other people and look into the future with optimism (Goleman 2007: 67).

The above way of understanding emotional intelligence emphasizes the role of feelings in intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions. In other words, according to the author, emotional intelligence comprises 5 components: (a) the awareness of one's emotional states, (b) controlling and managing emotions, (c) motivating oneself, (d) the ability to recognize other people's emotions (empathy), and (e) actions aimed at continuing interactions with the environment (Sadowska, Brachowicz 2008).

In turn, Bar-On specifies emotional intelligence as a "series of skills, other than cognitive ones, which make it possible for a person to effectively deal with environmental pressure and requirements" (Bar-On 1997 quoted in: Taracha 2010: 64–65). According to this scientist, emotional intelligence includes five main components: (a) intrapersonal skills, (b) interpersonal skills, (c) adjustment skills, (d) resistance to stress, and (e) the general mood (Sadowska, Brachowicz 2008).

Both above-mentioned concepts combine different aspects of cognition, intelligence, emotions, motivation or personality, which is why they are called a mixed model.

Many authors use the term "emotional competence," indicating its broader meaning. The term was introduced by Steven Gordon, and it became popular after publishing *The Development of Emotional Competence* by Carolyn Saarni. Saarni's concept of emotional competence is rooted in sociological theories, which is why she believes that emotional intelligence is strictly related to its social consequences. According to the author, "emotional competence is the ability to get involved in transactions which facilitate an individual's development and occur in a changing and, sometimes, unfavourable social-physical environment" (Saarni 1999: 79). Thus, emotional competence involves active participation in social life. What is more, a high level of such competence results in the ability to manage one's thoughts, emotions and actions adequately within a given social and cultural context. The approach of Saarni is slightly broader than that of Salovey and Mayer, or by Goleman and Bar-On, because Saarni clearly emphasizes that social context plays the key role in a person's emotional functioning.

The results of many studies indicate the connection between a high level of emotional intelligence, and better grades and higher control of emotions among students (Gil-Olarte, Guil, Mestre, Nuñez 2005; Gil-Olarte, Palomera, Brackett 2006). Christopher Trentacosta and Caroll Izard (2007) proved that emotional and social competences of kindergarten children influence their grades when they start school. However, we have to bear in mind that recognizing and understanding one's own emotions, as well as our self-regulation, are not sufficient predictors of success in life. Recognizing, understanding and regulating other people's emotional states are equally important, if not more important, especially in those areas of life in which interaction with another person is significant (Jaworowska, Matczak 2005). Taking into account the above, the role of an emotionally intelligent teacher in the process of care, education and upbringing is crucial.

According to Goleman, what makes a teacher a good leader is his/her emotional wisdom. An emotionally intelligent teacher educates a student in a way that not only makes the student think

and act, but also feel, because "great work starts with great and strong emotions" (Goleman 1997: 156; 1999: 259).

As it has already been mentioned in the introduction, a team of American scientists (Brackett et al. 2011, quoted after Kwiatkowski 2015a) analysed the properties of the emotional atmosphere of a classroom (*classroom emotional climate*—CEC), specified as the degree to which teachers can create a comfortable atmosphere for the students, characterized by the dominance of good emotions. The classroom emotional climate satisfies the students' need to feel safe, attached, approved and respected, and it reinforces their motivation to study, develops their interests, and facilitates constructive ways of coping with difficult situations. Apart from the above-mentioned features, in the description of the classroom emotional climate, a teacher and his/her traits play an important role. Such traits include sensitivity to the students' needs; warm, friendly and empathic relationships between the teacher and the student; respect for the students and referring to their point of view; encouraging the students to take an active part in the classes; and the lack of unpleasant discipline practices and cynicism (Hamre, Pianta 2007, quoted after: Kwiatkowski 2015a).

The above analyses have shown that emotional intelligence seems to be of major importance in a teacher's work. Being a teacher, a pedagogue, and especially a special school teacher is connected with great emotional burden that results from numerous interactions: teacher—student, teacher—parent, teacher—teacher, teacher—principal, etc. In this perspective, the ability to recognize, understand and control one's own emotions is necessary in the proper professional functioning. What is more, it is not enough to understand one's own emotional states. A teacher should also understand emotions and related behaviours of students, especially those whose intellectual deficiencies make it impossible to adequately express and communicate what they feel. The lack of emotional competences, i.e. the unawareness of one's own and others' emotions, makes it impossible to be a good teacher.

Social competences

Another significant factor that determines how a person functions in a social role, including the professional one, includes his/her social competences.

The concept of social competences was introduced by Robert W. White in 1959. White dealt with the problem of influencing the environment. He described the ability to exert such an influence as a specifically perceived skill, i.e. each skill that facilitates efficient interaction with the environment, making it identical with social competences. Since then, numerous researchers have been trying to create possibly the most adequate definition of social competences, trying to figure out if we can speak about one, general competence, or rather about a collection of different skills related to various areas of social functioning. Some people identify these competences with emotional and social intelligence, or with social knowledge. Others identify it with cognitive processes, especially with the ability to obtain and select socially significant information. There are also approaches the representatives of which, while discussing social competences, take into account motivation, as well as temperament and personality. However, according to Katarzyna Martowska (2012), only if we make use of such skills within social space, we can talk about social competences. Anyway, we can agree with the statement that social competences are of complex nature.

In the most general terms, social competences include skills that are necessary for efficient management of oneself in social situations, as well as effectiveness in interpersonal situations (Smółka 2008: 258).

Anna Matczak defines social competences as "complex skills needed to efficiently cope with specific social situations, acquired by an individual in the process of social training" (Matczak 2007: 7). In other words, social competences include a person's ability to effectively deal with social situations (Matczak, Martowska 2013). Such situations refer both to the nearest environment—the family, and to a broader social environment, e.g. school or work.

Social competences are among eight key competences specified by the European Union. According to the EU, social competences are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes adequate to a given situation.

The concept of social competences emphasizes two of its functions: (a) making and maintaining interpersonal relationships, and (b) fulfilling one's objectives through exerting influence on other people. Taking this into account, we should consider whether there

is a general disposition for being competent, which, in consequence, is reflected in coping with problems in each of the above-mentioned aspects of social functioning. Or should we rather speak about a collection of skills that results in a varied level of dealing with different interpersonal situations? Scientists have different opinions on this issue, but the authors of the article believe that there is such a thing as specific social competences, which is reflected in the questionnaire used in the research.

In this perspective, it is good to ask about the number and kinds of social competences. Ronald Riggio (1986) enumerates seven of them (emotional expressiveness, emotional sensitivity, emotional control, social expressiveness, social sensitivity, social control, and social manipulation), and Michael Argyle (1999) mentions six competences (the ability to reward others, the ability to empathize and taking on various roles, assertiveness, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, and self-presentation). Other groups of social competences, based on the categorization of Argyle, are distinguished by Matczak (2001), the author of the Social Competence Questionnaire: coping with situations of close interpersonal contact, with situations of social exposition, and with situations that require assertiveness.

The studies related to social competences and their influence on a person's functioning in various areas of life are carried out almost everywhere in the world. The research results indicate that there is a relationship between cognitive skills/social competences, and school/professional success (Jones, Greenberg, Crowley 2015).

Other studies confirm the correlation between social competences and the sense of satisfaction, the willingness to help other people, as well as the openness to receive help from others. What is more, it was noticed that people with a high level of social competences cope with difficult situations better. Also, their social interactions are good. A low level of social competences accompanies psychological disorders, addictions and somatic diseases (Knopp 2013). A high level of social competences supports teachers in dealing with stress which, in the complicated educational reality of the recent years, often accompanies pedagogues. In the research on professional stress of teachers, carried out by Stefan Kwiatkowski (2018a, 2018b), the author determined that stress increases the probability of the occurrence of

negative consequences in the area of broadly understood psychological wellbeing of teachers.

Social competences are acquired in the process of social training. The first examples we imitate are our parents. Later we learn from our teachers, too. Teachers' role in shaping various competences is particularly important in the preschool and early school period, because at that time children spend most of their time in the kindergarten or at school. Teachers have the opportunity to watch students in many different situations in which social competences are necessary. A conscious teacher is able to recognize the areas in which a child needs support and corrective behaviour models. If a teacher has deficiencies in these areas himself/herself, he/she will not be a good model for the student. However, if the level of his/her competence is high, he/she may be a good guide in the challenges a young person faces.

Methodological assumptions of the authors' research

The subject of the following research result analysis was emotional intelligence and social competences of teachers working in special schools for children and youth with intellectual disabilities.

The objective of the research was specifying the general level and evaluating particular aspects of emotional intelligence and social competences among the analysed teachers. In addition, the variables such as sex, age and length of employment were taken into account.

Thus, the subject of empirical verifications was focused on the main research problem: How are emotional intelligence and social competences shaped in the group of special school teachers? Taking into account the above, the following detailed analyses were formulated:

1. What is the level of emotional intelligence among the analysed teachers?
2. What is the level of social competences of the analysed teachers?
3. Are sex, age and length of employment factors that influence the teachers' emotional intelligence?
4. Are sex, age and length of employment factors that influence the teachers' social competences?

The empirical data was collected through the Popular Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Polish abbreviation: PKIE), the PROPOS questionnaire and the survey questionnaire.

The Popular Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Jaworowska, Matczak 2005) is a self-describing tool. It includes 94 items each of which is a statement (e.g. *I am often unable to describe what I feel*). The surveyed person is to indicate, on a scale from 1 to 5, the degree to which he/she agrees with the statement (1: I definitely disagree, 2: I rather disagree, 3: It is difficult to say, 4: I rather agree, 5: I definitely agree). The results are the basis for calculating the general result and the results within four scales (Polish abbreviations are used below):

1. AKC: accepting, expressing and using one's own emotions in action,
2. EMP: empathy, i.e. understanding and recognizing emotions of other people,
3. KON: control, also the cognitive one, over one's own emotions,
4. ROZ: understanding and recognizing one's own emotions.

The psychometric properties of the scale are very good (reliability: the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the general result of the students and the teachers is above 0.90; factor accuracy: four results explain 24.5% [students] and 32.8% [adults] of the total variance).

The PROKOS questionnaire (Matczak, Martowska 2013) is a self-describing tool that consists of 90 items. Each of them specifies different activities or tasks. These activities refer to three areas of a person's social activity: employment, social life and family life. The analysed person is to determine, on a four-grade scale, how well he/she would cope with a given situation (e.g. *Initiate a talk with a stranger during a social meeting*). This scale has the following categories of answers: 4: definitely well, 3: rather well, 2: rather bad, 1: definitely bad. The analysed teacher gets the general result and particular results in the following five scales (Polish abbreviations are used below):

1. Scale A, which measures assertive competences,
2. Scale K, which measures cooperative competences,
3. Scale T, which measures social competences,
4. Scale Z, which measures social resourcefulness,
5. Scale S, which measures competences helpful in community service.

The psychometric properties of the scale are very good (reliability: the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.95; the accuracy of the general result is based on the correlation of the PROKOS results with, i.a. social competences measured with KKS, and emotional intelligence).

A 100 teachers took part in the research. The teachers work in special schools or educational and care institutions for children and youth with intellectual disabilities. The group of teachers included 90% women and 10% men. Their average age was 45. The average length of work with intellectually disabled people was 21 years. All the teachers worked with children and young people with intellectual disabilities: 2% worked with students with low intellectual disability; 76% with medium disability; 75% with high disability; and 66% with deep intellectual disability.[1]

Before the research, the authors met the principals of the institutions. During those meetings, the authors explained the objective and tools of the research. After obtaining the principals' consent for carrying out the research among the teachers, the questionnaires were distributed among the pedagogues. The research participants were told that their participation is voluntary and anonymous, and the obtained empirical data will only be used for scientific purposes. Some teachers filled in the questionnaires at school, and some of them did this at home. A half of the questionnaires that were distributed have not been returned.

The analysis of quantitative variables (those expressed in a number) was carried out by calculating the mean, the standard deflection, the median value, quartiles, the minimum and the maximum value. The comparison of the quantitative variables in two groups was carried out through the Student's t-test (when the variable was distributed normally in those groups), or the Mann-Whitney test (when the variable was distributed in an abnormal manner). The correlations between the quantitative variables were analysed with the use of the Pearson correlation coefficient (when both of them were distributed normally) or the Spearman's correlation coefficient

---

[1] The percentage does not add up to 100 because it was a multiple-choice question.

(when it was the contrary). The analysis was carried out in the R programme, version 3.5.1.[2]

Analysis and interpretation of the empirical research

The PKIE questionnaire makes it possible to evaluate the analysed person's emotional intelligence within four scales: AKC: accepting, expressing and using one's own emotions in action, EMP: empathy, i.e. recognizing and understanding the emotions of other people, KON: control, also the cognitive one, over one's own emotions, and ROZ: understanding and being aware of one's own emotions. Additionally, the general result is calculated. For each of the scales, and for the general result, there are some sten norms (separate for women and men) that make it possible to interpret the results in the categories of low results (sten 1–4), medium (sten 5–6) and high results (sten 7–10). Below, in a tabular and graphic form, the results obtained by the respondents in the PKIE questionnaire are presented.

Table 1: Level of emotional intelligence

|	Low results	Medium results	High results	Medium sten
AKC	30 (30%)	33 (33%)	37 (37%)	5.56
EMP	23 (23%)	22 (22%)	55 (55%)	6.18
KON	12 (12%)	21 (21%)	67 (67%)	7.15
ROZ	3 (3%)	45 (45%)	52 (52%)	6.69
General result PKIE	5 (5%)	56 (56%)	39 (39%)	6.61

AKC: accepting, expressing and using one's own emotions in action, EMP: empathy, i.e. understanding and recognizing emotions of other people, KON: control, also the cognitive one, over one's own emotions, and ROZ: understanding and being aware of one's own emotions.

Source: the authors' own research.

---

[2] R Core Team (2018). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. https://www.R-project.org/.

The obtained data shows that the analysed teachers' highest result was related to the KON scale (7.15 sten, i.e. a high result). In other words, the ability to control their own emotions is dominant among them. The respondents are able to consciously steer their own emotions, which is particularly important in the work of a special school pedagogue. Working with children and youth with intellectual disabilities requires the adjustment of intensity and ways of expressing emotions to the specific features of a given emotion and to a given social situation. The high result of this scale also indicates that the analysed teachers know which emotional states support or hinder particular kinds of actions. What is more, the teachers are able to use this knowledge in their pedagogical work. The analysed teachers obtained medium, but very close to high, results in the EMP scale (6.18 sten) and the ROZ scale (6.69 sten). While interpreting these results, we can state that the analysed teachers are aware of their emotions and their reasons. In addition, the respondents adequately read and understand the emotions of others, which is why they understand other people's intentions for particular actions. The ability to recognize and understand people's emotional states is of key importance while working with people with intellectual disabilities, because this is the group of people who, depending on the degree of disability, often fail to express their emotions in the proper manner. The analysed teachers obtained the lowest results in the AKC scale (5.56 sten). In other words, the respondents are average at expressing their own emotions, both the good and bad ones. The average results in this scale may result in the fact that people with intellectual disabilities may have problems with understanding what the teacher feels and responding to his/her emotional states. The average total result in PKIE is 6.61 sten, which is a medium level, although it is close to a high level.

Chart 1: Level of emotional intelligence
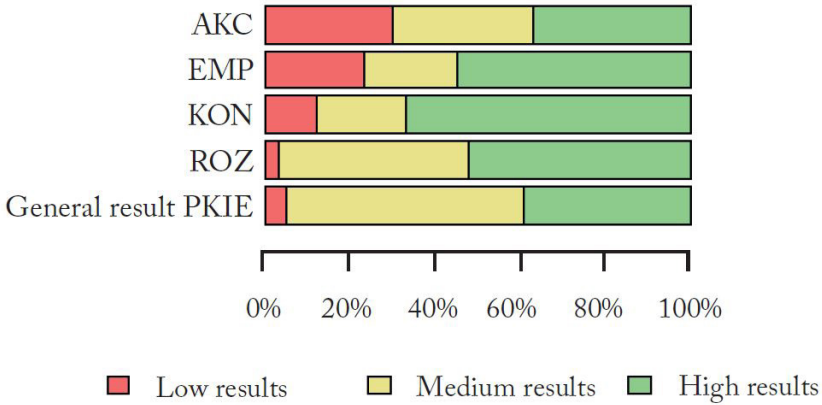
Source: the authors' own research.

To sum up the above analyses, it should be concluded that it is necessary to train those components of emotional intelligence in which special pedagogues obtained average results, i.e. accepting, expressing and using one's own emotions in action, empathic skills, and the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions. As it has already been mentioned, these are the skills one can improve.

The PROKOS questionnaire (Social Competences Profile) makes it possible to evaluate the level of social competences in five detailed scopes: assertive competences (scale A), cooperative competences (scale K), social competences (scale T), social resourcefulness (scale Z), and competences useful in social work (scale S). Moreover, the general result is calculated. For each of the sub-scales, and for the general result, there are sten norms (separate for women and for men) that make it possible to interpret the results in the category of low results (sten 1–4), medium results (sten 5–6) and high results (sten 7–10). Below, in a tabular and graphic form, the results obtained by the respondents in the PROKOS questionnaire are presented.
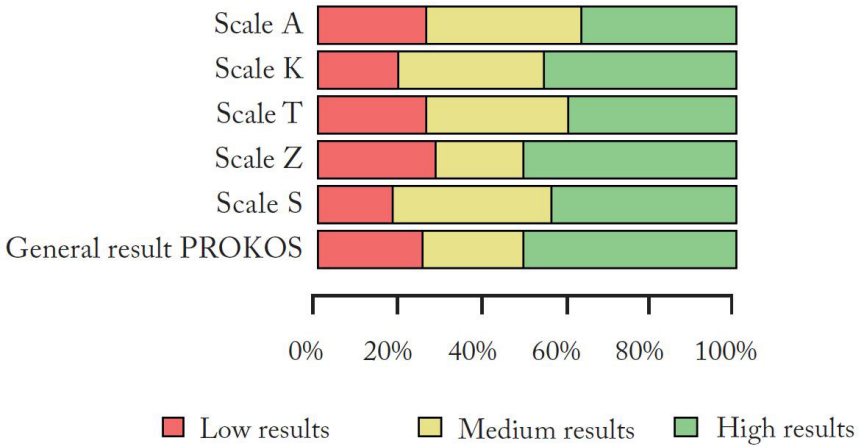
Table 2: Level of social competences

	Low results	Medium results	High results	Medium sten
Scale A	26 (26%)	37 (37%)	37 (37%)	5.77
Scale K	19 (19%)	35 (35%)	46 (46%)	6.09
Scale T	26 (26%)	34 (34%)	40 (40%)	5.97
Scale Z	28 (28%)	21 (21%)	51 (51%)	6.18
Scale S	18 (18%)	38 (38%)	44 (44%)	6.51
General result PROKOS	25 (25%)	24 (24%)	51 (51%)	6.19

Scale A: assertive competences, scale K: cooperative competences, scale T: social competences, scale Z: social resourcefulness, scale S: social work competences.

Source: the authors' own research.

The above data shows that the respondents obtained the best results in the S scale (6.51 sten), which confirms their medium (but still close to high) level of competences useful in community service. The analysed teachers are good at recognizing social needs and objectives, and they can organize various tasks, as well as encourage other people to take part in the tasks. The result on the level of 6 sten was also obtained in other scales: Z (6.18 sten) and K (6.09 sten), i.e. social resourcefulness and cooperative competences. The respondents are average at fulfilling tasks, especially those which require making others carry out certain activities. Cooperative competences are particularly useful in working with children and youth because a person with high results in this scale (K) can take care about others, support them, and cooperate with them in general. Moreover, according to the authors of the questionnaire, this ability depends on social training. The lowest research results were obtained in the T scale, i.e. social competences (5.97 sten) and in the A scale, i.e. assertive competences (5.77). The average general result in PROKOS was 6.19 sten, i.e. the average level.

Chart 2: Level of social competences

Scale A	
Scale K	
Scale T	
Scale Z	
Scale S	
General result PROKOS	

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Low results   ■ Medium results   ■ High results

Source: the authors' own research.

Sex vs. emotional intelligence and social competences

Various studies show that the level of emotional intelligence is higher among women (see Molero, Ortega, Moreno 2010; Zych et al. 2017). However, we should take into account that the above-mentioned studies were carried out in the general population of women and men, not in the population of teachers. In the research carried out among special school teachers, sex is not a factor that differentiates the level of emotional intelligence. Neither the general result nor particular scales have shown an important correlation (all of them p > 0.05). We can suppose that a special teacher's job is selected by men with special personality predispositions.

It is different with the level of social competences. The obtained data shows that men obtained higher results than women in each of the scales and in the general result.

Table 3: Sex and social competence

PROKOS		Women (N = 90)	Men (N = 10)	p *
Scale A	M ± SD	5.56 ± 2.36	7.7 ± 1.83	0.008
	median	6	7.5	NP
	quartiles	4–7	6.25–9.5	
Scale K	M ± SD	5.87 ± 2.31	8.1 ± 1.29	0.002
	median	6	8	NP
	quartiles	5–7	7.25–8.75	
Scale T	M ± SD	5.73 ± 2.22	8.1 ± 1.73	0.001
	median	6	9	NP
	quartiles	4–7.75	6.75–9	
Scale Z	M ± SD	6.01 ± 2.48	7.7 ± 2	0.048
	median	6	7.5	NP
	quartiles	4–7	6.25–9.75	
Scale S	M ± SD	6.34 ± 2.23	8 ± 1.76	0.022
	median	6	8	NP
	quartiles	5–8	6.25–9.75	
General result PROKOS	M ± SD	5.97 ± 2.44	8.2 ± 1.4	0.004
	median	6	8	NP
	quartiles	4–8	7.25–9.5	

* p = normal distribution in the groups, Student's t-test; NP = no normal distribution in the groups, Mann-Whitney test

Source: the authors' own resources.

Age vs. emotional intelligence and social competences

Some studies indicate that elder people are characterized by better emotional self-regulation (see Márquez-González, Izal, Montorio, Losada 2008), while other research results show the contrary (see Nolen-Hoeksema, Aldao 2011). The research we carried out confirms the first statement. Age correlates in a significant manner with the scales KON and ROZ, and with the general result in PKIE (because $p < 0.05$): the elder a person is, the higher his/her result on the scales ranks. Thus, experience that a person gains with age, improves the awareness of one's emotions, develops the ability to name, understand and control them. Also, we should take into account that the

obtainment of further levels of emotional intelligence also requires the development of cognitive skills (Salovey, Sluyter 1999; quoted after: Taracha 2010: 66–69).

Table 4: Age and emotional intelligence

PKIE	Correlation with age			
	Correlation coefficient	p *	Dependence direction	Dependence strength
AKC	0.136	p = 0.182 NP	—	—
EMP	0.191	p = 0.059 NP	—	—
KON	0.344	p = 0.001 NP	positive	weak
ROZ	0.216	p = 0.032 NP	positive	very weak
General result PKIE	0.335	p = 0.001 NP	positive	weak

* p = normal distribution of both correlated variables, Pearson correlation coefficient; NP = no normal distribution of at least one of correlated variables, Spearman's correlation coefficient

Source: the authors' own research.

The analyses concerning social competences show that age does not correlate significantly with any of the scales (because all of them $p > 0.05$).

Length of employment vs. emotional intelligence and social competences

The number of years of work with intellectually disabled people significantly correlates with the scales KON and ROZ, and with the general result in PKIE (because $p < 0.05$), i.e. the more years of employment, the higher results on these scales a person achieves.

Table 5: Length of employment and emotional intelligence

PKIE	Correlation with the number of years of work with intellectually disabled people			
	Correlation coefficient	p *	Dependence direction	Dependence strength
AKC	0.112	p = 0.272 NP	—	—
EMP	0.112	p = 0.272 NP	—	—
KON	0.347	p < 0.001 NP	positive	weak
ROZ	0.271	p = 0.007 NP	positive	very weak
General result PKIE	0.298	p = 0.003 NP	positive	very weak

* p = normal distribution of both correlated variables, Pearson correlation coefficient; NP = no normal distribution of at least one of correlated variables, Spearman's correlation coefficient

Source: the authors' own research.

Taking into account the above, both age and length of employment improve the teacher's ability to recognize, understand and control his/her emotional states. The age correlated with the length of employment among the analysed teachers, which is why the empirical results are similar. It was also shown that the number of years of work with intellectually disabled people does not significantly correlate with any of the scales in social competences (because all of them p > 0.05).

Conclusion

The level of emotional intelligence and social competences should determine the choice of a profession because there are areas of a person's professional activity in which such intelligence and competences are particularly important. Such areas include a teacher's work. Teachers, who are endowed with great social trust and high expectations, need to constantly upgrade their competences, be open to social changes and consider varied needs of their students.

Numerous studies show the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence/social competences and the success of the teaching-learning process. For example, Lauryne Alexis-Boyd (quoted after: Llorent, Zych, Varo-Millán 2020) showed that improper

management of emotions and social situations related to didactic activity may exert a bad influence on a teacher's emotional life. That is why, this author suggested the need to elaborate teacher training programmes concerning emotion management in their professional activity.

The analysis of professional personality, emotional intelligence and social competences carried out among students of pedagogy by Kwiatkowski indicates the need to complement the curriculum of studies with courses in developing emotional intelligence of future teachers. The author emphasizes that

> (…) this type of training would bring measurable, good effects not only for students themselves (who would be able to improve their relationship with the teacher, which would facilitate their acquisition of knowledge; their emotional intelligence would develop faster through everyday contact with an "emotionally intelligent" teacher-model), but also for teachers (Kwiatkowski 2015b: 143).

To sum it up, it seems that all of us—starting from students and teachers, and ending with parents and all citizens—should do our best to equip future and current teachers with competences that will make it possible for them to effectively cope with everyday, often unexpected and difficult, tasks they may come across their professional path. Additionally, to support the development of emotional-social competences of their students, teachers should represent a high level of those competences themselves.

Taking into account the above, it is necessary to educate students of pedagogy in the area of emotional and social competences already at the academic level, which, in the long run, will exert a good influence on the entire society. It is because, as scientific research shows, a high level of those competences is necessary to facilitate prompt social changes (Lopes, Salovey 2004; Mayer, Cobb 2000).

The authors' postulate to extend the academic curriculum by practical classes that improve social competences particularly refers to the process of professional preparation of special school teachers. The graduates, equipped with necessary social skills, would better cope with the permanent concern for their student's health and well-being as teachers. Also, such teachers would not be prone to crises, losing satisfaction with work and professional burnout. This, in turn, should

exert a good influence on the development of their students' competences at school, during everyday social training.

Bibliography

Argyle M. (1999). *Psychologia stosunków międzyludzkich*, trans. W. Domachowski, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Gil-Olarte P., Palomera R., Brackett M.A. (2006). "Relating Emotional Intelligence to Social Competence and Academic Achievement in High School Students," *Psicothema*, vol. 16, supplement, pp. 118–123.

Goleman D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence*, New York: Bantam Books [Polish Edition: D. Goleman (1997). *Inteligencja emocjonalna*, trans. A. Jankowski, Poznań: Media Rodzina; Polish Jubilee Edition: D. Goleman (2007). *Inteligencja emocjonalna*, trans. A. Jankowski, Poznań: Media Rodzina].

Goleman D. (1999). *Inteligencja emocjonalna w praktyce*, trans. A. Jankowski, Poznań: Media Rodzina.

Guil R., Gil-Olarte P., Mestre J.M., Nuñez I. (2005). "Inteligencia emocional y adaptación socioescolar," in *Psicología social y problemas sociales. Psicología Ambiental, Comunitaria y Educación*, eds. J. Romay, R. García, Madrid: Biblioteca Nuevas, pp. 359–366.

Jaworowska A., Matczak A. (2005). *Popularny Kwestionariusz Inteligencji Emocjonalnej PKIE*. Warszawa: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych PTP.

Jones D.E., Greenberg M.T., Crowley M.D. (2015), "Early Social-Emotional Functioning and Public Health: The Relationship Between Kindergarten Social Competence and Future Wellness," *American Journal of Public Health*, vol. 105, no. 11, pp. 2283–2290.

Knopp K. (2013). *Kompetencje społeczne – pomiar i aplikacja praktyczna*, Warszawa: Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji; Instytut Psychologii UKSW.

Kwiatkowski S.T. (2015a). "Innowacje we współczesnym systemie kształcenia nauczycieli w kontekście kształtowania inteligencji emocjonalnej i kompetencji społecznych," in *Bliżej siebie. Edukacja i dialog w grupie niejednorodnej kulturowo*, ed. R. Nowakowska-Siuta, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe ChAT, pp. 93–110.

Kwiatkowski S.T. (2015b). "Diagnoza wybranych różnic indywidualnych studentów pedagogiki w kontekście przyszłych sukcesów w zawodzie nauczyciela," *Studia z Teorii Wychowania*, vol. 6, no. 4(13), pp. 127–159.

Kwiatkowski S.T. (2018a). "Czynniki warunkujące radzenie sobie nauczycieli szkół podstawowych z wyzwaniami zawodowymi – relacja z badań," *Edukacja Ustawiczna Dorosłych*, no. 4(103), pp. 90–108.

Kwiatkowski S.T. (2018b). "Radzenie sobie ze stresem w zawodzie nauczyciela – raport z badań," *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Skłodowska. Sectio J. Paedagogia-Psychologia*, no. 31(3), pp. 133–162.

Llorent V.J., Zych I., Varo-Millán J.C. (2020). "Competencias socioemocionales autopercibidas en el profesorado universitario en España," *Educación XXI*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 297–318.

Lopes P., Salovey P. (2004). "Toward a Broader Education: Social, Emotional, and Practical Skills," in *Building School Success on Social and Emotional Learning*, eds. J.E. Zins, R.P. Weissberg, M.C. Wang, H.J. Walberg, New York: Teachers College Press, pp. 79–93.

Márquez-González M., Izal M., Montorio I., Losada A. (2008). "Experiencia y regulación emocional a lo largo de la etapa adulta del ciclo vital: análisis comparativo en tres grupos de edad," *Psicothema*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 616–622.

Martowska K. (2012). *Psychologiczne uwarunkowania kompetencji społecznych*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Liberi Libri.

Matczak A. (2007). *Kwestionariusz Kompetencji Społecznych KKS. Podręcznik.* Second supplemented edition, Warszawa: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych.

Matczak A., Martowska K. (2013). *Profil kompetencji społecznych. PROKOS*, Warszawa: Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych PTP.

Mayer J.D., Cobb C.D. (2000). "Emotional Intelligence: What the Research Says," *Educational Leadership: Journal of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development*, vol. 58, no. 3, pp. 14–18.

Molero D., Ortega F., Moreno M.R. (2010). "Diferencias en la adquisición de competencias emocionales en función del género," *Revista Electrónica de Investigación y Docencia (REID)*, no. 3, pp. 165–172.

Nolen-Hoeksema S., Aldao A. (2011). "Gender and Age Differences in Emotion Regulation Strategies and Their Relationship to Depressive Symptoms," *Personality and Individual Differences*, vol. 51, no. 6, pp. 704–708.

Riggio R.E. (1986). "Assessment of Basic Social Skills," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 51, pp. 649–660.

Saarni C. (1999). "Kompetencja emocjonalna i samoregulacja w dzieciństwie," in *Rozwój emocjonalny a inteligencja emocjonalna. Problemy edukacyjne*, eds. P. Salovey, D.J. Sluyter, trans. M. Karpiński, Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, pp. 75–125.

Saarni C. (1999). *The Development of Emotional Competence*, New York: Guilford Press.

Saarni C. (2005). "Społeczny kontekst rozwoju emocjonalnego," in *Psychologia emocji*, eds. M. Lewis, J.M. Haviland-Jones, trans. M. Kacmajor et al., Gdańsk: Gdańskie Towarzystwo Psychologiczne, pp. 392–412.

Sadowska M., Brachowicz M. (2008). "Struktura inteligencji emocjonalnej," in *Studia z psychologii w KUL*, vol. 15, eds. P. Francuz, W. Otrębski, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, pp. 65–79.

Salovey P., Mayer J.D. (1999). "Czym jest inteligencja emocjonalna?" in *Rozwój emocjonalny a inteligencja emocjonalna. Problemy edukacyjne*, eds. P. Salovey, D.J. Sluyter, trans. M. Karpiński, Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis, pp. 23–69.

Salovey P., Sluyter D.J. (eds.) (1999), *Rozwój emocjonalny a inteligencja emocjonalna. Problemy edukacyjne*, trans. M. Karpiński, Poznań: Dom Wydawniczy Rebis.

Salovey P., Mayer J.D. (1990). "Emotional Intelligence," *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 185–211.

Smółka P. (2008). "Kompetencje społeczne – uwarunkowania i metody pomiaru," in *Szkice z psychologii różnic indywidualnych*, eds. W. Ciarkowska, W. Oniszczenko, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, pp. 258–268.

Sutton R., Wheatley K. (2003). "Teachers' Emotions and Teaching: A Review of the Literature and Directions for Future Research," *Educational Psychology Review*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 327–358.

Taracha M. (2010). *Inteligencja emocjonalna a wykorzystanie potencjału intelektualnego*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej.

Trentacosta C.J., Izard C.E. (2007). "Kindergarten Children's Emotion Competence as a Predictor of Their Academic Competence in First Grade," *Emotion*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 77–88.

Wiszejko-Wierzbicka D. (2010). *Niewykorzystana sfera: partycypacja społeczna i obywatelska osób z ograniczeniami sprawności*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.

Zych I., Beltrán-Catalán M., Ortega-Ruiz R., Llorent V.J. (2017). "Competencias sociales y emocionales de adolescentes involucrados en diferentes roles de bullying y cyberbullying," *Revista de Psicodidáctica*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 86–93.

ADDRESSES FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Estera Twardowska-Staszek
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow
Institute of Educational Sciences
e-mail: estera.twardowska-staszek@ignatianum.edu.pl

Małgorzata Alberska
Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow
Institute of Educational Sciences
e-mail: malgorzata.alberska@ignatianum.edu.pl