

EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES OF THE FORTHCOMING PHYSIOTHERAPISTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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Annotation. *Purpose.* Defining the level of emotional intelligence of students – prospective physiotherapists and physical education teachers. *Material and method.* The study was conducted amongst students of University School of Physical Education in Wrocław: There were 134 students from Physiotherapy Department and 254 students of Physical Education Department tested. In the research the tool to diagnose emotional intelligence was used: Emotional Intelligence Scale by Matczak et al. *Results.* In assessing the level of emotional intelligence the differences between students groups were pointed out due to their field of study and gender. Average emotional intelligence for all groups was at the moderate level although prospective teachers reached higher scores. Students of Physiotherapy and subjects constituting the control group showed lower level of studies parameter and the results were similar. Different levels of emotional intelligence are also visible in the results obtained by women and men. Women in each group receive higher scores than men. *Conclusions.* Emotional competencies of the subjects are at the moderate and low level, which is not a satisfactory result. Higher predispositions should be expected of people who choose teaching or physiotherapist professions, because it is required by specificity of the work they intend to carry on. Therefore, it seems necessary to pay special attention to the development of these competencies in the course of the study.

Key words: emotional intelligence, student, teacher, physiotherapist.

Introduction

The proper functioning in relationships with others is an essential skill especially for those people whose profession requires constant communion with people. Amongst these professions are with no doubt teaching and physiotherapist profession. People who are engaged in these professions should have a high level of emotional and social competence, as work both with the student and the patient requires specific interpersonal skills. Emotional intelligence is responsible for the quality and the level of these skills and it is defined as For the quality and the level of these skills is the responsibility of emotional intelligence, which is defined as a set of capabilities that determine the use of emotions to solve problems in social situations [1].

Goleman [2] more accurately describes emotional intelligence, saying that it is the ability of motivation and perseverance in the pursuit of goal, ability to control impulses and urges to meet them later, ability to control own emotions, and regulate the mood and not give up to sad feelings that break up the thinking process, ability to optimistically looking into the future, as well as empathy and social behavior. Qualities and skills that make up emotional intelligence promote proper interpersonal relationships and often are critical to the success in life and profession [3], as well as significantly protect against the appearance of burnout syndrome, which is a typical phenomenon of the so-called social professions [4,5].

Emotional intelligence by Salovey, Mayer and Caruso [6] is a fourfold construct. First component is the perception and expression of emotions - it is the ability to perceive and recognize emotions in oneself and others. The second component is the ability to assimilate emotions to support cognitive processes. The third component - understanding emotions - includes knowledge about the experience of the emotional sphere. The fourth component - managing emotions - refers to the ability to consciously regulate own emotional states and moods as well as other people. In this concept, efficiency of emotional intelligence is strongly emphasized [7].

For the purpose of this study, the focus was on a single element being a part of emotional intelligence model, namely the ability to recognize emotions in other people based on their facial expressions. For the physiotherapist and teachers the face of a patient/student is often the first source of information that should be properly read already in the initial phase of the relationship because it can have an impact on its further course. During the conversation, the educational situation or intervention interpretation of emotions from facial expressions should occur on a regular basis to foster constructive communication and to help taking appropriate actions. Please note that in interpersonal communication the non-verbal message is about 65% of the information [8], which is why it is extremely important to be able to properly interpret these messages.

As pointed out by Wronka [9], the reception and interpretation of the information contained in human faces is a complex perceptual process, based on visual stimuli of dynamic variation. Although it happens very quickly, it is characterized by high reliability.

However, the accuracy of reading and interpreting the facial emotions varies in humans. Some people make it more accurately and some less - it depends on their individual skills and abilities.

Purpose

The aim of this study was to determine the level of emotional intelligence of students - forthcoming physiotherapists and physical education teachers. Emotional competencies are crucial for these professions, so it was assumed that people who want to perform these professions in the future should have a high level of emotional sensitivity.

Material and methods

The study was conducted in 2014 among the students of the Academy of Physical Education in Wrocław: 134 individuals from the Department of Physiotherapy and 254 students of the Department of Physical Education. All students of Physiotherapy declared desire to work in their profession, and the teaching profession is going to perform 43% of the students of Physical Education. These are mostly people who decided to perform this profession while they were choosing the course of study. Other people from a group of students of Physical Education, despite the fact that studying in pedagogical university do not see themselves in the role of a teacher. Such students were used in the analysis of the test results as a reference group.

In the research the tool to diagnose emotional intelligence was used: Emotional Intelligence Scale by Matczak et al. [10]. In the construction of the scale the focus was put on the basic emotional abilities, namely the ability to recognize emotions in other people based on facial expressions. The test material contains 18 photographs of two actors who express a variety of emotional states. On the answer sheet, each image has a set of six names of emotions assigned to it, both positive and negative. Studied subject must assess whether the face in the photograph expresses those emotions and select one of three possible answers: expresses, doesn't express, it is difficult to say.

The results were converted to raw stems which were interpreted as follows: for low results the range from 1 to 4 stems were adopted, 5 to 6 stems were selected for average results (standard), and the results in the range of 7 to 10 stems were interpreted as a high scores.

Results

In assessing the level of emotional intelligence, the differences between the two groups of students were shown due to their course of the study and gender.

The average emotional intelligence for all groups was at the average level (5-6 stems), although slightly higher results were achieved by forthcoming teachers. Physiotherapy Students and individuals creating control group showed lower levels of the studied parameter, and the results were similar. The variation in the emotional intelligence is also visible in the results obtained by women and men. Women in each group receive higher scores than men (tab.1).

Table 1

Emotional intelligence – the average of the results in the studied groups

SEX STUDY GROUP	Women			Men		
	Number of people	Average	Standard deviation	Number of people	Average	Standard deviation
Physiotherapists	79	75,04	11,73	55	73,15	9,69
Teachers	53	75,54	8,71	56	73,55	9,15
Reference group	70	74,58	8,52	75	72,87	13,76

Analysis of the distribution of different levels of emotional intelligence showed that among students - forthcoming physiotherapists and teachers and individuals in the control group, the smallest group consisted of those presenting a high level of emotional intelligence, followed by group of people with low levels of the studied characteristic, and the most numerous group was represented by those with average level of emotional intelligence. The distribution of the numerical amount of the respondents' gender was shaped similarly (Fig. 1, 2). The numerical amount of group of students with a high level of emotional intelligence was significantly different from the numerical amount of groups presenting average and low levels of the characteristic.

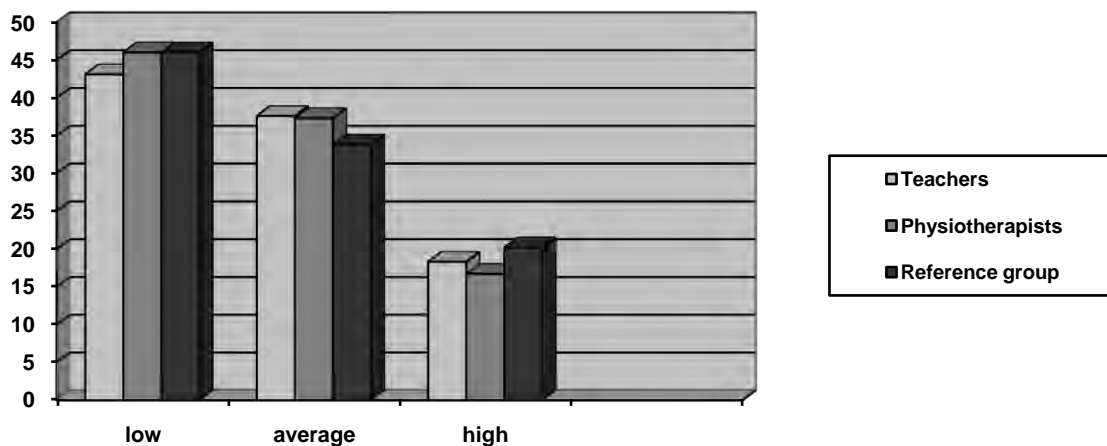


Fig.1. Level of the women's emotional intelligence and the studies department

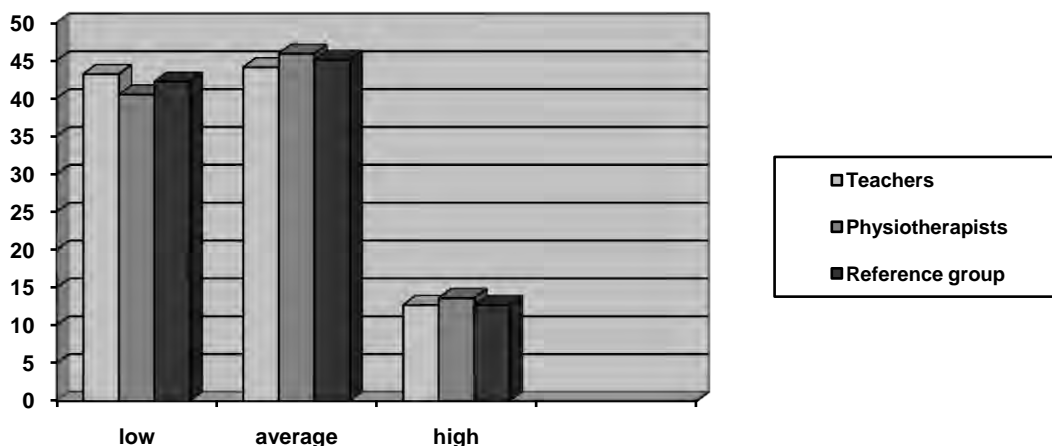


Fig.2. Level of the men's emotional intelligence and the studies department

Conclusions

According to the research results, it can be said that emotional competencies of the subjects are at the moderate and low level, which is not a satisfactory result. Higher predispositions should be expected of people who choose teaching or physiotherapist professions, because it is required by specificity of the work they intend to carry on.

Emotional competencies promote proper interpersonal relations, because achieving personal goals happens simultaneously with maintaining good relations with partners of the interaction.

A high level of competence in the area of interpersonal relations is also associated with better adaptation to changes in life, greater plasticity of behavior and attitudes in a variety of social situations and lower rates of anxiety, depression or loneliness [11].

In relation to emotional and social competencies we can talk about having or not having certain predispositions of the personality which affect those competencies to a high degree. But more importantly, predispositions themselves may not be sufficient, however in their absence it is possible to master behaviors and skills to raise the quality of these competencies.

Direct impact on the level of social competencies has the so-called social training, carried on during everyday life, study or work situations, as well as during the course of special training [12].

The training focused on developing the professional and social emotional skills is necessary, especially in professions based on close interpersonal relationships. [13].

Therefore, in the preparation of candidates for future teachers and physiotherapists, it is essential that in addition to factual knowledge and skills also focus on developing personal qualities and social and emotional competencies. This sphere is highly neglected in Polish universities, where special classes developing interpersonal skills of students run only occasionally [14].

Such activities are widespread for many years in the United States. Possibilities for training are directed to people engaged in professions known as aid professions in which it is necessary to have a high emotional competencies and social skills to cope with stress.

The starting point for creation of educational programs is the concept of emotional intelligence. Its components allow to appoint the overall framework of emotional competencies, both personal and social that condition the effective functioning in the professional role. Therefore these programs include actions to improve self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Among the latter are the most important skills: ability to create of relationships, leadership, communication, ability to influence the lives of others, ability to catalyze changes, ability to soften conflicts [2].

Considering interpersonal effectiveness one can bear in mind that it can be shaped by all kinds of stimuli relating to social behavior. It is particularly important to stimulate:

- the ability to decode social rules and analyze the situation,
- cognitive empathy and provision of social reinforcement,
- the ability to view own and other people expressive behavior m
- the ability to create positive self-image,
- the ability to get rid of fears and social restrictions,
- assertive behavior,
- the ability to influence,
- the ability to communicate properly and solve conflicts,
- constructive ways of dealing with stress [15].

Classes that teach above mentioned skills and influence personal development of students should be conducted in all schools, especially those who are preparing to work in direct and close contact with other human being.

The offer of such classes has been developed by the author of this article it is being implemented among the students of the University School of Physical Education in Wrocław.

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