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**PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES IN LEGAL EDUCATION OF FUTURE LAWYERS:  
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CAREER SUCCESS**

В статті теоретично обґрунтовано психологічні характеристики формування емоційного інтелекту студентів юридичних факультетів, визначено та експериментально перевірено умови ефективного формування емоційного інтелекту, розроблено та науково обґрунтовано модель процесу формування емоційного інтелекту, уточнено критерії його сформованості у майбутніх юристів.

**Ключові слова:** психологічні чинники, юридична освіта, емоційний інтелект, модель, складові компоненти емоційного інтелекту, критерії сформованості емоційного інтелекту.

The article deals with the theoretical foundation of the concept emotional intelligence in law students. It was defined and empirically examined effective conditions of emotional intelligence formation in future lawyers based on the model as well as criteria of its formation.

**Keywords:** psychological predictors, legal education, emotional intelligence, model, components, criteria of emotional intelligence formation.

**Introduction.** At the beginning of the 21-st century, Ukraine which gained its independence in 1991, faces a great number of organizational problems, namely, in legal education. Law enforcement organizations are continually challenged to hire the best suited and qualified applicants for the job of a lawyer, having superior abilities to persuade, influence, and communicate. Besides, the law enforcement community is constantly being scrutinized and criticized regarding the manner in which they interact with the public they serve [3];[8];[15].

Global market forces now dominate all non-professional work. Self-regulation and the exercise of complex judgment are the critical elements of professional work, and provide some immunity from these market forces [17].

In this context, the issue of vital importance for legal education is: how psychological theories and practice can be effectively applied for the process of strengthening professionalism in law students, future lawyers?

The direction which received a considerable attention in Ukraine recently, regarding training and education of law students, is incorporating Emotional Intelligence concepts into Legal Education and, thus, strengthening their professionalism [8]; [11]; [12], etc.

Emotional intelligence, as it coined by outstanding psychologist D. Goleman, is “...the capacity for organizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions in ourselves and in our relationship [ , p.317].

How is emotional intelligence important for lawyers and what impact it can have?

It is common knowledge today that emotional intelligence should be a key success factor for lawyers, judges, juries as the profession demands to act calm, empathetic and thoughtful in



provocative situations or instantly make the only decision on how to act in vulnerable and stressful situations.

Advocacy, negotiation, and counseling - all rely heavily on skills extremely important for lawyers, namely: persuading, influencing, and communicating. Psychological literature review proves that these are basic emotional competencies for law profession [4]; [19]; [20]; [25] and offers the innovative way to increase professionalism through increasing the competency in these skills [1]; [2]; [5]; [6]; [7]; [9]; [10], etc.. Moreover, it is postulated that emotional intelligence is the new benchmark to a successful legal career [18]. In the framework of this, psychological research indicates that higher levels of emotional intelligence enhance a person's ability to interact actively and effectively with others [7]; [9]; [10]; [14]; [22]; [23]; [24], etc.

Thus, incorporating instruction about emotional intelligence competencies into the existing law school curriculum of universities, in our view, could strengthen and better support the profession's efforts to increase the professionalism of a future lawyer and ensure career success.

**Goal Setting.** It is our purpose with the given paper, through the suggestion of new psychological approach to formation of emotional intelligence competencies in law students, grounded on problem-based real situations, to spark more interest among law specialists in the question of organizational success of future law enforcement employee. It is therefore important to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and stability levels.

In order to investigate this relationship the following stated objectives and hypotheses will help to determine outcome:

1. to determine the emotional intelligence and the stability levels in 1-3-rd year of study law students (extra-mural department);
2. to find out whether high emotional intelligence levels can be associated with high stability levels;
3. to formulate possible recommendations based on our empirical findings regarding future research on emotional intelligence formation and stability in future.

To achieve these objectives, the following hypotheses were generated for the given research, and are as follows:

Hypothesis 1. There is a statistical correlation between emotional intelligence and stability levels of law students.

Hypothesis 2. There is a statistical correlation between emotional intelligence of law students with high and low emotional intelligence in terms of their stability.

In the given paper we limit ourselves to the analysis of the psychological factors of effective emotional intelligence formation, its model as well as criteria basing on Ukrainian and foreign psychology achievements.

**Results.** The concept of emotional intelligence and its application in the practice of law is psychologically characterized as a combination of competencies or abilities involving emotions [5]; [6]. According to Goleman, they include self-awareness of emotions, awareness of emotions of others, empathetic understanding of those emotions, and the ability to use this awareness to self-regulate one's own behavior and the behavior of others.

Ukrainian recent publications deal primarily with relatively neglected issues of emotional intelligence, namely: its diagnostics [11]; emotional awareness formation in future psychologists [7]; [9]; [10]; [14]; emotional stability development in police officers [3]; [8]; [13]; [15]; emotional stability in police officers activities [3], etc.

By contrast, foreign investigators pay considerable attention to the impact of emotional intelligence on subjective well-being [17]; examine the importance to educate people to be emotionally and socially intelligent [16]; [18]; [19]; [20]; the relationship between stress and mental health [20]; between leadership behavior and police officers' attitude to the notion of emotional intelligence [25].



What, then, emotional intelligence has to do with the legal context and legal education?

Emotional intelligence is the ability to interpret, understand and manage one's own and others' emotions [5];[6]; in other words, to become emotionally mature and confident in law profession. There is already a definite recognition of the importance of emotional intelligence research in legal literature [8];[12];[13]; [15];[17];[19];[25], etc. Legal education literature offers examples of incorporating notions of self-awareness and focused understanding of the positions of others into curriculum.

And lastly, do law students have the skills needed to develop and maintain their own emotional balance to deal with stressful occupation?

In our view, in order to answer these questions it is highly desirable to trace the roots of emotional intelligence and the scientific results obtained. Firstly, the notion of emotional intelligence was introduced into psychology theory and practice comparatively not long ago – in 1990 by psychologists P.Salovey and J. Mayer [23]. They proved that intelligent quotient (IQ) does not coincide with the emotional one [ ], though IQ as a measure is still used to hire and select police recruits worldwide but does not predict job performance very well [16];[21];[22], etc.

In 1995 D.Goleman [5] who investigated neuropsychological considerations of emotional intelligence stated that intellectual exercises or reading assignments by themselves are unlikely to work, because emotional responses do not emerge from the part of the brain where higher-level mental functions occur, like reasoning and language [ ]. What matters greatly from Goleman's research, instead they come from the interior limbic system in the brain where emotions like "anger" and "fear" emerge. The author calls this the "Primal brain" and further explains that we often unknowingly act according to these primal emotions. This process was coined as "negative habituation" and made it possible to arrive at a revolutionary conclusion: without **POSITIVE** habitual self-awareness training which is aimed at changing emotional intelligence competencies, is rather difficult.

Goleman illustrates the conclusion with the following case-study: a stress management class has some impact on learners but may not suffice as it lacks skills at the cognitive exterior level. Skills at that level are highly perishable and they do not become a positive habit.

What approaches to emotional intelligence do work in students' environment? What are favourable psychological factors for emotional intelligence formation in law students?

One of the most fruitful approaches, in our view, is problem-based training program. Its goal is emotional intelligence training and, as the literature review shows, plays a major role in future lawyers [8];[18];[19];[20];[25], etc .

Psychologists Mayer and Cobb [18] call problem-based training of emotional intelligence as socioemotional learning. In our case with 126 students it teaches law students how to examine their own emotional intelligence competencies. These competencies include:

- becoming more aware of emotional triggers that can instigate an angry violent response;
- learning tactics to manage one's own mental state during stressful situations, for example, a case-study grounded on real-life situations;
- being more attentive to the impact of daily emotions on long-term moods and attitudes toward colleagues-students.

How are possibly these competencies could be shaped?

The most effective favourable conditions are created in the process of:

1. Using problem-based situations, reflecting complex tasks and choice-decision in stressful and hazardous cases;
2. Keeping a daily journal recording the learning process to obtain in-depth information on the particular problem, in terms of typical errors, mistakes, and rational solutions. Research by F.Sala [22] highlights that workshops interventions improve emotional intelligence competencies, namely:



- self-confidence;
- conflict-management;
- communication;
- conscientiousness

3. Emotional intelligence competencies can change providing positive development by experiential learning, habitual self-reflection and long-term cognitive training.

Thus, the theoretical model of the process of emotional intelligence formation in law students must combine adaptive expertise in managing emotions, minds and physiological reactions to the stressful situations. The conceptualization of emotional intelligence and creation of the model promotes improved understanding and application of the construct. It also helps to distinguish between different levels of emotional intelligence competencies: high, medium and low. The criteria laid for differentiation in training law students are as follows:

High level - 95 -100 per cent of successful job performance fulfillment

Medium level – 85 – 94 per cent of successful job performance fulfillment

Low level - 70-84 per cent of successful job performance fulfillment.

**Conclusions.** Psychological issues in legal education of future lawyers make it possible to examine the most effective means of teaching and developing emotional intelligence within the law enforcement culture. The research proved that although technical skills are important in a lawyer's profession but organizations need to identify, select, promote, and develop future law specialists based on emotional intelligence competencies. Our recommendation is to apply a systematic and focused approach to identify how emotional intelligence affects academic performance in law students and performance in the field.

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