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IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN STRESSFUL CONDITIONS

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Relevance

The need to maintain a people's mental health in emergency situations is an important task of WHO (World Health Organization, 2022). Creating conditions for maintaining mental health stability of all citizens is an important task of each state in emergency situations (hostilities, pandemics, natural disasters, etc.). The level of mental health of citizens, as evidence of their psychological and social well-being, determines the effectiveness of the functioning of the state social sphere.

Research problem

In order to develop effective psychological means of maintaining the stability of human mental health in stressful conditions, it is important to investigate the factors of human mental health in stress. An important moderator of the connection between mental health and stress is emotional intelligence of personality (Ciarrochi, Deane & Anderson, 2002). University students have been proven most vulnerable to psychological factors that affect their mental health in stressful conditions (Campbell, et al., 2022). At the same time, the influence of emotional intelligence on the academic success of university students (Mohzan, Hassan, & Abd Halil, 2013) is determined. Studying the impact of emotional intelligence on the mental health of university students in stressful conditions offers potential to find coping strategies, which will allow them to overcome the problems of higher education.

Research purpose – empirically investigate the impact of emotional intelligence on the mental health of Ukrainian university students in stressful conditions.

Objectives: 1. Empirically investigate the university students' mental health. 2. Empirically investigate the university students' emotional intelligence. 3. Determine the impact of emotional intelligence on the mental health of university students.

Research methodology. The mental health of the personality without psychopathological characteristics determines his psychological, social and subjective well-being. The availability of well-being confirms the frequency of personality experiences of positive functioning during the short and recent period – two weeks or one month. Psychological well-being of personality attests to a clear awareness and consistent realization of life goals. Social well-being of personality is confirmed by the openness to new experience in society and the willingness and need to acquire new social competences (Keyes, 2002).

Emotional intelligence is an integrated complex of personality ability to know, understand, differentiate and realize both personal emotions and emotions of other people; apply emotions to intensify one's own thinking; use personal knowledge of emotional manifestations by other people to succeed in social interactions with them; consciously regulate one's own emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The mental health of Ukrainian university students was researched with the help of an adapted questionnaire "The Mental Health Continuum – A Short Form" (Keyes, 2002; Nosenko & Chetveryk-Burchak, 2014). The questionnaire contains statements that begin with the words "How often for two weeks (a month) you have felt..." happiness, interest in life, joy, your social significance, confidence, etc. The questionnaire is determined by high, average and low personality mental health.

The emotional intelligence of university students was researched by Emotional intelligence test (Hall, 2007). The test contains statements regarding emotional awareness, management of own emotions, self-motivation, empathy and recognition of other people's emotions. The test determines the high, average and low levels of personality emotional intelligence.

The empirical research in compliance with ethical standards was conducted online during the 2023-2024 academic year. It was a period of martial law in the country. The research was attended by 118 Ukrainian university students aged 17-23. The studied are students of universities located in the cities of Kyiv and Zaporizhzhia.

Results

Quantitative data on the levels of studied university students' mental health is presented in Figure 1.

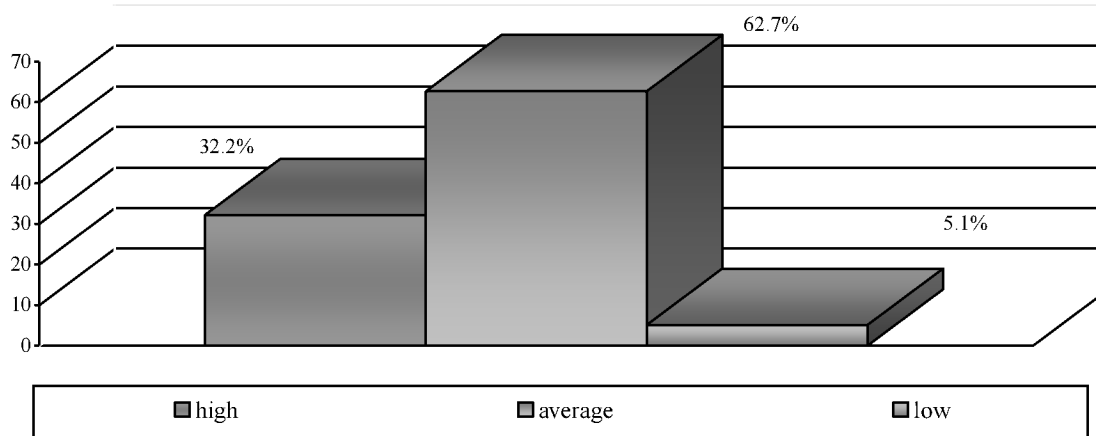


Figure 1. Levels of studied university students' mental health

Figure 1 shows that most of the studied university students revealed an average level (62.7%) of mental health, in a much smaller amount – a high level (32.2%) and in the smallest – low level (5.1%). The studied university students with average mental health have experienced either happiness, or pleasure, or interest in life approximately once or two or three times a week for the last two weeks. High level mental health studied university students have experienced either happiness, or pleasure, or interest in life almost every two weeks. Studied university students with low mental health experienced either happiness or pleasure or interest in life once or twice over the last two weeks.

Quantitative data obtained as a result of an empirical study of the levels of studied university students' emotional intelligence is presented in the figure 2.

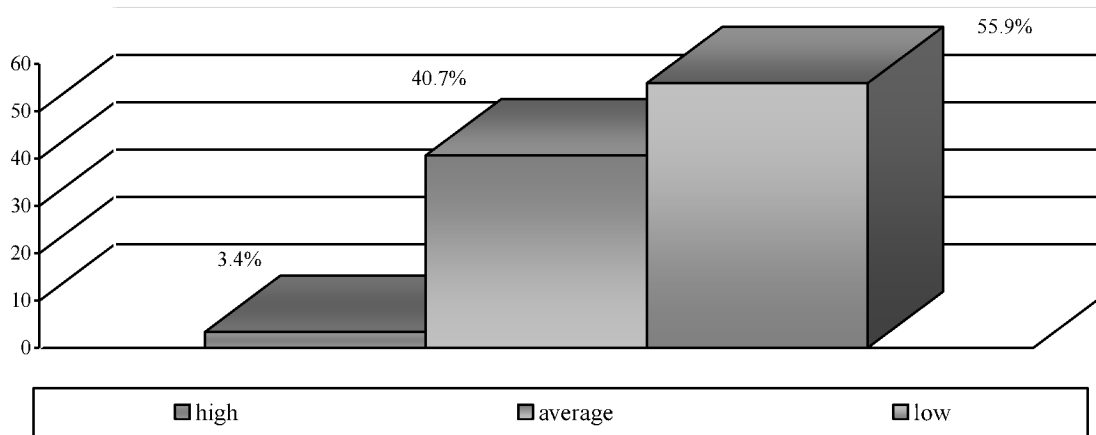


Figure 2. Levels of studied university students' emotional intelligence

As can be seen from Figure 2, a larger number of studied university students under study revealed low level (55.9%) and average level (40.7%) of emotional intelligence. A small number of studied university students is determined by a high level (3.4%) of emotional intelligence.

Below are presented empirical results concerning emotional awareness, management of own emotions, self-motivation, empathy and recognition of other people's emotions in the studied university students. Quantitative data obtained as a result of an empirical study of the levels of studied university students' emotional awareness is presented in the figure 3.

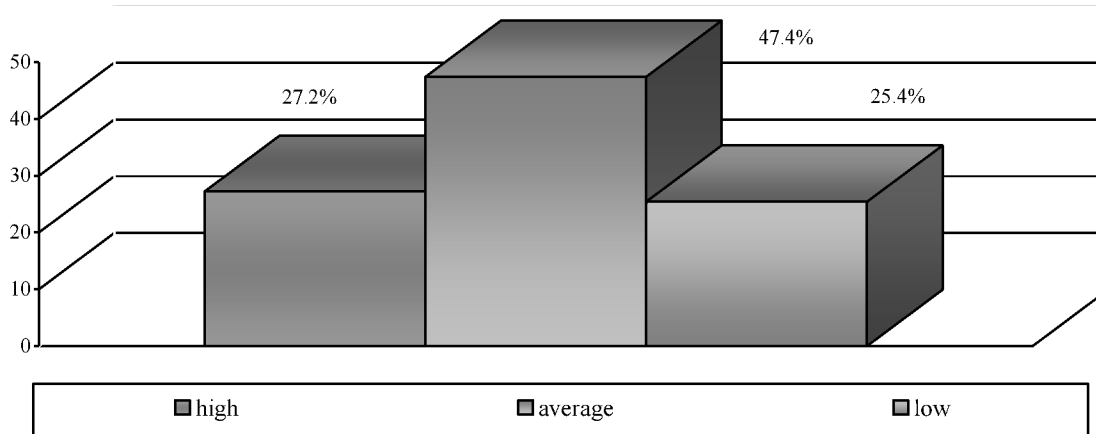


Figure 3. Levels of studied university students' emotional awareness

As can be seen from Figure 3, a largest number of studied university students has determined own emotional awareness at an average level (47.4%). They believe that they are sufficiently aware of emotions and their types. They are well aware of the need to change themselves, given their own negative emotions. They are often noticed and aware of changes in their emotional states. A much smaller number of studied university students believe that their emotional awareness is low level (25.4%) and high level (27.2%). Accordingly, they think that very little or much know about emotions and their types; vaguely or clearly aware of the need to change themselves, given their own negative emotions; rarely or constantly notice and aware of changes in their emotional states.

Quantitative data obtained as a result of an empirical study of the levels of studied university students' management of own emotion is presented in the figure 4.

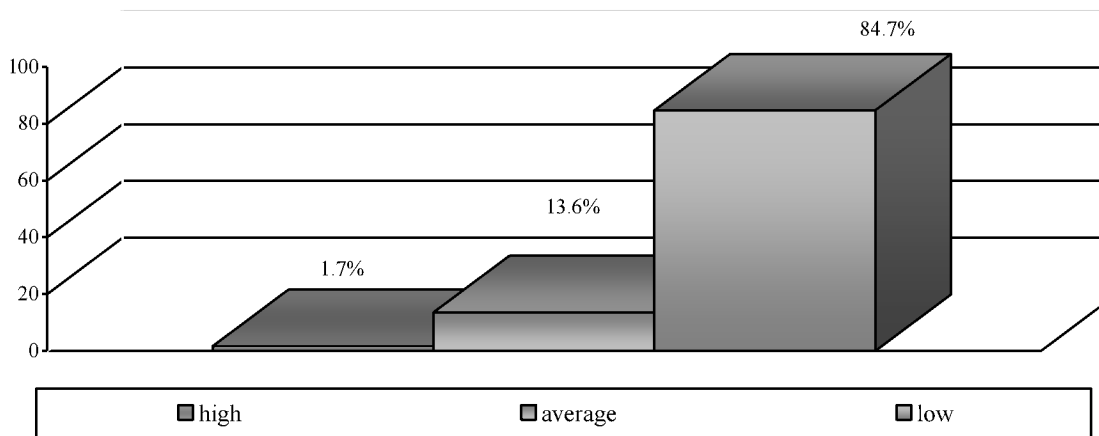


Figure 4. Levels of studied university students' management of own emotion

As can be seen from Figure 4, a largest number of studied university students believe that their level of management of own emotion is low (84.7%). According to a small number of studied university students, their level of management of own emotions is average (13.6%) or high (1.7%). Studied university students with low, average and high levels, respectively, in some, half or all life situations can remain calm when external pressure, monitor their well-being, easy to quench their emotions and disconnect from negative emotions.

Quantitative data obtained as a result of an empirical study of the levels of studied university students' self-motivation is presented in the figure 5.



Figure 5. Levels of studied university students' self-motivation

As can be seen from Figure 5, according to more studied university students, their self-motivation level is low (57.6%). A much smaller number of studied university students rated their self-motivation level as average (30.5%) or high (11.9%). Studied university students with low, average and high levels, respectively, in some, half or all life situations, can remain calm and focused, maintain resistance to obstacles, show positive emotions and get rid of negative emotions.

Quantitative data obtained as a result of an empirical study of the levels of studied university students' empathy is presented in the figure 6.

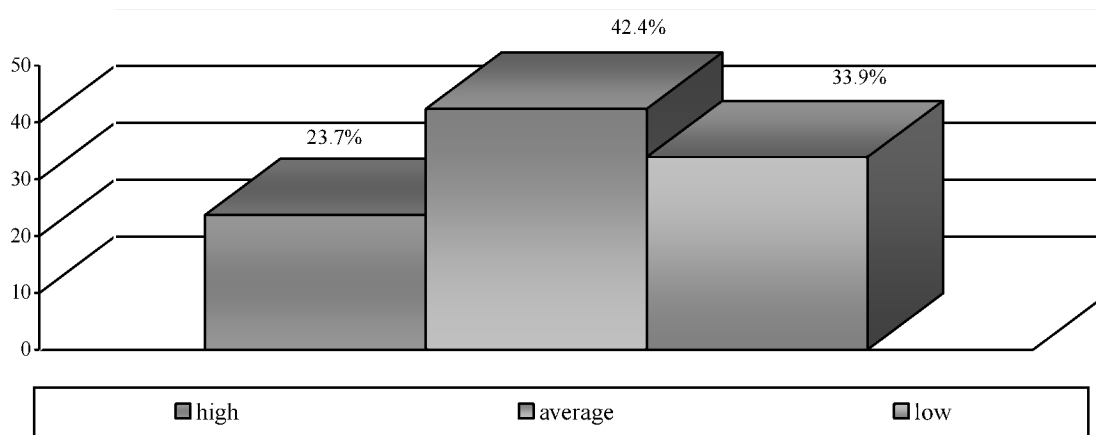


Figure 6. Levels of studied university students' empathy

As can be seen from Figure 6, according to more of the studied university students, their level of empathy is average (42.4%) and low (33.9%). The smaller number of university students studied determined their level of empathy as high (23.7%). Studied university students with low, average and high levels, respectively, in individual, half or all life situations are able to correctly recognize other people's emotions by verbal and non-verbal manifestations, to show sensitivity to other people's emotions.

Quantitative data obtained as a result of an empirical study of the levels of studied university students' recognition of other people's emotions is presented in the Figure 7.

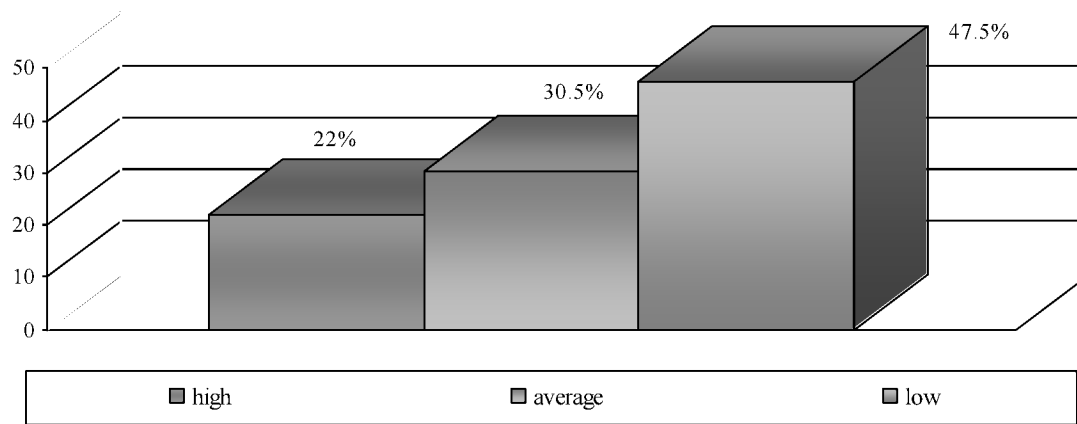


Figure 7. Levels of studied university students' recognition of other people's emotions

As can be seen from Figure 7, more than the studied university students revealed a low level (47.5%) of recognition of other people's emotions. In fewer studied university students, an average (30.5%) and high (22%) level of recognition of other people's emotions were established. The studied university students with low, average and high levels, respectively, in some, half or all life situations, are able to adequately respond to the emotions and mood of other people, as well as to reassure and direct them to achieve their goals.

As a result of correlation analysis using the Pearson correlation coefficient, it is determined that the mental health of studied university students is statistically significantly influenced by emotional intelligence ($r=0.430223$; $p\leq 0.01$), management of own emotions ($r=0.414191$; $p\leq 0.01$), self-motivation ($r=0.316056$; $p\leq 0.01$), empathy ($r=0.256686$; $p\leq 0.01$).

Conclusions

Therefore, the statistically significant impact of emotional intelligence on the mental health of the studied university students in stressful conditions is confirmed. The studied university students with low emotional intelligence have low mental health (almost twentieth part). The studied university students with average emotional intelligence have an average level of mental health (almost two fifth parts). The studied university students with high levels of emotional intelligence have a high level of mental health (almost thirty-third part). The question of effective psychological means of developing emotional intelligence in university students to maintain the stability of their mental health in stressful conditions is promising for scientific search.

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