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**PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE AT EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY
OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**511.02. DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY**

**ABSTRACT
of the Doctoral Thesis in Psychology**

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IQ - cognitive intelligence

EI - emotional intelligence

EQ - emotional quotient

MIA - Ministry of Internal Affairs

EG - experimental group

CG - control group

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

The topicality and importance of the topic addressed. In the current context of globalization and rapid socio-cultural changes, it becomes imperative to develop psychological traits such as cognitive flexibility, self-regulation, and socio-emotional competencies, which facilitate adaptation to the megatrends of contemporary society. These characteristics support the formation of a functional personality, capable of effective integration into dynamic and complex social environments [20].

Reforms within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) enhance the perception of professional stability; however, legal uncertainties and the societal underestimation of MIA employees increase the risk of assaults against them [63, 65].

The development of emotional intelligence (EI) is often neglected by MIA employees, who tend to recognize its importance only in stressful situations [1, 2, 3].

EI is essential for professional performance, as it supports empathy and effective communication, particularly in the interactions between police officers and victims or witnesses. Enhancing EI within the MIA improves emotional regulation, cooperation, and conflict resolution [4, 32, 42].

The relevance of this topic lies in the persistently low public image of the MIA, the frequency of assaults on its personnel, early onset of illness, their emotional instability, and in the complex nature of EI itself, which demands up-to-date personal development interventions [1, 5, 6, 30].

Description of the research field and identification of the research problem.

EI remains a current and intensively studied topic, from the 20th century to the present day, particularly in the context of political, social, and economic crises. The regional situation and the complex responsibilities of MIA employees necessitate the development of this competence as a means of emotional self-regulation and stress resilience [7, 32].

EI has been a subject of scholarly discussion and research and is reflected in various theoretical approaches, being perceived in multiple ways. One of the earliest works on EI was the study conducted in the late 1930s by Thorndike R. L. and Stein S. [26], who defined it as the ability to understand and manage people. Kant I. (1724–1804), followed by Müller-Merbach H. (2007), were among the first to recognize the importance of non-cognitive aspects of intelligence [20].

According to Bar-On R., the development of the EI concept can be traced back to Darwin Ch., who argued that there is a close connection between the mind and the heart [9, p. 23]. Mayer J. (1908) provided a detailed classification of types of thinking, including emotional thinking [53,

pp. 267–298]. Bar-On R. (1985) introduced the concept of the emotional quotient and developed a corresponding assessment tool [39, p. 388]. Wechsler D. introduced the notion of “non-intellectual elements,” referring to affective regulation [197, p. 268]. Sternberg R. [9, p. 420] argued that intelligence serves to help individuals adapt to their environment. Shekhter S. (1960) contributed to the development of cognitive theories of emotion. Gardner H. initiated the theory of multiple intelligences [4].

Mayer J. (1998) and Salovey P. (1990) [154, p. 355], along with Bar-On R. (2000) [39] and Goleman D. (1998) [46, p. 400], defined EI as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.” According to Goleman D. (2008), EI consists of a set of abilities and capacities, including self-awareness, impulse control, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills [15, 47, 60].

Jonis K. and Day J. D. (1997) view EI as encompassing declarative and procedural knowledge, flexible retrieval of knowledge, and the resolution of problems involving more than one correct answer or interpretation [50, p. 245]. Wagner R. K. and Sternberg R. (1985) argue that many differences among social, emotional, and practical intelligences fall into three categories of tacit knowledge: self-management, managing others, and task management [46, p. 400]. Cantor N. and Kihlstrom J. F. (1987, 2000) emphasized self-leadership, leadership of others, and task accomplishment [62, p. 217].

Morin E. views EI as a set of verbal or non-verbal abilities [9], while Vrij A. has focused on the study of police officers’ social interactions with suspects and victims [61].

In Romania, EI among MIA employees has been studied by Opriș D. and Macavei B., who focused on emotional distress and coping strategies, as well as by Roco M. [25, 58]. In the Republic of Moldova, Rusu E. developed an EI training program [27], Cojocaru-Borozan M. emphasized its role in emotional culture [11], and Racu Ig. and Iu. identified gender and environment-based differences in adolescent empathy [22–24]. Dița M. and Vîrlan M. analyzed emotional stability and self-control among pre-adolescents [14], while Rusnac S. and Cimpu A.C. underscored the need to expand psychological training programs within the police force [26].

Although the topic of emotional intelligence is extensively studied internationally, there is a lack of differentiated research in the Republic of Moldova by gender, age, experience, and function among MIA employees – factors that underscore the need for further investigation into these complex psychological dimensions.

This situation justifies the formulation of the **research problem**, which can be explored through the following question: How does the

development of emotional intelligence influence the personality traits of MIA employees and what impact can a psychological program have in optimizing these processes?

This study is focused on directing and structuring a clear definition of emotional intelligence among MIA employees, which will serve as a premise for its further exploration and the development of an Emotional Intelligence Development Program for MIA employees. It will also contribute to the revision of curricula and training programs for initial, continuous, and managerial training, as well as to a more rigorous selection process for personnel recruitment within the MIA.

Purpose of the research: The purpose of the research is to evaluate the level of emotional intelligence development among MIA employees, by analyzing its essential components and the influence exerted on personality traits, with the aim of developing an emotional intelligence development program adapted to this professional group.

The objectives set were:

1. Establishing the theoretical framework of the research by analyzing the specialized literature on the concept of emotional intelligence, its components, determining factors, and functions in the context of police officers' activities;
2. Developing and conducting a descriptive study on the evaluation of the development level of emotional intelligence dimensions among MIA employees, through the application of validated psychological tools;
3. Investigating individual differences in emotional intelligence based on variables such as gender, age, years of service, and the position held within the MIA structure;
4. Conducting a correlational study between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the personality traits of MIA employees;
5. Designing, implementing, and validating a psychological intervention program aimed at developing emotional intelligence among MIA employees, and evaluating its effectiveness through experimental methods.

General hypothesis: It is hypothesized that the dimensions of emotional intelligence of MIA employees are significantly influenced by factors such as gender, age, years of service, and the position held, and that these dimensions are correlated with personality traits.

Synthesis of the research methodology and justification of the research methods. In the given research, several methods were used, based on the purpose, objectives and hypotheses of the study:

1. Theoretical methods, used for conceptual analysis and the development of the theoretical framework of the research: analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, comparison, abstraction, scientific generalization, and theoretical modelling.

2. Empirical methods, used for obtaining and processing data from reality include qualitative methods such as simple and structured observation, individual, group, semi-structured, and in-depth interviews, focus groups, case studies, and content analysis. Quantitative methods involve questionnaires, psychological tests, rating scales, opinion surveys, psychological experiments, and survey methods. Statistical and mathematical methods used for data analysis include descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, standard deviations, etc., and inferential statistics such as Levene's test, One-way ANOVA, Mann-Whitney U test, Pearson method, Wilcoxon test, and Dunn-Bonferroni Post-Hoc test.

The scientific novelty and originality lie in the fact that, for the first time in the Republic of Moldova, the dimensions of emotional intelligence in MIA employees were experimentally investigated and empirically described. The study highlighted the level of emotional intelligence based on variables such as gender, age, work experience, and position held. Additionally, the relationship between personality traits and the level of emotional intelligence was established. Furthermore, the research included the design, implementation, and validation of a psychological intervention program, which proved to be effective in developing emotional intelligence among MIA employees.

The research findings that contribute to the solution of an important scientific problem are: the identification of the specific characteristics of emotional intelligence in MIA employees and the development of a program aimed at enhancing the abilities to understand and constructively interpret one's own and others' emotions, manage one's emotions, overcome obstacles, and improve interpersonal communication. These contributions have led to improved emotional regulation, the development of empathy, and the ability to manage risky situations among employees of the MIA.

The theoretical significance of the research lies in deepening the concept of emotional intelligence, analyzing the correlations between its components, as well as investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and the personality traits of MIA employees. Additionally, the research is based on relevant psychological and interdisciplinary studies, contributing to the strengthening of the theoretical foundation regarding the development of emotional intelligence in organizational and institutional contexts.

The practical value of the research lies in the possibility of utilizing the obtained results for the development of social policies aimed at fostering emotional intelligence among MIA employees. These results provide practical material for courses, seminars, and discussions on emotional intelligence development, being useful not only for students

and MIA employees but also for specialists in the field. The emotional intelligence development program can serve as a foundation for creating similar programs and represents a valuable resource for educators, psychologists, managers, human resource management personnel within the MIA, and anyone concerned with the activity of MIA employees.

The results of the research were discussed and approved during meetings of the Guidance commission, as well as at national and international conferences. The emotional intelligence development program was utilized in the training and professional development of police officers during initial, ongoing, and managerial training courses at «Ștefan cel Mare» Academy of the MIA.

The thesis contains: an introduction, 3 chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography with 223 titles, 9 annexes, 156 pages of main text, 34 tables, and 33 figures. The results obtained have been published in 13 scientific articles.

SYNTHESIS OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1, “Theoretical considerations on emotional intelligence”, provides an overview of the main conceptions and theories of EI, highlighting current research directions, theoretical contradictions, as well as the components, influencing factors, and functions defined by various authors. It also presents the specific characteristics of EI among employees of the MIA and its impact on professional performance.

Most definitions of EI emphasize affective and interrelational components [13], [19], underscoring the ability to manage one’s own emotions and to understand the emotions of others. Jonis K. and Day J. D. (1997) argue that EI involves both declarative and procedural knowledge, along with flexible problem-solving abilities that allow for multiple solutions [50, p. 245].

In 1985, Bar-On R. introduced the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) as a measurement tool. In 1990, Mayer J. and Salovey P. officially defined EI and proposed assessment methods, consolidating it as a distinct form of intelligence [50, 53]. Subsequent research expanded the field and contributed to the popularization of the concept [40, 64].

Simultaneously, cognitive models of intelligence - such as Spearman Ch.’s factorial model and hierarchical theories - revealed the limitations of traditional assessments focused primarily on logical abilities, failing to include non-intellectual traits [12]. Thorndike R.L. and Stein S. introduced the concept of social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage people, while Thurstone L. identified multiple mental abilities, though without a direct connection to emotional processing [17, 44].

Critiques of the traditional perspective came from Wexler D. and Sternberg R., who proposed the triarchic theory of intelligence, integrating goal-oriented mental control [46]. In the late 1930s, Gardner H. began to articulate the theory of “multiple intelligences” [4].

The researcher most frequently associated with the concept of EI is Goleman D. [15, 16], while the studies of Vrij A. focused on the social interactions between police officers and suspects or victims [61].

In Romania, several authors have conducted studies on EI among police officers and MIA employees. Among them, Opriș D. and Macavei B. have contributed research on emotional distress and cognitive-emotional coping mechanisms [58], while Roco M. conducted studies on EI in professional contexts, including among police personnel [25].

Research conducted in the Republic of Moldova emphasizes various aspects of emotional intelligence. Zagaevschi C. [28] and Rusu E. [27] developed EI training methods for adolescents and students; Cojocaru-Borozan M. [11] views EI as part of emotional culture; Platon I. [20] defines EI as a multidimensional construct; Dița M. and Vîrlan M. [14],

along with Pîslari S. [21], highlight the role of self-regulation and empathy among preadolescents. Cerlat R. [8] and Gorincioi V. [18] analyze the impact of emotional stability and risk factors. Racu Iu. and Ig. [22–24] explore gender- and environment-related differences in empathy, while Rusnac S. and Cimpu A.C. [26] stress the need for psychological training programs for police officers in this area.

Several authors have studied EI among police officers, revealing differences by gender and role. McDowall A. et al. (2020) [54], Bar-On R. et al. (2000) [40], Arnatt M. J., Beyerlein M.M. (2014) [34], and Grubb A. R. et al. (2018) [49] reported variations in EI scores across different contexts. Women tend to score higher in empathy, while men score higher in emotional control [43, 52, 165]. EI is essential for police officers, showing positive correlations with career commitment and job satisfaction [35, 36, 43].

Two studies have demonstrated positive correlations between EI and the police profession, even after controlling for cognitive and personality variables [33, pp. 1–8; 38, pp. 296–305]. Ojedokun O. [57, pp. 137–155] found that EI reduces the likelihood of unethical conduct. High EI is associated with enhanced performance [48, pp. 392–413], reduced organizational stress [55, pp. 1–7], and better work–life balance [51, pp. 184–194]. EI may also contribute to reducing corruption [37, pp. 195–208], increasing the integrity of recruits [41, pp. 63–86], and may be temporarily improved through training interventions [59, pp. 76–107].

The studies analyzed in this chapter demonstrate that the dimensions of emotional intelligence are highly complex. Although low emotional intelligence amplifies chaos both personally and professionally, research addressing the issue of emotional intelligence in MIA employees is still lacking.

In this context, we propose the following definition: *Emotional intelligence in police officers is the ability to recognize, be aware of, and manage one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others, focusing on skills such as emotional self-regulation, empathy, constructive conflict management, and the harmonious development of interpersonal relationships. This ability contributes to managing crisis situations, maintaining emotional balance in the face of stressors, and creating a climate of trust between the police officer and society.*

Thus, we believe there is sufficient preliminary evidence to suggest the need for placing greater emphasis on EI in police work, including in selection, training, and practice. This could help address broader concerns regarding contemporary police work, including the weak public legitimacy, low trust levels, and perceptions of systemic issues related to police misconduct.

Despite the large number of studies focused on the aforementioned

topic at the international level, and those available in our country, the research problem is not fully addressed or not at all. This results in a gap (particularly in the scientific circuit in the Republic of Moldova) concerning studies in which emotional intelligence is examined from a gender, chronological age, career stage, type of activity, role held, and the correlation between personality traits and emotional intelligence, specifically for MIA employees.

The aforementioned aspects underscore the necessity of continuing research on these complex psychological dimensions.

This situation justifies the formulation of the **research problem**, which can be explored through the following question: How does the development of emotional intelligence influence the personality traits of the MIA employees, and what impact could a psychological program have in optimizing these processes?

This study focuses on directing and structuring a clear definition of emotional intelligence for MIA employees, which will serve as a premise for further exploration of this concept and for the development of an Emotional Intelligence Development Program for MIA employees. The study aims to review the curriculum and training programs, both initial and ongoing, as well as managerial programs, and to enable a more rigorous selection process for personnel during recruitment within the MIA.

Purpose of the research: The purpose of the research is to evaluate the level of emotional intelligence development among MIA employees, by analyzing its essential components and the influence exerted on personality traits, with the aim of developing an emotional intelligence development program tailored to this professional group.

The objectives set were:

1. Establishing the theoretical framework of the research by analyzing the specialized literature on the concept of emotional intelligence, its components, determining factors, and functions in the context of police officers' activities;
2. Developing and conducting a descriptive study on the evaluation of the development level of emotional intelligence dimensions among MIA employees, through the application of validated psychological tools;
3. Investigating individual differences in emotional intelligence based on variables such as gender, age, years of service, and the position held within the MIA structure;
4. Conducting a correlational study between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the personality traits of MIA employees;
5. Designing, implementing, and validating a psychological intervention program aimed at developing emotional intelligence among MIA employees, and evaluating its effectiveness through experimental methods.

General hypothesis: It is hypothesized that the dimensions of emotional intelligence of MIA employees are significantly influenced by factors such as gender, age, years of service, and the position held, and that these dimensions are correlated with personality traits.

Chapter 2, “Experimental research on emotional intelligence among employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs,” outlines the presentation of the hypothesis, purpose, research objectives, as well as the experimental framework: research methodology, experimental sample, and experimental procedures conducted. The chapter includes an analysis of experimental data related to the determination of the level of emotional intelligence development in relation to gender, age, work experience, and the position held by MIA employees. It analyzes the correlation between the dimensions of emotional intelligence (Emotional Intelligence Test for Adults by Bar-On and D. Goleman, adapted by M. Roco [45]; Emotional Maturity Scale by Milton Friedman [23]; Emotional Distress Profile by David Opriş and Bianca Macavei [10]; Cognitive-Emotional Coping Questionnaire by Nadia Garnefski, Vivian Kraaij, Philip Spinhoven [10]; Empathic Emotional Maturation Questionnaire by Albert Mehrabian [23]) and personality traits (Five-Factor Personality Questionnaire [10]).

The purpose of the research for the assessment stage: Studying the dimensions of emotional intelligence among the MIA employees in relation to gender, age, work experience, position held, and personality traits.

The experimental research aimed at determining the following **research objectives** in order to achieve the purpose:

1. Identifying the dimensions for research, determining the research instruments, and selecting the experimental sample;
2. Applying the research instruments and collecting experimental materials to identify the dimensions of emotional intelligence among the MIA employees in relation to gender, age, work experience, position held, and personality characteristics;
3. Analyzing the obtained data, performing statistical processing, synthesizing, and interpreting the research results;
4. Developing conclusions in the context of confirming the research hypotheses, general conclusions, and recommendations regarding the development of emotional intelligence among MIA employees.

In this experiment, we proposed the following **general hypothesis**: The dimensions of emotional intelligence of MIA employees are significantly influenced by factors such as gender, age, work experience, and position held, and these dimensions are correlated with personality traits.

From this general hypothesis, the following specific hypotheses for the assessment stage were derived:

Hypothesis 1: There are significant differences in emotional intelligence among the MIA employees based on gender, age, work experience, and position held, such that certain factors influence their level of emotional intelligence.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant correlation between the emotional intelligence of MIA employees and their personality traits, such that certain personality traits are associated with a higher level of emotional intelligence.

Research methodology:

The assessment experiment was conducted during the years 2022-2023, within “Ștefan cel Mare” Academy of the MIA.

Research subjects:

The assessment experiment involved 425 MIA employees, aged between 19 and 65 years, of which 213 were male and 212 were female.

Stages of the assessment experiment:

In the first stage of the assessment experiment, were conducted individual discussions with the supervisors of the MIA employees (their subordinates) who were to be involved in the experiment. The individual discussion was aimed at fostering mutual understanding for the inclusion of their subordinates in the research.

In the second stage, the research instruments were administered, the results obtained were analyzed and interpreted, and statistical data analysis was performed.

In the third stage, conclusions were formulated to confirm the research hypotheses, and recommendations were made for the development of emotional intelligence among the MIA employees exhibiting low levels of emotional intelligence.

Research results:

The first step in conducting this study was to examine the particularities of emotional intelligence among the MIA employees in relation to gender, age, work experience, position held, and personality traits, as well as to identify statistically significant differences.

Differences in emotional intelligence among the MIA employees based on gender.

The results of the emotional intelligence levels among MIA employees, both women and men, fall within the sub-average-to-average range. However, women exhibit a higher level, with a statistically significant difference ($p=0.03$). The emotional maturity averages indicate that both genders display emotional sensitivity, but men are more emotionally mature ($p=0.049$). The emotional distress averages fall into the low-to-average distress category, with women showing higher levels compared to men ($p=0.0001$). As for empathic emotional maturation, men are charac-

terized as weakly empathic, while women show a medium level of empathy ($p=0.001$). Regarding cognitive-emotional coping, women exhibit a higher level on the acceptance scale ($p=0.003$), while men show a higher level on the blaming others scale ($p=0.002$).

Differences in emotional intelligence among the MIA employees based on age.

The emotional intelligence levels of MIA employees aged between 31 and 65 years fall within the average range, being higher than those of employees aged between 19 and 30 years, with a statistically significant difference ($p=0.001$). The emotional maturity averages show that both age groups are classified as sensitive individuals, but those in the older age group exhibit a slight increase ($p=0.015$). The emotional distress averages fall into the low distress category for the 31-65 age group and medium distress for the 19-30 age group ($p=0.001$). Regarding empathic emotional maturation, MIA employees in the 19-30 age group have slightly higher values compared to those in the 31-65 age group; however, no statistically significant difference was found. As for cognitive-emotional coping, the 31-65 age group is more likely to blame others and exaggerate the catastrophe, while those in the 19-30 age group tend to self-blame and ruminate, but then resign and focus on the steps they will take to confront the event, assigning it a positive meaning. Statistically significant differences were found across all scales.

Differences in emotional intelligence among the MIA employees based on length of service.

Regarding EI among MIA employees based on length of service, we compared results across groups and found that employees with up to 5 years of service exhibit a higher level of emotional distress compared to those with 5-10 years or 18-35 years of service ($p = 0.001$). Interestingly, MIA employees with up to 5 years of service also demonstrate a higher level of emotional intelligence compared to those with 5-10 years or 18-35 years of service ($p = 0.001$). Additionally, this group shows higher levels of acceptance, planning-based refocusing, positive reappraisal, putting situations into perspective, catastrophizing, and blaming others ($p = 0.001$).

No statistically significant differences were identified in the emotional intelligence dimensions between employees with 5-10 years and those with 18-35 years of service. This suggests that after an initial phase of emotional skill acquisition and consolidation, the level of emotional intelligence tends to stabilize over time.

Differences in emotional intelligence among the MIA employees based on their job position.

The results of emotional intelligence levels among MIA employees

holding leadership positions fall within the average range, being higher than those of employees in execution positions (with below-average levels), and show a statistically significant difference ($p=0.001$). The mean scores of emotional maturity indicate that both groups are characterized by sensitivity, however, those in leadership positions show a higher level ($p=0.027$). Employees in leadership roles exhibit a lower level of emotional distress compared to those in execution positions ($p=0.001$). Regarding empathic emotional maturation, no significant statistical differences were found. In terms of cognitive-emotional coping: employees in leadership roles are more likely to blame others and engage in catastrophizing, whereas those in execution positions tend to self-blame and ruminate, but then resign themselves and think positively about the steps they will take to confront the event. Statistically significant differences were observed in all scales.

The next step in conducting the study was to **determine the significant correlations** between the emotional intelligence of MIA employees and their personality traits, such that certain personality traits are associated with a higher level of emotional intelligence. We found that there are both direct and inverse proportional correlations: a high level of social desirability leads to a low level of emotional intelligence ($p=0.004$); a high level of agreeableness leads to a low level of emotional intelligence ($p=0.002$); a high level of conscientiousness leads to a low level of emotional intelligence ($p=0.048$); the more autonomously the MIA employees tend to act, the more difficulties they encounter in understanding others' emotions and in acting according to these emotions ($p=0.013$); the higher the emotional maturity of MIA employees, the lower the level of autonomy ($p=0.015$); the higher the emotional distress in the MIA employees, the less extroverted they are ($p=0.001$); there are no strong, statistically significant inverse or direct proportional correlations between emotional maturity empathy and personality traits.

Chapter 3, "Development of emotional intelligence among employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs," outlines the methodology of the formative experiment is presented, including the aim and hypothesis of the research, the objectives, and the investigated variables. The dimensions of EI targeted by the formative program are described, along with the applied principles and methods. The program's core components include self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and the management of social relationships.

The effectiveness of the emotional intelligence development program for MIA employees is assessed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test (for intra-group, test-retest comparisons) and the Mann-Whitney U test (for inter-group comparisons at the same stage).

The analysis of the empirical research results on emotional intelligence among MIA employees highlighted the need for psychological intervention in this area. The investigation into the psychosocial aspects of emotional intelligence confirmed the possibility of developing emotional intelligence throughout life, which became an important formative indicator. Therefore, the development of the formative approach was based on the premise that the issue of emotional intelligence of MIA employees still offers the possibility and necessity of new analytical, investigative, and formative directions that could contribute to the development of an optimal level of emotional intelligence components.

Thus, we proceeded with the implementation of the formative experiment by designing a psychologically oriented intervention program with a developmental focus [27, 41], aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence among employees of the MIA.

The purpose:

The design and implementation of a program for the development of emotional intelligence in MIA personnel.

Research hypothesis for the formative experiment:

We hypothesize that the implementation of a program based on techniques aimed at developing the ability to understand and constructively interpret one's own emotions and those of others, regulate emotional responses, overcome psychological obstacles, and enhance interpersonal communication will significantly contribute to the improvement of emotional regulation, the development of empathy, and the strengthening of stress management skills among employees of the MIA.

Research objectives:

1. To identify formative methods and techniques and to design a program for the development of emotional intelligence;
2. To establish the experimental and control groups;
3. To implement the emotional intelligence development program within the experimental group;
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of the emotional intelligence development program;
5. To formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the results obtained.

Description of the experimental research sample

The formative experiment was conducted on a sample of 24 participants, aged between 19 and 65 years. They were divided into two groups: the Experimental Group (EG) and the Control Group (CG). Participants from both groups had previously taken part in the preliminary (baseline) assessment phase and demonstrated the lowest levels of emotional

intelligence, emotional maturity, empathic emotional development, the highest/lowest level of cognitive-emotional coping strategies, as well as the high level of emotional distress.

The grouping process also considered gender as a criterion. Each group consisted of 12 participants: 6 men and 6 women.

The emotional intelligence development program sessions were conducted twice a month over a period of 10 months, from May 2023 to February 2024. Each psychological intervention session had an average duration of 2 hours (120 minutes). A total of 20 intervention sessions were carried out with the experimental group.

Throughout the course of the experimental research, all participants provided informed consent to take part in the study, under the condition that their identities would remain anonymous.

At this stage of the research, the following statistical methods were used:

- **Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test** – to calculate the statistical differences observed within the same group (experimental or control) at different stages of the research (pre-test and post-test);

- **Mann-Whitney U Test** – to calculate the statistical differences between participants from different groups at the same stage of the research.

Competencies developed through the intervention program:

1. The ability to understand and constructively interpret one's own emotions and those of others;

2. The ability to effectively regulate and manage one's own emotional responses;

3. The ability to demonstrate emotional stability and subjective self-control;

4. The ability to exhibit motivation and empathy;

5. The ability to display socially appropriate and acceptable behaviour.

Analysis and interpretation of research results

In the control study, we employed the same diagnostic techniques as those used in the initial assessment phase of the research.

Results of the study based on psychological instruments measuring emotional intelligence dimensions.

The data obtained from the activities aimed to develop and enhance emotional intelligence demonstrate that the experimental group (which participated in the training sessions) recorded positive changes across all measured parameters, in contrast to the control group.

To highlight statistical differences within the CG between pre - and post-test measurements, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used. The

results indicate no significant differences, with the exception of emotional maturity and empathic emotional development, which may be attributed to the influence of experiences encountered between testing sessions. However, the scores of the control group remained significantly lower compared to those of the EG following the implementation of the emotional intelligence development program.

Analyzing the results of the experimental group obtained before and after the training, we can specify that there are statistically significant differences in all dimensions of emotional intelligence, as well as in personality traits. This allows us to affirm that the psychological intervention achieved its goal, contributing to the development of emotional intelligence among the employees of the MIA (Table 4).

From a psychological perspective, we can interpret that employees of the MIA in the Experimental/Retest group, compared to those in the Control/Retest group, following the psychological intervention, are more capable of taking responsibility for their actions and stressful events in their lives, overcoming them by putting them into perspective. They plan actions in case they encounter difficulties, are honest with themselves and others, are more resilient in the face of overloads, demonstrate high emotional balance, are empathetic, can manage their emotions, build positive relationships with those around them, and recognize their own emotions as well as those of others.

In conclusion, the results obtained by the Experimental/Retest group, compared to those of the Control/Retest group, allow us to affirm that the psychological intervention had a significant positive effect on the development of emotional intelligence levels in the subjects of the Experimental group.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of this doctoral thesis was to identify the dimensions of emotional intelligence at employees of the MIA and to develop psychological strategies and techniques through which this level can be enhanced.

To achieve this objective, a theoretical study and two experimental studies were conducted. The analysis of the results generated the following **conclusions**:

1. The theoretical argument of the study is as follows: Emotional intelligence influences behaviour, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness and awareness of others, communication, motivation, empathy, conflict resolution, and emotional regulation (Chapter 1, paragraphs 1.1-1.3), all of which are currently considered essential facilitators for ensuring personal and professional success [1, 5, 6], including at all levels within a law enforcement institution such as the MIA [10, 11]. Furthermore, its development is a dynamic process of assimilating experiences throughout life (Chapter 1, paragraph 1.4). In practice, the success that an individual achieves in life largely depends on emotional intelligence [1, 8, 12]. The **definition** we propose in this research is: *Emotional intelligence of the police officers is the ability to recognize, be aware of, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others, focusing on emotional self-regulation skills, empathy, constructive conflict management, and the harmonious development of interpersonal relationships, which contribute to handling crisis situations, maintaining emotional balance in the face of stressors, and creating a climate of trust between the police officer and society.*

2. The theoretical analysis of studies on emotional intelligence (Chapter 1, paragraphs 1.1-1.3) allowed us to establish that poor communication, destructive management of conflicts and emotions, problematic interpersonal relationships, lack of empathy, low motivation etc., including among employees of the MIA (Chapter 1, paragraph 1.4), are due to a low level of emotional intelligence. These factors can negatively impact the image of the MIA system and may also create favourable conditions for an increase in the number of offenses against police officers.

3. It was found that MIA employees exhibit a moderate level of EI, situated near the lower threshold, indicating difficulties in applying coping strategies, empathy, emotional maturation, and resilience. Female employees demonstrate higher levels of EI, greater empathy, and more effective emotional management skills, whereas male employees tend to show greater stress resistance but are more likely to assign blame to others. Supervisors display higher EI levels and tend to externalize blame more frequently than employees in non-supervisory roles.

Employees with 18–35 years of service tend to assign positive mean-

ing to stress, while those with 5–10 years of service appear to be more emotionally affected. Individuals aged 31–65 show less vulnerability to overload, in contrast to the 19–30 age group, who, while more emotionally sensitive, exhibit greater optimism.

4. Among MIA employees, high EI shows a negative correlation with social desirability, autonomy, and certain coping strategies. Police officers with high EI tend to be more authentic, honest, intuitive, act quickly, and avoid rumination or self-blame; however, they display lower levels of autonomy. Emotional distress is associated with lower extraversion and a reduced tendency to blame others.

5. The study identified a direct proportional correlation between emotional intelligence and the scales of cognitive-emotional coping strategies, specifically catastrophizing (amplifying the terror caused by events) and blaming others (for the purpose of avoiding punishment). Thus, police officers with higher emotional maturity may exaggerate the horror caused by events due to the high expectations from society and their superiors. Regarding emotional distress, police officers with a higher level tend to self-blame and ruminate on events, but over time, they tend to reappraise the event in a positive light, minimizing its severity through acceptance.

6. The results of the baseline experiment served as the foundation for the development of an EI enhancement program for MIA employees. Following the implementation of the program, subjects in the EG demonstrated significant improvements in EI and coping strategies, whereas those in the CG remained at below-average levels. Thus, it was demonstrated that not only life experience but also a structured program can contribute to the development of emotional intelligence.

7. The development of emotional intelligence contributed to the optimization of personality traits among the subjects in the experimental group. These traits became more balanced through the decrease or increase in test scores (some results had a positive impact either through score reduction or elevation) across all assessed variables. As a result, MIA employees became more emotionally stable and demonstrated greater sincerity.

Summarizing the scientific results, we conclude that the proposed research and objectives have been fully achieved. Consequently, the important scientific problem was addressed - namely, the identification of the psychological dimensions of emotional intelligence in employees of the MIA, as well as its specific characteristics depending on gender, age, years of service, and job position. This facilitated the design and implementation of a targeted emotional intelligence development program, which proved effective in optimizing the personality traits of MIA em-

ployees. This optimization is expected to enhance constructive engagement with civil society and contribute to improving the public image of both the MIA system as a whole and the police officer in particular.

The present study also acknowledges certain limitations of the results obtained. These refer to the lack of data regarding the level of emotional intelligence among MIA employees based on their status (officer/non-commissioned officer; public servant with special status/regular public servant), the specific department in which they work (public order, criminal investigation, crime analysis, etc.), the values they hold, and the comparative assessment of emotional intelligence levels between MIA employees and members of civil society.

Suggestions for potential research directions related to the addressed topic:

1. Expanding the research efforts to identify the dimensions of emotional intelligence within specific police domains (public order, criminal investigation, crime investigations, etc.);

2. Extending researches based on police status criteria (officer/non-commissioned officer; public servant with special status/public servant within the MIA);

3. Extending the research based on the functional specificity of professional categories (carabinieri, rescuers/firefighters, border police officers, etc.);

4. Conducting a study on the correlation between emotional intelligence of the MIA employees and the values they possess;

5. Conducting comparative studies on emotional intelligence of the MIA employees in relation to that of the civilian population.

The results of the theoretical-experimental study conducted regarding the development of emotional intelligence at the MIA employees allow us to formulate the following recommendations:

1. We suggest that the program for developing emotional intelligence among the MIA employees be adopted and utilized by employees with psychological duties within the MIA subdivisions. This would aim to facilitate the successful completion of police officers' service missions through active and productive involvement (establishing a constructive relationship with civil society, reducing emotional instability, and strengthening self-confidence and trust in civil society), while harmonizing their personal and professional lives.

2. The results obtained may serve as a basis for the Central or Military Medical Commissions belonging to the MIA to evaluate the emotional intelligence components of candidates for employment.

3. We suggest that the results obtained to be thoroughly analyzed by the MIA employees responsible for recruitment, selection, and hir-

ing human resources within the MIA. They should emphasize a selection process based on clear arguments regarding the importance of emotional intelligence for MIA employees.

4. We recommend that “Ștefan cel Mare” Academy of the MIA review the curriculum and training programs for initial, continuous and managerial police training, and include more practical hours aimed to develop emotional intelligence among MIA employees.

5. We recommend that the MIA employees responsible for professional training include topics focusing on emotional intelligence dimensions in the General Training Plan.

6. We propose the results of this research serve as a foundation for including concrete actions in the MIA Development Strategies aimed at enhancing the emotional intelligence of the MIA employees.

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ANNOTATION

Vica Anton. Psychological dimensions of emotional intelligence to the employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Doctoral Thesis in Psychology, Chisinau, 2025

Structure of the thesis: the work is composed of an abstract (in three languages), an introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, 223 bibliographic sources, 9 annexes, 156 pages of core text, 34 tables, and 33 figures. The results obtained are published in 13 scientific papers.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, personality traits, psychological development program, professional success.

The purpose of the research: the evaluation of the level of emotional intelligence development among employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, through the analysis of its essential components and the influence exerted on personality traits, with the aim of developing a tailored emotional intelligence development program for this professional group.

Research objectives: theoretical framework development, to establish the theoretical foundation of the research by analyzing the specialized literature on the concept of emotional intelligence, its components, determining factors, and functions in the context of police officers' duties; development and conduct of a descriptive study, to design and implement a descriptive study aimed at evaluating the level of development of emotional intelligence dimensions among MIA employees, using validated psychological tools; investigation of individual differences, to examine individual differences in emotional intelligence based on variables such as gender, age, years of service, and position held within the MIA structure; correlational study, to conduct a correlational study between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and the personality traits of MIA employees; design, implementation, and validation of a psychological intervention program, to create, implement, and validate a psychological intervention program aimed at developing emotional intelligence among MIA employees, followed by an experimental evaluation of its effectiveness.

Scientific novelty and originality lie in the fact that, for the first time in the Republic of Moldova, the emotional intelligence dimensions of MAI employees were experimentally investigated and empirically described. The study highlighted the level of emotional intelligence based on variables such as gender, age, years of service, and position held within the institution. Furthermore, the relationship between personality traits and emotional intelligence levels was established. Additionally, the research included the design, implementation, and validation of a psychological intervention program, which proved to be effective in developing emotional intelligence among MAI employees.

Results of the research that contribute to solving the important scientific problem include: a deeper understanding of the concept of emotional intelligence, the analysis of correlations between its components, and the investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and the personality traits of MAI employees. Additionally, the research is supported by relevant psychological and interdisciplinary studies, contributing to the consolidation of the theoretical foundation regarding the development of emotional intelligence in organizational and institutional contexts.

Theoretical significance of the work lies in the achievement of a synthesis of relevant theories and models of emotional intelligence, as well as the highlighting of the historical context of the evolution of the aforementioned concept. This research also involves the conceptualization of emotional intelligence, specifically for employees of the MIA. Additionally, the work synthesizes the results of both fundamental and applied research on emotional intelligence, thus contributing new knowledge regarding the dimensions of emotional intelligence among MIA employees to the theoretical base of psychological science.

Practical value of the work lies in the potential implementation of an emotional intelligence development program for MIA employees, enhancing their emotional stability. It aims to reduce incidents of misconduct while improving service quality to the public. The program could serve as a basis for a methodological guide for psychologists in the internal affairs system and inform the curriculum at the "Ștefan cel Mare" Academy of the MIA, as well as aid in more effective human resources management within the MIA.

Implementation of research findings: are applied in the training and professional development of police officers through initial, continuous, and managerial training courses offered by the "Ștefan cel Mare" Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This dissertation makes a substantial contribution to the enrichment of the national scientific literature in the field of psychology and is actively utilized in the professional activities within the MIA.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Вика Антон. Психологические аспекты эмоционального интеллекта сотрудникам Министерства внутренних дел
Кандидатская диссертация по психологии, Кишинев, 2025 г.

Структура диссертации: работа состоит из аннотации (на трёх языках), введения, трёх глав, общих выводов и рекомендаций, 223 библиографических источников, 9 приложений, 156 страниц основного текста, 34 таблиц и 33 рисунков. Полученные результаты опубликованы в 13 научных работах.

Ключевые слова: эмоциональный интеллект, личностные черты, программа психологического развития, профессиональный успех.

Цель исследования: оценка уровня развития эмоционального интеллекта среди сотрудников МВД путём анализа его ключевых компонентов и влияния на личностные черты с целью разработки программы развития эмоционального интеллекта, адаптированной к данной профессиональной группе.

Задачи исследования: обоснование теоретической основы исследования путём анализа специализированной литературы, касающейся понятия эмоционального интеллекта, его компонентов, определяющих факторов и функций в контексте профессиональной деятельности полицейских; разработка и проведение констатирующего исследования по оценке уровня развития компонентов эмоционального интеллекта среди сотрудников МВД с использованием валидизированных психологических методик; изучение индивидуальных различий в уровне эмоционального интеллекта в зависимости от таких переменных, как пол, возраст, стаж работы и занимаемая должность в структуре МВД; проведение корреляционного анализа между компонентами эмоционального интеллекта и личностными чертами сотрудников МВД; разработка, внедрение и валидация программы психологического вмешательства, направленной на развитие эмоционального интеллекта у сотрудников МВД, а также оценка её эффективности с помощью экспериментальных методов.

Научная новизна и оригинальность: в первом в Республике Молдова экспериментальном изучении компонентов эмоционального интеллекта у сотрудников МВД с учётом пола, возраста, стажа и должности, выявлении их связи с личностными чертами, а также в разработке и доказанной эффективности интервенционной программы по развитию эмоционального интеллекта.

Научные результаты, способствующие решению важной научной проблемы, заключаются в углублённом раскрытии концепта эмоционального интеллекта, анализе корреляций между его компонентами, а также исследовании взаимосвязей между эмоциональным интеллектом и личностными чертами сотрудников МВД. Настоящее исследование опирается на актуальные психологические и междисциплинарные работы, внося вклад в укрепление теоретической базы по развитию эмоционального интеллекта в организационно-институциональном контексте.

Теоретическое значение работы состоит в обобщении и синтезе теорий эмоционального интеллекта, его концептуализации применительно к сотрудникам МВД и дополнении психологической науки новыми данными о его компонентах.

Прикладное значение работы: возможность практического применения комплексной программы развития эмоционального интеллекта среди сотрудников МВД как в краткосрочной, так и в долгосрочной перспективе, с положительным влиянием на их эмоциональную стабильность; снижение количества случаев неповиновения, жестокого обращения и хулиганства среди сотрудников, улучшение качества предоставляемых ими услуг гражданскому обществу. Разработанная программа может служить основой методического пособия для психологов системы внутренних дел, а также ориентиром для учебных планов и программ начального, непрерывного и управленческого обучения в Академии МВД «Штефан чел Маре». Кроме того, она может быть полезной для всего персонала, ответственного за управление человеческими ресурсами в системе МВД, особенно в условиях менее качественного отбора кадров.

Внедрение научных результатов: результаты настоящего исследования используются в процессе подготовки и профессионального обучения полицейских в рамках начальных, непрерывных и управленческих курсов в Академии МВД «Штефан чел Маре». Диссертация представляет собой значительный вклад в развитие национальной научной литературы в области психологии и применяется в профессиональной деятельности в структуре МВД.

ADNOTARE

Vica Anton. Dimensiuni psihologice ale inteligenței emoționale la angajații Ministerului Afacerilor Interne

Teză de doctor în psihologie, Chișinău, 2025

Structura tezei. Lucrarea este compusă din adnotare (în 3 limbi), introducere, 3 capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, 223 surse bibliografice, 9 anexe, 156 pagini text de bază, 34 tabele și 33 figuri. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 13 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: inteligența emoțională, trăsături de personalitate, program de dezvoltare psihologică, succes profesional.

Scopul cercetării: evaluarea nivelului de dezvoltare a inteligenței emoționale în rândul angajaților MAI prin analiza componentelor sale esențiale și a influenței exercitate asupra trăsăturilor de personalitate, în vederea elaborării unui program de dezvoltare a inteligenței emoționale adaptat acestui grup profesional.

Obiectivele cercetării: fundamentarea cadrului teoretic al cercetării prin analiza literaturii de specialitate privind conceptul de inteligență emoțională, componentele, factorii determinanți și funcțiile acesteia în contextul activității polițiștilor; elaborarea și desfășurarea unui studiu constatativ privind evaluarea nivelului de dezvoltare a dimensiunilor inteligenței emoționale în rândul angajaților MAI prin aplicarea unor instrumente psihologice validate; investigarea diferențelor individuale în ceea ce privește inteligența emoțională, în funcție de variabile precum sexul, vârsta, vechimea în activitate și funcția deținută în structura MAI; realizarea unui studiu corelațional între dimensiunile inteligenței emoționale și trăsăturile de personalitate ale angajaților MAI; conceperea, implementarea și validarea unui program de intervenție psihologică, destinat dezvoltării inteligenței emoționale în rândul angajaților MAI, și evaluarea eficienței acestuia prin metode experimentale.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică constă în faptul că, pentru prima dată în Republica Moldova, au fost investigate experimental și descrise empiric dimensiunile inteligenței emoționale la angajații MAI. Studiul a evidențiat nivelul inteligenței emoționale în funcție de variabile precum sexul, vârsta, stagiul de activitate și funcția deținută. De asemenea, a fost stabilită relația dintre trăsăturile de personalitate și nivelul inteligenței emoționale. În plus, cercetarea a inclus conceperea, implementarea și validarea unui program de intervenție psihologică, care s-a dovedit eficient în dezvoltarea inteligenței emoționale în rândul angajaților MAI.

Rezultatele cercetării, care contribuie la soluționarea problemei științifice importante, rezidă în aprofundarea conceptului de inteligență emoțională, analiza corelațiilor dintre componentele sale, precum și în investigarea relației dintre inteligența emoțională și trăsăturile de personalitate ale angajaților MAI. De asemenea, cercetarea se sprijină pe studii psihologice și interdisciplinare relevante, contribuind la consolidarea fundamentului teoretic privind dezvoltarea inteligenței emoționale în context organizațional și instituțional.

Semnificația teoretică a lucrării: realizarea unei sinteze a teoriilor și modelelor relevante privind inteligența emoțională și evidențierea contextului istoric al evoluției conceptului menționat; conceptualizarea inteligenței emoționale, inclusiv la angajații MAI; sintetizarea rezultatelor cercetărilor fundamentale și aplicative ale inteligenței emoționale; completarea bazei teoretice a științei psihologice cu noi cunoștințe referitoare la dimensiunile inteligenței emoționale la angajații MAI.

Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării: posibilitatea aplicării programului complex de dezvoltare a inteligenței emoționale la angajații MAI, pe termen scurt și lung, influențând asupra stabilității emoționale a acestora; micșorarea numărului de ultragieri, maltratări, huliganism asupra angajaților MAI, oferirea serviciilor calitative de către angajații MAI în raport cu societatea civilă (programul putând constitui baza unui ghid metodologic pentru psihologii din sistemul afacerilor interne, indiciu pentru curricula și programele de instruire inițială, continuă și managerială în cadrul Academiei „Ștefan cel Mare” a MAI), dar și pentru întreg personalul responsabil de managementul resurselor umane din cadrul MAI.

Implementarea rezultatelor cercetării. Rezultatele acestui studiu sunt utilizate în procesul de pregătire și formare a polițiștilor la cursurile de instruire inițială, continuă, managerială în cadrul Academiei „Ștefan cel Mare” a MAI. Teza constituie o contribuție temeinică la îmbogățirea literaturii științifice naționale în domeniul psihologiei și este utilizată în activitatea profesională din cadrul MAI.

ANTON VICA

**PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE IN EMPLOYEES OF THE MINISTRY
OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**511.02. DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY**

**ABSTRACT
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