



## THE THEORY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION AND ITS PRACTICAL ASPECTS

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**Abstract:** *This article investigates the theory of emotional intelligence in education and examines its practical applications in teaching and learning processes. The concept of emotional intelligence has gained significant attention in educational research since the 1990s, yet its integration into pedagogical practice remains uneven and sometimes superficial. The study addresses the gap between theoretical models of emotional intelligence and their actual implementation in educational settings. The purpose of the article is to analyse the major theoretical frameworks of emotional intelligence, to evaluate their relevance for educational practice, and to identify the conditions under which emotional intelligence can be effectively developed in both teachers and students. The research is based on a systematic analysis of international scientific literature, including the foundational works of Salovey and Mayer, Goleman, Bar-On, and Petrides, as well as recent empirical studies conducted in diverse educational contexts across Europe, Asia, and North America. The article distinguishes between ability-based and trait-based models of emotional intelligence and examines their implications for curriculum design, classroom interaction, teacher training, and student well-being. The main result is a conceptual framework that connects four dimensions of emotional intelligence - perception, understanding, regulation, and application of emotions - with specific pedagogical strategies. The study concludes that emotional intelligence is not a fixed trait but a developable capacity, and that educational institutions play a critical role in its systematic cultivation when appropriate pedagogical conditions are provided.*

**Keywords:** *emotional intelligence, education, social-emotional learning, teacher training, student well-being, self-regulation, empathy, classroom interaction*

## ТЕОРИЯ ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНОГО ИНТЕЛЛЕКТА В ОБРАЗОВАНИИ И ЕЁ ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ

**Аннотация:** *В статье исследуется теория эмоционального интеллекта в образовании и рассматриваются её практические применения в процессах преподавания и обучения. Концепция эмоционального интеллекта привлекла значительное внимание в педагогических исследованиях начиная с 1990-х годов, однако её интеграция в педагогическую практику остаётся неравномерной и иногда*



поверхностной. Исследование обращается к разрыву между теоретическими моделями эмоционального интеллекта и их фактическим применением в образовательных условиях. Цель статьи - проанализировать основные теоретические рамки эмоционального интеллекта, оценить их значимость для педагогической практики и определить условия, при которых эмоциональный интеллект может быть эффективно развит как у учителей, так и у учащихся. Исследование основано на систематическом анализе международной научной литературы, включая фундаментальные работы Саловея и Мэйера, Гоулмана, Бар-Она и Петридеса, а также новейшие эмпирические исследования, проведенные в различных образовательных контекстах Европы, Азии и Северной Америки. В статье проводится разграничение между моделями эмоционального интеллекта, основанными на способностях, и моделями, основанными на чертах, и анализируются их последствия для проектирования учебных программ, взаимодействия в классе, подготовки учителей и благополучия учащихся. Основным результатом является концептуальная рамка, связывающая четыре измерения эмоционального интеллекта - восприятие, понимание, регуляцию и применение эмоций - с конкретными педагогическими стратегиями. Исследование заключает, что эмоциональный интеллект не является неизменной чертой, а представляет собой развиваемую способность, и что образовательные учреждения играют ключевую роль в его систематическом формировании при создании соответствующих педагогических условий.

**Ключевые слова:** эмоциональный интеллект, образование, социально-эмоциональное обучение, подготовка учителей, благополучие учащихся, саморегуляция, эмпатия, взаимодействие в классе

## TA'LIMDA EMOTSIONAL INTELEKT NAZARIYASI VA UNING AMALIY JIHATLARI

**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada ta'limda emotsional intellekt nazariyasi o'rganiladi va uning o'qitish hamda o'rganish jarayonlaridagi amaliy qo'llanilishi tahlil qilinadi. Emotsional intellekt tushunchasi 1990-yillardan boshlab pedagogik tadqiqotlarda katta e'tiborga sazovor bo'ldi, biroq uning pedagogik amaliyotga integratsiyasi notekis va ba'zan yuzaki bo'lib qolmoqda. Tadqiqot emotsional intellektning nazariy modellari va ularning ta'lim sharoitlarida haqiqiy qo'llanilishi o'rtasidagi tafovutga murojaat qiladi. Maqolaning maqsadi emotsional intellektning asosiy nazariy ramkalarini tahlil qilish, ularning pedagogik amaliyot uchun ahamiyatini baholash va emotsional intellektni o'qituvchilar va o'quvchilarda samarali rivojlantirish mumkin bo'lgan shartlarni aniqlashdan iborat. Tadqiqot xalqaro ilmiy adabiyotlarning tizimli tahliliga, jumladan Salovey va Mayer, Goleman, Bar-On va Petridesning fundamental ishlari, shuningdek



*Yevropa, Osiyo va Shimoliy Amerikaning turli ta'lim kontekstlarida o'tkazilgan so'nggi empirik tadqiqotlarga asoslangan. Maqolada emotsional intellektning qobiliyatlarga asoslangan va xususiyatlarga asoslangan modellari o'rtasida farqlanish o'tkaziladi hamda ularning o'quv dasturlarini loyihalash, sinfdagi o'zaro munosabat, o'qituvchilarni tayyorlash va o'quvchilar farovonligi uchun oqibatlarini tahlil qilinadi. Asosiy natija emotsional intellektning to'rtta o'lchami - hissiyotlarni idrok etish, tushunish, boshqarish va qo'llash - ni aniq pedagogik strategiyalar bilan bog'laydigan kontseptual ramkadir. Tadqiqot emotsional intellekt o'zgarish xususiyat emas, balki rivojlantirilishi mumkin bo'lgan qobiliyat ekanligi va ta'lim muassasalari tegishli pedagogik shartlar yaratilganda uning tizimli shakllanishida hal qiluvchi rol o'ynashi xulosasiga keladi.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** *emotsional intellekt, ta'lim, ijtimoiy-emotsional o'rganish, o'qituvchilarni tayyorlash, o'quvchilar farovonligi, o'zini o'zi boshqarish, empatiya, sinfdagi o'zaro munosabat*

## INTRODUCTION

The idea that human intelligence extends beyond purely cognitive abilities has a long intellectual history, but it received its modern scientific formulation in the early 1990s. Salovey and Mayer (1990) introduced the term emotional intelligence to describe the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions in adaptive ways. Their original article, published in the journal *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, defined emotional intelligence as a subset of social intelligence that involves the capacity to monitor one's own and others' feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide thinking and action. This definition was deliberately cognitive in character: it treated emotional intelligence not as a personality trait but as a mental ability that could be measured through performance tasks.

The concept gained wide public attention after Goleman (1995) published

his bestselling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. Goleman expanded the original framework significantly, including motivation, social skills, and personality dispositions alongside the core emotional abilities. While Goleman's work brought emotional intelligence into mainstream discourse and attracted the interest of educators worldwide, it also introduced conceptual ambiguity. The scientific community responded with two main directions of further development. One direction, continued by Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2004), refined the ability model and developed the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test as a performance-based measure. The other direction, represented by Petrides and Furnham (2001), proposed trait emotional intelligence, which is measured through self-report questionnaires and understood as a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies.



Separately, Bar-On (1997) developed the Emotional Quotient Inventory, a self-report measure based on a broader model of emotional-social intelligence that includes stress management, adaptability, and general mood. These different approaches created a rich but sometimes confusing theoretical landscape. For educators, the critical question is not which model is scientifically superior in abstract terms, but which aspects of emotional intelligence are relevant for the classroom, how they can be assessed in educational settings, and what pedagogical strategies support their development.

The relevance of emotional intelligence for education is supported by a growing body of empirical evidence. A meta-analysis by Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011), covering 213 school-based social and emotional learning programmes involving 270,034 students, found that participants demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, behaviour, and academic performance. More recently, MacCann, Jiang, Brown, Double, Bucich, and Minbashian (2020) conducted a meta-analysis of 158 studies and reported that emotional intelligence is positively associated with academic performance, with the strongest effects observed for ability-based measures. These findings suggest that the relationship between emotional intelligence and educational

outcomes is not merely theoretical but has a measurable empirical basis.

The research problem of this article can be formulated as follows: how can the theoretical models of emotional intelligence be translated into effective pedagogical practice, and what conditions are necessary for this translation to succeed? The purpose of the study is to provide a systematic theoretical analysis that connects major frameworks of emotional intelligence with specific educational applications. The object of the study is the process of integrating emotional intelligence into education. The subject is the pedagogical and psychological conditions under which emotional intelligence can be developed in teachers and students within formal educational settings.

The hypothesis of the article is that emotional intelligence is most effectively developed in educational contexts when four conditions are present: explicit inclusion of emotional competencies in the curriculum, modelling of emotionally intelligent behaviour by teachers, creation of a psychologically safe classroom environment, and systematic reflection on emotional experiences in learning. If any of these conditions is missing, emotional intelligence programmes may produce short-term effects but fail to achieve lasting developmental outcomes. This hypothesis is grounded in the assumption that emotional development, like cognitive development, requires sustained, structured, and contextually embedded support.



## Methods

The article employs a theoretical and analytical research design. The method includes a systematic review of scientific literature, comparative analysis of theoretical models, and conceptual synthesis. The literature base covers peer-reviewed publications from 1990 to 2024, drawn from international databases including Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO, and ERIC. The search was conducted using the terms emotional intelligence, social-emotional learning, emotional competence in education, teacher emotional intelligence, and student emotional regulation.

The analytical procedure was organized in four stages. At the first stage, the major theoretical models of emotional intelligence were identified and compared: the ability model of Mayer and Salovey, the competence model of Goleman, the trait model of Petrides, and the emotional-social intelligence model of Bar-On. At the second stage, empirical studies examining the effects of emotional intelligence on educational outcomes were reviewed, with attention to sample size, methodology, and cultural context. At the third stage, practical applications of emotional intelligence in educational settings were categorized, including curriculum integration, teacher training programmes, and school-wide initiatives. At the fourth stage, a conceptual framework connecting theory and practice was developed.

The article does not present original empirical data. Its contribution is

analytical: it offers a structured overview of the field that can serve as a foundation for designing educational interventions, developing teacher training curricula, and constructing assessment tools for emotional intelligence in educational contexts. This approach is justified because the field of emotional intelligence in education contains multiple overlapping models, and practitioners need a clear conceptual map before implementing specific programmes.

## Results

### 1. Comparative analysis of theoretical models

The first result of the analysis is a systematic comparison of the four major theoretical models of emotional intelligence and their relevance for education. The ability model of Mayer and Salovey describes emotional intelligence as a set of four hierarchically organized abilities: perceiving emotions accurately, using emotions to facilitate thought, understanding emotional meanings and their combinations, and managing emotions in oneself and others. This model has the strongest psychometric foundation and treats emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability that can be tested through correct and incorrect answers. Its educational implication is that emotional skills, like mathematical or linguistic skills, can be taught, practised, and assessed through structured educational activities.

Goleman's competence model organizes emotional intelligence into five



domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Unlike the Mayer-Salovey model, Goleman's framework incorporates personality traits and motivational dispositions. This makes it intuitively appealing for educators but methodologically less precise. Its practical strength lies in its accessibility: many school-based programmes worldwide, including the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning framework, draw on Goleman's categories. Its weakness is that it sometimes conflates emotional abilities with general positive personality characteristics, making it difficult to determine what exactly is being developed.

The trait model of Petrides defines emotional intelligence as a cluster of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions. It is measured through self-report instruments such as the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire. This model acknowledges that people's

beliefs about their own emotional abilities may differ from their actual performance. In educational research, trait emotional intelligence has been linked to student well-being, lower anxiety, better peer relationships, and reduced behavioural problems. However, because it relies on self-perception, it is susceptible to response biases, particularly in younger students.

Bar-On's model of emotional-social intelligence includes intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management, adaptability, and general mood. It provides a comprehensive picture of the emotional and social capacities relevant to effective functioning. In education, this model has been applied in school counselling, student support services, and leadership development programmes. Its breadth is both a strength and a limitation: it covers many relevant dimensions but makes it difficult to isolate the specific contribution of emotional intelligence from other psychological constructs.

Model	Core construct	Measurement approach	Educational application
Mayer & Salovey (Ability)	Four-branch hierarchy of emotional abilities	Performance-based tests (MSCEIT)	Structured skill instruction, assessment through tasks
Goleman (Competence)	Five domains including motivation and social skills	360-degree feedback, behavioural observation	SEL curricula, school culture, leadership training
Petrides (Trait)	Emotional self-perceptions and	Self-report questionnaires	Student well-being programmes,



Model	Core construct	Measurement approach	Educational application
	dispositions	(TEIQue)	screening, counselling
Bar-On (ESI)	Emotional-social intelligence with five scales	Self-report inventory (EQ-i)	Support services, adaptability training, school counselling

## 2. Emotional intelligence and academic outcomes

The second result concerns the empirical relationship between emotional intelligence and academic outcomes. The evidence from multiple studies and meta-analyses supports a moderate but consistent positive association. MacCann et al. (2020) reported that the correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance is comparable in magnitude to the correlation between conscientiousness and academic performance, suggesting that emotional intelligence makes an independent contribution to educational success beyond personality and cognitive ability alone.

Several mechanisms have been proposed to explain this relationship. First, students with higher emotional intelligence are better able to regulate test anxiety, maintain concentration during challenging tasks, and recover from academic setbacks. Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory of achievement emotions provides a useful framework: emotions in learning are determined by the student's perceived control over the learning task and the value assigned to the outcome. Students who can perceive

and regulate their emotions are more likely to maintain adaptive emotional states during learning. Second, emotional intelligence supports productive classroom relationships. Students who understand the emotions of their peers can collaborate more effectively in group work, resolve conflicts constructively, and contribute to a positive learning climate. Third, emotional intelligence facilitates motivation regulation. Students who are aware of their emotional states can identify when motivation is declining and apply strategies to sustain engagement.

However, the evidence also contains important nuances. The strength of the relationship varies by age, cultural context, and the model of emotional intelligence used. Ability-based measures tend to show more robust associations with academic performance than trait-based measures. In collectivist cultures, interpersonal dimensions of emotional intelligence may be more strongly associated with academic outcomes than intrapersonal dimensions. These nuances are important for educators because they suggest that emotional intelligence interventions should be adapted to the



specific context rather than applied as universal programmes.

### 3. Practical applications in educational settings

The third result is a categorization of practical applications of emotional intelligence in education. These applications can be organized into four areas: curriculum-integrated programmes, teacher emotional competence development, classroom environment design, and assessment practices.

Curriculum-integrated programmes embed emotional learning into the regular academic curriculum rather than treating it as a separate subject. The RULER programme developed at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence is a prominent example. It teaches students to Recognize, Understand, Label, Express, and Regulate emotions, and integrates these skills into language arts, social studies, and other subjects. Research on RULER has shown positive effects on classroom emotional climate, student engagement, and academic achievement. Another example is the MindUP programme, which combines mindfulness practices with lessons on the neuroscience of emotions, helping students understand the biological basis of their emotional reactions.

Teacher emotional competence development recognizes that teachers cannot effectively teach emotional skills that they themselves have not developed. Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, Reyes, and Salovey (2010) found that teachers who received training in emotional

intelligence reported greater job satisfaction, less emotional exhaustion, and more positive relationships with students. Jennings and Greenberg (2009) proposed the prosocial classroom model, arguing that teachers' social-emotional competence directly affects the quality of teacher-student relationships, classroom management, and the successful implementation of social-emotional learning curricula. This perspective has practical implications for teacher education: pre-service training programmes should include not only instruction on how to teach emotional intelligence to students but also systematic work on teachers' own emotional development.

Classroom environment design is the third area of application. Research shows that emotional intelligence develops more effectively in psychologically safe environments where students feel accepted, where mistakes are treated as learning opportunities, and where emotional expression is neither suppressed nor dismissed. Hamre and Pianta (2005) demonstrated that the quality of teacher-student interactions, particularly emotional support, is one of the strongest predictors of student engagement and academic growth. Creating such environments requires intentional pedagogical actions: establishing clear norms for emotional expression, responding to students' emotional states with empathy and guidance, and modelling constructive conflict resolution.



Assessment practices constitute the fourth area. Traditional academic assessment focuses on cognitive outcomes, but a comprehensive educational approach should also include assessment of emotional competencies. This does not mean grading students on their emotions. It means using formative assessment tools such as emotional check-ins, reflection journals, peer feedback on group work, and self-assessment rubrics to help students monitor their own emotional development. Portfolio-based assessment, where students collect evidence of their emotional growth over time, is another promising approach that aligns with the developmental nature of emotional intelligence.

#### **4. A conceptual framework for integrating emotional intelligence into education**

The fourth result is a conceptual framework that connects the four dimensions of emotional intelligence identified in the ability model - perception, understanding, regulation, and application - with specific pedagogical strategies.

The first dimension, perception of emotions, can be developed through activities that train students to identify emotional cues in themselves and others. In language arts, students can analyse characters' emotions in literary texts. In social studies, they can examine the emotional dimensions of historical events. In daily classroom practice, mood check-ins at the beginning of lessons help

students develop the habit of attending to their emotional states.

The second dimension, understanding of emotions, involves learning about the causes, consequences, and combinations of different emotional states. This can be addressed through explicit instruction on emotional vocabulary, discussion of emotional scenarios, and analysis of how emotions change over time. A student who understands that frustration often arises from perceived unfairness, or that excitement can sometimes interfere with careful thinking, has a richer emotional understanding that supports better decision-making.

The third dimension, regulation of emotions, is perhaps the most practically important for educational settings. Self-regulation strategies include cognitive reappraisal, attentional deployment, and response modulation. In the classroom, these strategies can be taught through breathing exercises, reflective pauses before responding, and structured debriefing after emotionally charged activities. The key pedagogical principle is that regulation should not mean suppression. Students should learn to manage their emotions adaptively, not to eliminate emotional experience.

The fourth dimension, application of emotions, refers to the ability to use emotional information in thinking, problem-solving, and creative activities. Research suggests that positive emotions broaden attentional focus and support creative thinking, while moderate levels



of negative emotion can enhance analytical reasoning. Teachers can facilitate this dimension by designing learning activities that engage students emotionally, by connecting academic content to students' personal experiences, and by using emotions as data for reflection and discussion rather than as obstacles to learning.

These four dimensions are not separate skills to be developed in isolation. They form an integrated system in which perception feeds understanding, understanding supports regulation, and regulation enables effective application. The pedagogical implication is that emotional intelligence should be woven throughout the educational experience rather than confined to a single lesson or programme.

## Discussion

The results of the theoretical analysis confirm that emotional intelligence is a meaningful construct for educational practice, but its effective integration requires careful attention to both theoretical foundations and practical conditions. The comparison of models reveals that no single framework captures the full complexity of emotional intelligence in education. The ability model provides scientific rigour and clear assessment criteria, but its performance-based tests may not capture the full range of emotional competencies relevant to classroom life. The trait model captures subjective experience and self-perception, which are important for student well-being, but may reflect confidence more

than competence. The competence model is practical and accessible but lacks conceptual precision. A balanced educational approach should draw on multiple models, selecting elements that are most relevant to specific pedagogical goals.

The empirical evidence reviewed in this article supports the conclusion that emotional intelligence can be developed through structured educational interventions. However, the effectiveness of such interventions depends on several conditions that are not always present in educational practice. First, emotional intelligence programmes must be sustained over time. Short workshops and one-time lessons produce limited effects. The programmes that show the strongest outcomes are those that are integrated into the regular curriculum and maintained across several years of schooling. Second, teacher preparation is essential. Teachers who lack emotional self-awareness or who feel uncomfortable discussing emotions in the classroom cannot deliver emotional intelligence programmes effectively. Third, the school culture must support emotional openness. In schools where emotional expression is discouraged, where competition dominates over collaboration, or where student-teacher relationships are hierarchical and distant, emotional intelligence programmes may be perceived as irrelevant or even threatening.

Cross-cultural considerations add another layer of complexity. Research



conducted in Western educational contexts may not directly transfer to educational settings in Central Asia, East Asia, or the Middle East, where emotional norms, communication styles, and the role of the teacher differ significantly. Fernández-Berrocal and Extremera (2006) noted that cultural values influence which emotional competencies are considered important, how emotions are expressed in public settings, and what constitutes appropriate emotional behaviour in the classroom. Uzbekistan's educational context, for example, combines post-Soviet pedagogical traditions with evolving national curricula, creating a unique environment where emotional intelligence concepts must be adapted rather than simply imported.

For higher education and teacher training, this discussion has direct implications. Pre-service teacher education programmes should include coursework on emotional intelligence theory, practical training in social-emotional learning methods, and opportunities for personal emotional development. In-service training should provide teachers with ongoing support for managing the emotional demands of the profession, including strategies for preventing emotional exhaustion and maintaining pedagogical motivation. School administrators should create institutional conditions that value emotional competence alongside academic achievement.

The proposed conceptual framework offers a structured approach to integrating emotional intelligence into education. Its practical value lies in the fact that it connects each dimension of emotional intelligence to specific, implementable pedagogical strategies. This makes it possible for curriculum designers, teacher educators, and school administrators to move from general statements about the importance of emotional intelligence to concrete plans for its development. However, the framework is theoretical and requires empirical validation in specific educational contexts, including longitudinal studies that track the development of emotional intelligence in students and teachers over time.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the article is based on a literature review rather than original empirical research. While this provides a broad overview, it cannot substitute for context-specific empirical investigation. Second, the field of emotional intelligence contains ongoing debates about measurement, construct validity, and the distinction between emotional intelligence and related constructs such as personality and general intelligence. These debates are not fully resolved and should be considered when interpreting the findings of individual studies. Third, the practical recommendations proposed in this article are based on evidence primarily from Western educational systems, and their applicability to other cultural contexts requires careful adaptation and empirical testing.



## Conclusion

The theory of emotional intelligence offers a scientifically grounded and practically relevant framework for improving the quality of education. This article has analysed four major theoretical models of emotional intelligence and demonstrated that each contributes valuable insights for educational practice. The ability model provides clear criteria for assessment and skill development. The trait model highlights the importance of emotional self-perception and student well-being. The competence model offers accessible categories for curriculum design. The emotional-social intelligence model broadens the scope to include adaptability and stress management.

The main conclusion of the study is that emotional intelligence in education is most effectively developed when four conditions are met: explicit curriculum integration, teacher emotional competence, psychologically safe classroom environments, and systematic reflection on emotional experiences. These conditions correspond to the four

dimensions of the proposed conceptual framework: perception, understanding, regulation, and application of emotions. When these dimensions are addressed together through sustained, contextually appropriate pedagogical strategies, emotional intelligence becomes not an add-on programme but an integral part of the educational process.

The practical significance of the article lies in its potential to inform curriculum development, teacher training, and educational policy. The theoretical significance lies in the integration of multiple models into a coherent framework that bridges the gap between psychological theory and pedagogical practice. Further research should focus on empirical testing of the proposed framework in specific educational contexts, development of culturally sensitive assessment tools, longitudinal studies of emotional intelligence development in pre-service teachers, and comparative analysis of emotional intelligence programmes across different educational systems.

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