SOCIO-EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE – NEUROEPISTEMOLOGICAL LANDMARKS/HIGHLIGHTS AND PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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According to J. Bruner (Bruner 1990), social intelligence can be described as a model of personality and individual behavior in which people are assumed to know themselves and the social world they live in. Individuals actively use this knowledge to control their emotions and guide their behavior towards desired objectives.

Social skills refer to children's ability to create functional social relationships with the other kids and adults in their life. In other words, social skills facilitate positive interactions, appropriate to cultural norms, in order to achieve their own goals and, at the same time, respecting the others' needs (Stephen and Kallay 2007). On the one hand, emotional intelligence, represents the capacity to identify, understand and accept their own emotions and to express them in a more healthy and controlled way, and on the other hand it represents the ability to perceive and correctly interpret the emotions of those around them.

In English, this term is found/occurs in two forms: "Emotional Intelligence (EI)" and "Emotional Quotient (E.Q.)", both referring to the same thing – the degree of emotional intelligence or emotional maturity. The term of "emotional intelligence" is relatively new. It was first used for by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990.

To this concept, but without naming it that way, referred Howard Gardner too, in 1993 when he used the terms of "interpersonal intelligence" and "intrapersonal intelligence", in the enumeration of the seven types of intelligence identified by him (shown in table no. 1).

Reuven Bar-On began to study this field in the early 80' and he is the author of the first test of emotional intelligence - Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) – addressed to persons over 16 years (of age).

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Table no. 1 Components of emotional intelligence

Source: Gardner 2003

Reuven Bar-On's point of view (2006)	**Daniel Goleman's point of view (1995)**
▪ Intrapersonal aspect - the awareness of our own emotions (to live the present experience and not what you felt in the past) - optimism, assertiveness; - respect, consideration for oneself; - self-realization; - independence.	▪ Self-knowledge - emotional self-knowledge; - realistic and accurate self-knowledge; - self-confidence.
▪ Interpersonal aspect - empathy; - interpersonal relationships; - social responsibility.	▪ Self-control - emotional self-control; - transparency and maintaining the integrity; - adaptability to change; - orientation towards results; - initiative; - optimism and perseverance.
▪ Adaptability/flexibility - problems solving; - flexibility.	▪ „Social Awareness" - empathy (sensing the feelings and perspectives of others, a real interest in the others' concerns); - job orientation.
▪ Stress management - stress tolerance; - impulse control.	▪ Interpersonal relations management - others' development, of their abilities, coaching;

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	- inspirational leadership; - catalyst of change (initiation and management of change); - influence; - conflict management (related to negotiation and dispute resolution); - team work and collaboration (creating group synergy in pursuit of group goals).
▪ General disposition/mood - happiness; - optimism.	

The first two components of the classification provided by Daniel Goleman are seen/viewed as some personal components of emotional intelligence, while the last two are social components of emotional intelligence (Crusitu, http://www.psihologiaonline.ro/).

If we follow and analyze the two classifications of emotional intelligence components we can reach the conclusion that this is composed/formed of four elements:

- the identification and better understanding of one's own emotions;

- the effective management of one's own emotions and significant increase of life quality;

- better understanding of those around and coexistence with a high degree of comfort;

- creating better relationships at all levels with others and increasing productivity and personal image.

The ability of emotional adjustment becomes sophisticated during teenage period. Sarmi (Sarmi 1989) identified three plausible factors necessary for adjusting emotions: capacity of adjusting emotions, knowledge of appropriate actions and the motivation to set/adjust emotions.

Emotional adjustment strategies can be classified into three types: problem-solving strategies (involve finding solutions to problems faced by a person and which causes negative emotions, as well as the application of optimal solution), emotional strategies (have as their purpose the improvement of

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negative emotional feeling), cognitive strategies (methods of neutralizing negative emotions through cognitive assessment of the situation from another/different perspective), (Botiș and Mihalca 2007). The psychometric model of intelligence shows that social-emotional skills should correlate, at least moderately, with cognitive ability (Zeidner 2002, 2009; Shani-Zinovich 2005; Matthews 2012; Roberts 2013). From a developmental perspective, cognitive ability may have an influence on social-emotional skills a person shows.

At the opposite pole, according to H. Gardner (Gardner 2006) social and emotional intelligence (that he calls them by terms of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence), should be totally independent of cognitive intelligence and of school-intellectual/academic ability.

Although social intelligence presents certain conceptual overlays with emotional intelligence, the psychological content of the two types of intelligence is different. P. E. Vernon (in Kihlstrom and Cantor 2000) provides operational definition of the social intelligence: "individual's ability to get along with the others in general, easiness in society, knowledge about social issues, sensitivity to the stimuli offered by the other group members, the intuition of temporary spiritual states or of others' intimate shades/traits of personality". Is about the ability of a person to understand the thoughts, feelings and behavioral intentions of the other persons they interact with in different social contexts.

Emotional intelligence is seen by J. D. Mayer and P. Salovey as involving a set of skills related to: individual's ability to perceive, as correctly as possible his own emotions and to express them in various contexts, capacity to adjust his own emotions and the capacity to manage his own emotions in solving various problems.

In D. Goleman's vision (Goleman 2001, 2008), emotional intelligence designates a set of individual skills involving self-awareness, self-control, strong motivation for action and for personal development, empathy and social skills (the capacity of influence/persuasion, the ability of communication, of managing conflict situations, individual's ability to establish and maintain appropriate relationships with others, capacity of collaboration and cooperation, capacity of team work etc.).

For R. Bar-On (Bar-On 1985), emotional intelligence involves an emotional dimension, one personal and one social – all contributing to understanding of oneself and of others, managing social situations that the individual passes and the optimal adjustment to external requests.

Bar-On has refined the pattern of emotional intelligence that he

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originally proposed, developing the pattern of emotional-social intelligence based on the identification of certain clusters of relations between emotional and social skills that have a strong impact on the efficiency and the state of well-being from the psychological point of view. The first definitions offered to the concept of social intelligence appear to have influenced the way that emotional intelligence have been conceptualized later. Thus, the model proposed by Mayer and Salovey, conceives emotional intelligence as a part of social intelligence, showing that both concepts are related, in that they represent components of a broader construct (concerning the) on social-emotional ability.

Educational programs that include training methods of social and emotional skills, lead to significant improvements in form of acquisitions and school results, to reducing absenteeism rate and the tendency of early school leaving (school drop-out), improving students' skills conflict resolution and cooperation, decreasing the frequency of behavioral problems and symptoms of emotional distress (Tufeanu, 2015). It is undeniable the role that such educational programs play in promoting healthy development and success at school students of all ages (Robu 2016).

P. Sherlock (2002) investigated the possibility of integrating emotional intelligence in an educational plan that could be valid in any educational system. Along the examination of several models of international education, it has been established that values such as receptivity toward new, acceptance, respect and tolerance can rather be obtained as part of an educational plan promoting the development of emotional intelligence.

The individual dimensions of self-consciousness/awareness, self-knowledge and self-organization fosters social skills of teamwork, communication and conflict solving. These skills of emotional intelligence are those that encourage the collaboration between thoughts and feelings, between the cognitive and affective.

A model of international education through emotional intelligence, that can be extrapolated in any educational culture, comprises three areas: self-knowledge (learn to be), that begins with self-awareness and self-knowledge and reach the development self-control and motivation, knowledge of others (learn to coexist), that begins with developing empathic capacities, active listening and appreciation of novelty and diversity (the premise is that the teachable, first learn to control their own emotions and take responsibility for their actions, then they develop the capacity to understand the others' emotions), including knowledge in a domain (learn to know, learn to do).

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Approaching emotional intelligence is also possible in terms of academic performances, some authors sustaining that emotional intelligence predicts success at work, at school and in relationships, as well or even better than academic intelligence.

In 1992 T. B. Brazelton states that how a child learns is directly related to emotional intelligence and in order to achieve personal success the following conditions must be met (Rocco 2001): self-confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self-control, the capacity to establish positive relationships with others through pro-social behavior, interpersonal communication skills, cooperation.

A consistent set of studies provides empirical proofs/evidence for the predictive role that emotional intelligence plays in relation to school acquisitions and results, the general level of adaptation in school or the frequency of deviant behaviors in school.

Gil-Olarte Marquez, Palomera Martin and Brackett (2006) investigated the discriminant validity and the validity of the criterion of MSCEIT test/ Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test 2002, the total score correlating with the orientation toward cooperation, self-confidence within the context of social relationships, the leadership ability, shyness within social relationships, assertiveness, pro-social behaviors, school performance (77 teenagers) (Robu 2016).

Parker and partners (2004) investigated 667 high-school students, identifying a significant contribution of emotional intelligence in explaining the variation of school performance, with no difference between school level and gender (Robu 2016).

Definition, mechanisms, characteristics, relations and connections with othe types of intelligences

Socio-emotional development represents an integration of theories on social intelligence, emotional intelligence applied in education.

Socio-emotional skills development represents the improvement of emotional knowledge and optimizing social behaviors needed to achieve desirable and sustainable results. It also represents a personal capacity to deal with the environmental challenges.

Daniel Goleman (Goleman 2008) emphasizes the relationship between emotional intelligence and emotional competence highlighting the conceptual differences: “emotional intelligence determines our potential to learn the foundations of self-control and others, our emotional competence shows just how

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much of that potential we have accumulated under forms that can be translated into practical applicable skills".

In his PhD thesis, Sebastian Vaida (Vaida 2013), investigating the studies published in English between 1990 and 2012 to operationalize the concept of socio-emotional development in adults and young students, identified a total of 30 articles of relevance to the studied concept. He drew the following working definitions for socio-emotional skills with reference to students and young adults (people in the educational field). The definitions found (table no. 2) are as many directions of relationships and connections that socio-emotional intelligence may have with other types of intelligences.

Table no. 2 Definition of socio-emotional skills of adolescents (by S. Vaida)

Category	Definition	References
Socio-emotional skills	Skills through which learning occurs and that talks about interpersonal development and the increasing of academic potential.	Liff, 2003
Socio-emotional skills	Those skills which, based on emotional intelligence, predict performance.	Abraham, 2004
Emotional, social and cognitive skills	A person's characteristics leading to outstanding performances; Skills that can be included in one of the three categories: (1) emotional competencies or interpersonal skills, such as adaptability (2) social competencies or interpersonal skills, such as creating and maintaining a social network (3) cognitive competencies	Boyatzis and Saatcioglu
Socio-emotional skills	Set of skills involved in achieving performance or in solving personal or professional problems.	Castejon, Cantero and Perez, 2008
Socio-emotional skills	Description of the learning results (what knows or can demonstrate the person who has learnt, as the result of a learning process)	Oberst, Gallifa, Farriols and Villaregut, 2009

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Socio-emotional skills	Personal skill to use emotional information, behaviors and characteristics to facilitate the socially desirable results	Seal, Naumann, Scott and Royce-Davis, 2011
Socio-emotional skills	The product of emotional development and of social learning that can take place in an educational frame/setting.	Wang, Young, Wilhite and Marczyk, 2011
Socio-emotional skills	The method of monitoring, discriminate and use emotional information to facilitate thinking.	Galal, Carr-Lopez, Seal, Scott and Lopez, 2012
Socio-emotional skills	Improvement of personal capacity to realize a good management of environmental challenges.	Seal, Beauchamp, Miguel, Scott, Naumann, Dong and Galal, 2012
Socio-emotional skills	Skills such as self-motivation and persistence in front of frustrations, impulse control and delaying rewards, adjusting one's own states, empathy and hope.	Stewart and Chisholm, 2012
Socio-emotional skills	The product of emotional development and social learning that can take place in an educational setting.	Wang, Wilhite, Wyatt, Young, Bloemker and Wilhite, 2012

Literature concerned with emotional intelligence highlights numerous empirical evidence on the relationship between this area of emotional and social functioning, to other areas, such as management and leadership, individual performance in social and professional activities, adaptation to social changes or inherent challenges of daily operation/functioning, to the harmonization the relation with external environment and with ourselves.

Emotional development is reflected in the acquisition of certain skills or specific competencies of processing (encoding), expression (verbalization or non-verbal expression) and management or emotional control (adjustment or emotional self-adjustment), skills that are called "an umbrella of emotional/affective competencies. These skills refer to three important

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dimensions: emotional recognition, emotional expressiveness and emotional adjustment. Without these abilities, related to social competencies, we cannot speak of developing emotional/affective intelligence in adulthood.

Socio-emotional intelligence – trainig, feedback, guidence, control and self-control Interpersonal relations management

From the practical point of view, affectivity ("with rational components, relatively conscious, explaining psychic life") and emotions (hardly controllable, understanding life") are fundamentally different (Neacșu 2010). Emotional structures are "excellent examples of fictive causes that can be attributed to behaviours" (Neacșu 2010, a). The management of emotional-affective feelings is linked with "the assement of adaptability process and of getting closer to the target as a way of achieving goals" (Neacșu 2010).

Emotions are classifying into eight basic categories or primary emotions: anger, fear, sadness, joy, disgust, surprise, curiosity, acceptance. Primary emotions through combination give rise to the full spectrum of human emotional experience.

The fundamental directions of socio-emotional/affective development, suitable for educational programs, can be synthesized on a multifunctionl base, characterized by social values accepted in their belonging social medium. This way we can identify the following components specific for the curricular programs in schools and universities: ways and attitudes developed by social behaviour, learning patterns of human relationships, self-control, empathic nature capabilities. The fundamental question that occurs when approaching this topic, is (as follows): What is the role of the development of socio-emotional abilities in an individual's life?

Socio-emotional skills learning model follows a given/predetermined path: first level of interest, from the perspective of educational life, is related to the preparation of young people for active life, the second level of analyses of educational training aimes the utility of socio-emotional skills alongside with cognitive independence of thought and action that each adult should manifest in the active social life, the third level is occupied by the importance of developing interpersonal skills to achieve success in life.

Educational training prospects lead to the development of a reason, scientifically acceptable, through wich we understand the development of social behaviours on the basis of some working variables characteristic for an integrative psychological model: it is found that a developed socio-emotional

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skill deterrmines a high level of school performance among pupils, the high level of emotional intelligence generates an increased capacity of social interaction, suited to the requirements and needs of daily life, and that developed socio-emotional skills create a system of personal self-control, capitalized in terms of social life. People who develop their social skills feel the improvement of the capacity of understanding human emotions, which leads to benefits in the socio-professional improvement.

We musn't omit from the analyses the importance of various types of mental skills, and not only that ("qualititive notes of perceptual, neural, motor, cognitive aspects", (Neacșu 2010), assessable through specialized tests that shapes an individual's psychological profile: the interference of various categories of human skills, either general or specialized, is essential in the process of human's knowledge, the more important is the revaluation of the attitudinal type assessments. The educational process involves learning and assimilation, in a multitude of specific projective aspects. In other words, the educational process generates a definable field of knowledge through social interactions **(**https://razvidiaco.wordpress.com**).**

The development of socio-emotional intelligence becomes a necessity of contemporary educational training (Bourdieu, 1974). Emotions management can differentiate and structure the capacity of people reaching maturity, in the same way as interpersonal relationships management can optimize personal and socio-professional life, eliminating failure as the effect of socio-human discrepancies and differences.

The affective education becomes social-empathic and involves addressing individual needs in relation to social group (membership) requirements. The training needs of the students must be assessed and analyzed and one must not forget the contribution of non-formal education.

The psychosocial profile of people with high level of socio-emotional intelligence

Individual's adaptation to the environment he lives in is achieved through both cognitive and non-cognitive elements. These non-cognitive aspects of intelligence include affective, personal and social factors, being essential for individual's success in life.

Emotional intelligence is a skill that implies a creative relation with the states of fear, pain and desire. Children who are able to control their feelings/emotions and have enough patience to get two lollipops, prove

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themselves to be not only more capable from the emotional point of view but also more competent at school and in everyday life.

Students' emotional development is decisive for their success in life and not just for school results: pupils who have a stable emotional system at the age of four years have better results at various college entrance examination. The ability to recognize and deal with emotions lead to greater performance at school, at work and in relationships (D. Goleman). The epigenetic model of the functioning of the five mental types (orderly/disciplined mind, synthetic mind, creative mind, respectful mind, ethical mind) was introduced in the psychological development by Erick Erikson. Relying on his theory of multiple intelligences, Howard Gardner (Five minds for the future, 2007) identified a temporal succession as well to achieve the mental types (the five minds) from the epigenetic model proposed by Erick Erikson, even if this ordering/arrangement has only a mediator and guidance role, being very far from the logical or psychological sequencing: respect, mental discipline and creativity, synthesis, ethics.

There mut be brought into context the work of Bruce Lipton (2008) as well, biologist in the research of cell functioning, "The Biology of Faith", which reinforces the epigenetic view according to which the cells from our body are influenced/affected by our thoughts (the link between mind and matter).

According to some studies, a high socio-affective intelligence offers advantages:

- at the level of attitudes and behaviour: better awareness of emotions, a grater capacity to control emotions, an increased ability to cope with dififcult situations (such as bullying), a capacity of better concentration, rapidity/quickness in solving conflicts, increased impulses control, better attitudes and ethical values, ability above average in solving problems, lowering violence and aggressiveness;
- school and academic: a positive attitude towards learning, higher grades and better results on standardized tests, greater ability to cope with stressful school factors (dead-line, competition), increased respect and trust towards teachers and classmates;
- at health level: powering risk of infections, lowering risk of addictions, lowering chances of developing depression and a much lower rate of suicide in adolescence.

The psycholsocial profile of the person with a high level of socio-emotional intelligence describes the relations and roles in a pshychodynamic manner: possess a social balance in human relationships, has a remarkable

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capacity to be engaged in solving other people's problems, can devote to noble causes, and takes into account the moral aspect of the circumstances in which is involved. (This type of individual) has a rich emotional life, nuanced according to his own person; feels comfortable with himself /herself and with others in the social universe in which he/she lives; tends to be affirmative (positive), expressing his/hers feelings in a natural and direct way, with positive thoughts about himself/herself. For such a person life has a meaning and is worth living to the fullest. Is a sociable person expressing feelings in an adequate way and adapts well to stress; easily makes acquaintance with new people, being comfortable with himself/herself, being spontaneous; very rarely she/he feels anxious.

The assessment of socio-emotional intelligence. Models, valuations and applications of emotional intelligence in education and training

According to Reuven Bar-On emotional intelligence (social-emotional, Emotional Quotient-inventory, 1997) consists of five factors:

- intrapersonal factor, refers to self-consciousness and self-expression,
- interpersonal factor, refers to consciousness, skills and social interactions,
- stress management factor, refers to emotional management and control, the ability of a person to manage emotions,
- adaptability factor, refers to change management,
- general condition factor, refers to self-motivation and the ability of people to enjoy themselves, others and life in general.

***The EQ-i assessment provides five composite scores*:**

The Friedman scale of maturity (EMS) measures the level of emotional intelligence (infantilism, infantile, childish reactions, adolescent reactions, immature, slight/superficial emotional immaturity, situation towards limit, tendency towards imbalance, average level of maturation/maturity, appropriate level of maturation/ normal emotional development).

The concept of „mature" emotional behavior is reflected in what we call a normal emotional development. Emotional maturity develops throughout life and is the maturity form from which one can regress the earliest. One of the most comprehensive lists of stages that a child goes through on his way to maturity is presented by). Emotional maturity is a process in which personality is in a continuous struggle for a higher sense of emotional health, both intra-physical and intra-personal. The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology (2002), defines

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emotional maturity as the state in which a person's emotional reactivity/reaction is considered appropriate and normal for an adult in a given society. The clearest/most adequate connotation in most cultures is one that is linked to self-control, namely with the ability to refrain extreme emotional reactions.

Emotional maturity isn't therefore a stage where all problems are solved, but rather a continuous process of clarification and assessment, an attempt to integrate feelings, thoughts and behavior. In assessing the socio-emotional competence one must take into account the dimension of socio-emotional adaptability that refers to the ability of being flexible in relation with others, to readjust our emotional behaviors when situations change, to the ability to approach adequately and realistically relational situations or personal life issues (the ability to see them as they are) to the adequacy of emotional behaviors in the current situational contexts, to the power to identify and correctly approach emotional problems (to solve emotional problems properly). At the highest level, emotional intelligence involves a spiritual dimension that completes the power of love between people through the great power of divine love.

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