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THE SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CREATIVITY

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ABSTRACT

Although emotional intelligence and creativity may seem like two different factors that are unrelated to each other, research has shown that they are interconnected and that this connection plays a crucial role in the comprehensive development of human potential. In this article, we will examine the symbiotic relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity, that is, how they mutually develop each other.

Aim and methods: The aim of this research was to examine relation between emotional intelligence and creativity of students. For this purpose, firstly various literature sources were analyzed to answer the main research questions. Survey material and assessment tool were chosen to analyze the relation between two factors. Measuring the direction and strength of the interaction between emotional intelligence and creativity, identifying specific psychological processes that explain how these two constructs improve each other, comparing how relationships change in different circumstances (age, culture, profession), and developing recommendations for training and education programs based on the results obtained are some of the important issues to be resolved today.

Conclusion: The definition of emotional intelligence as a person's ability to understand, manage, and express his or her own and others' emotions reveals its direct connection with the creative process. Creativity is a multidimensional factor that manifests itself not only in the field of art, but also in problem solving and everyday decision-making. Research shows that creative processes deepen emotional understanding and lead to the development of self-awareness and empathy.

Although the existing literature suggests a certain relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity, the mechanisms of symbiotic interaction between them, the dynamics of this relationship, and its consequences have not been systematically investigated. In particular, there is no unified model that explains the relationship between the components of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills) and the stages of creativity (preparation, incubation, insight, verification). In addition, there is a need to conduct research on the dynamic relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and the stages of creativity, the role of emotional activity in the preparatory stage, the importance of emotional tolerance during the incubation period, the relationship between emotional depth and creativity during enlightenment, the impact of the development of a creative personality on the development of emotional intelligence, and the limiting and enhancing factors between them.

Due to the lack of a single model and insufficient literature, we considered it more appropriate to conduct the study in the direction of determining the symbiotic relationship between emotional intelligence and creative potential. The additional section at the end of the article reflects the emotional intelligence and creative potential indicators of each of the respondents. When analyzing the results, it becomes clear that there is no direct significant relationship between emotional intelligence and creative potential. It is clear from the study that while all students with high creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators, not all students with high emotional intelligence have high creative potential.

The article focuses not on the one-way relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity, but on the mutual influence. This focus places the research within a deep, comprehensive, and at the same time constrained framework, which we hope will allow for a scientifically efficient and consequential study.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Intelligence, Creativity, Student, Symbiotic Relation

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Introduction

Modern psychological research shows that emotional intelligence plays a productive role in the expression of creativity. At the same time, we would not be wrong to note that creative processes deepen emotional understanding, develop self-awareness and empathy. It is known that understanding the mechanism of this interaction is of crucial importance for the effective development of individual and collective potential in various fields, from education to management (Çapan, E., Owen, K, 2017). In this article, we will examine the nature of this symbiotic relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity, its effects on personal and professional development, and how to effectively benefit from this relationship.

Research Problem

Although the existing literature suggests that there is a certain relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity, the mechanisms of symbiotic interaction between these two constructs, the dynamics of this relationship, and its practical consequences in individual, social, and organizational contexts have not been systematically investigated. The main purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of the level of emotional intelligence on creative activity. Otherwise, the extent to which the development of creative activity, in turn, affects the development of an individual's emotional intelligence, and to reveal the existence of a truly two-way (symbiotic) relationship, constitutes the basis of the study (Holmes, W., Porayska-Pomsta, K, 2023).

Research Focus

The main focus of the research is to find ways for students to acquire emotional intelligence and creative qualities that are considered essential for their future career and personal success. To this end, one of the key factors is to first determine the current situation.

Research Aim and Questions

The main objective of the study is to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity. The level of creativity in individuals with high or low emotional intelligence, and the existence of a symbiotic relationship between these two factors are the subject of the study. One of the main objectives of the study is to find answers to the following questions:

1. Is the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity really bidirectional?
2. How does this relationship develop over time? Does the relationship become stronger at certain stages of development?
3. How do emotional difficulties and stress affect creativity?
4. Do environments that promote creativity also automatically help develop emotional intelligence?
5. What are the most effective strategies to optimally develop both factors simultaneously in educational and work environments?

It is hoped that these research questions will provide the basis for conducting a comprehensive study that covers all critical aspects of the topic and has both theoretical depth and practical significance.

Literature review / Theoretical Overview

There are many theories about emotional intelligence and creativity. The studies of Salovey and Mayer from the 90s of the 20th century, and the introduction of the term emotional intelligence to psychological literature by Daniel Goleman in 1995, play a role in revealing the neuroscientific basis in experiments carried out in modern times. Although the study of the field of creativity began much earlier in the 50s of the 20th century, emotional intelligence has gone a long way and is a field that needs to be referenced in almost many fields (Goleman, D, 2003).

Daniel Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence (Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills), Mayer and Salovey's model (Perception and expression of emotions, orientation to thought, understanding and interpretation, management), Wallace's creativity model (Preparation, incubation, illumination, verification), Amabile's component model (domain knowledge, creative thinking skills, intrinsic motivation) are considered the main sources (Mayer, J., Salovey, P, 1997).

There are several studies on the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity. Among them, Jing Zhou and Jennifer M. George's "The impact of emotional intelligence on creativity in the workplace", Ivcevic et al. "Emotional abilities and creative expression", Shao et al. "Meta-analysis - moderate positive correlation" can be cited as examples. The lack of systematicity of the results obtained poses certain problems.

Some scientists note that there is a weak relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity. Others note that excessive emotional control limits creativity (Zhou, J., George, J.M, 2017).

These theoretical perspectives help to strengthen the scientific basis of research by synthesizing the existing literature and clearly identifying areas where original contribution is needed.

Research Methodology

General Background

The research was conducted using the test method. To determine emotional intelligence, the “Emotional Intelligence” test published by the Institute for Professional Development of Education Workers of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the “Assessment of Creative Potential” test published in the book “114 Psychological Tests” were used (Bayramov, F.D., Huseynova, D.R., Namazova, A.S, 2011). The research was conducted among students studying in the II, III and IV years in the form of a questionnaire. It was carried out in September 2025 among students of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Psychology of Baku State University, the first higher education institution of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The target population of this research is undergraduate students aged 18-22.

Participants / Sample

256 people participated in the study. Of them, 127 were second-year students, 60 were third-year students, and 69 were fourth-year students. In the study, the university admission scores of the respondents were classified into 4 types (according to Azerbaijan State Exam Committee results): 200, 300, 400, and above 500 points. It turns out that, in terms of the number of participants, students who were admitted to the university with scores between 400 and 500 points predominated in all courses. The group that was the most reluctant in terms of the number of participants was the students who were admitted with scores between 200 and 300 points. Of the respondents, 221 were women and 35 were men. We can conclude that women were more enthusiastic about the study.

Table 1. Participants’ scores

N	II year	III year	IV year	Female	Male
200+	0	0	6	5	1
300+	25	16	6	39	8
400+	61	36	29	108	18
500+	41	8	28	69	8
Total	127	60	69	221	35

Instrument and Procedures

The emotional intelligence test consists of 20 questions and 4 items. At the same time, the creative potential measurement test consists of 18 questions and 3 items. Both tests were systematically administered to students in the form of an online questionnaire and the results were studied 1 week later. The fact that the tests are reflected in the same online questionnaire allows us to determine both the emotional intelligence indicators and the creative potential results of the student. It would not be wrong to note that the students' ability to see the answers to their tests increased their interest in solving the test.

Data Analysis and Results

Based on the results of the study, we can note that the second-year respondents are 127 people. Of them, the number of students admitted to the university with scores above 300 is 25, the number of students admitted to the university with scores above 400 is 61, and the number of students admitted to the university with scores above 500 is 41. Students admitted with scores above 200 and below 300 were reluctant to participate in the study and did not participate in the survey.

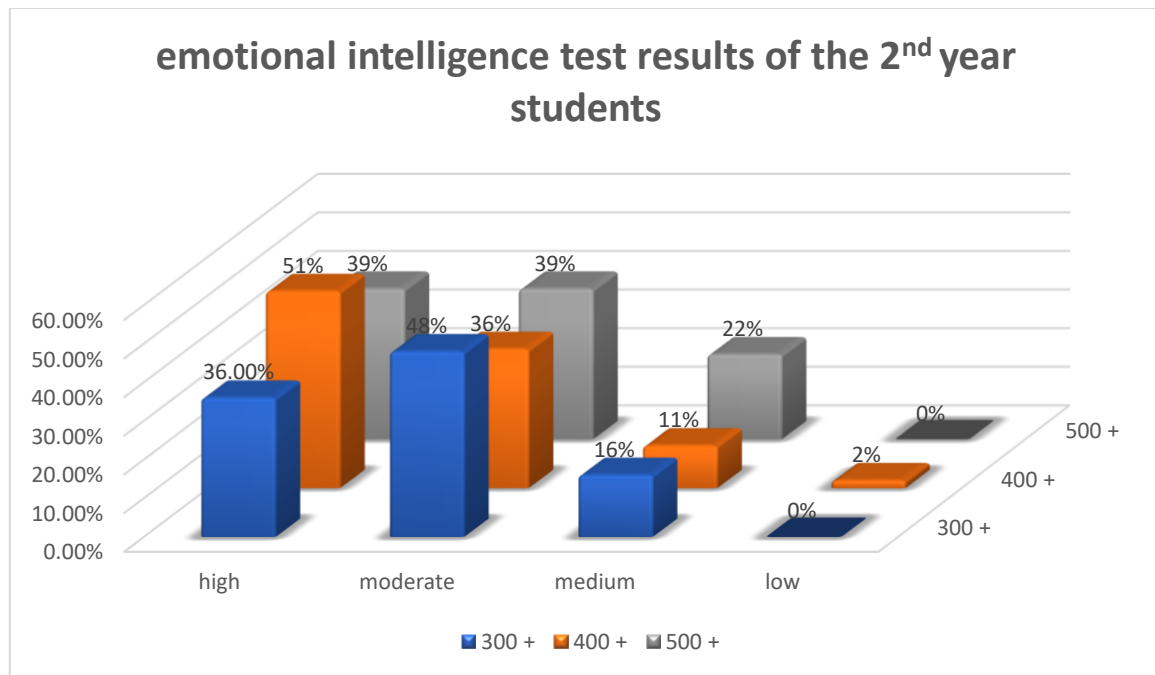


Fig. 1. Emotional intelligence test results of the 2nd year students

As shown in the graph above, out of 25 students enrolled in the second year of study with scores between 300 and 400, 9 of them had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 36%, 12 of them had high emotional intelligence indicators of 48%, and 4 of them had average emotional intelligence indicators of 16%. No weak indicators were observed.

Out of 61 students enrolled in the second year of study with scores between 400 and 500, 31 of them had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 51%, 22 of them had high emotional intelligence indicators of 36%, 7 of them had average emotional intelligence indicators of 1%, and 1 of them had low emotional intelligence indicators of 1%.

Of the 41 second-year students admitted to the university with scores between 500 and 600, 16 had very high emotional intelligence indicators (39%), 16 had high emotional intelligence indicators (39%), and 9 had average emotional intelligence indicators (22%). No weak indicators were observed, as was the case with students admitted with scores between 300 and 400.

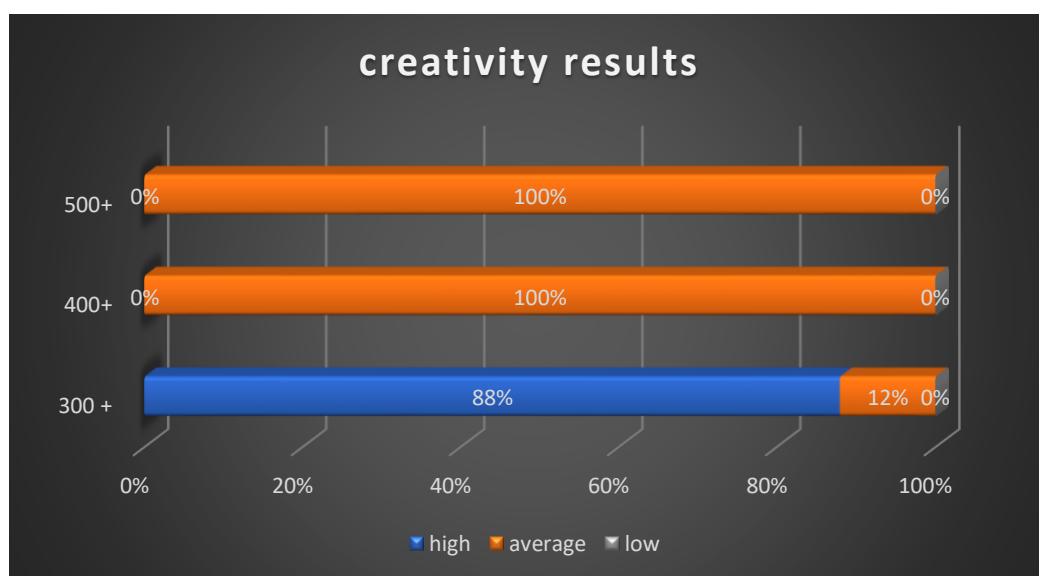


Fig. 2. Creativity test results of the 2nd year students

As a result of the study, it was found that out of 25 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 300 and 400 points, only 3 (12%) had high creative potential, and 22 (88%) had average. No low indicators were found. Out of 61 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 400 and 500 points, all had average creative potential. Emotional intelligence indicators were very high in 31 students, and all indicators were reflected in the others.

Out of 41 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 500 and 600 points, all had average creative potential. We observe that emotional intelligence indicators were very high in 16 students, and high and average indicators in the others.

It turns out that 3 people with high creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators. Of the 22 people with average creative potential, 6 have very high emotional intelligence indicators. The others have high and average emotional intelligence indicators.

In general, 127 students studying in the second year participated in the study. Of them, 56 (44%) had very high emotional intelligence indicators, 50 (39%) had high, 20 (16%) had average, and 1 (1%) had low. 125 (98%) had medium and only 3 (2%) had high creative potential, but not all students with very high emotional intelligence indicators.

From this, it can be concluded that even if not all students with high creative potential have high emotional intelligence indicators, all students with high creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators. This can be clearly seen from the results presented in the additional section at the end of the article.

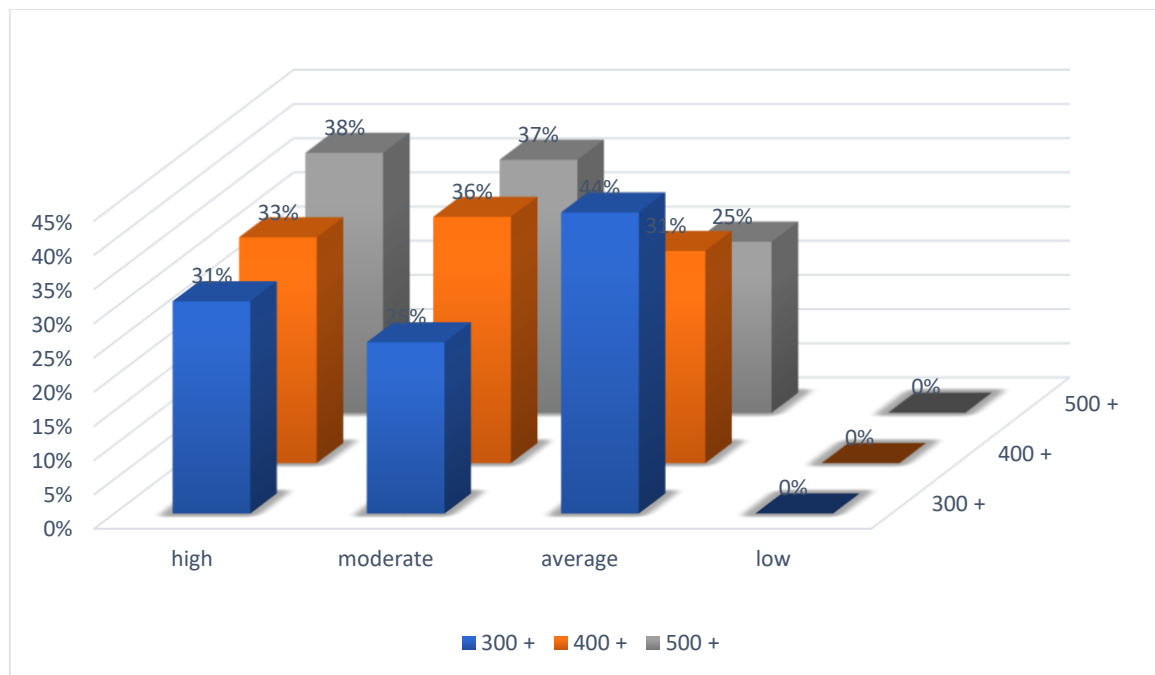


Fig. 3. Emotional intelligence test results of the 3rd year students

As it presented in the graph above, out of 16 students enrolled in the third year of study with scores between 300 and 400, 5 had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 31%, 4 had high emotional intelligence indicators of 25%, and 7 had average emotional intelligence indicators of 44%. No weak indicators were observed.

Out of 36 students enrolled in the third year of study with scores between 400 and 500, 12 had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 33%, 13 had high emotional intelligence indicators of 36%, and 11 had average emotional intelligence indicators of 31%. No weak indicators were observed.

Out of 8 students enrolled in the third year of study with scores between 500 and 600, 3 had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 38%, 3 had high emotional intelligence indicators of 37%, and 2 had average emotional intelligence indicators of 25%. No weak indicators were observed.

When familiarizing ourselves with the creativity indicators of the third-year students mentioned below, it becomes clear that out of the 16 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 300

and 400 points, all of them have average indicators. 5 of them have very high emotional intelligence indicators, and the others have high and average emotional intelligence indicators, respectively.

Out of the 36 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 400 and 500 points, only 1 (3%) has high creative potential, and 35 (97%) have average creative potential. 1 person with high creative potential has very high emotional intelligence indicators.

11 people with average creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators.

All 8 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 500 and 600 points have average creative potential. We observe that 3 people have very high emotional intelligence indicators, and the others have high and average indicators, respectively.

It turns out that 1 person with high creative potential has very high emotional intelligence indicators. Out of 59 people with average creative potential, 19 people have very high emotional intelligence indicators. The others have high and average emotional intelligence indicators.

In general, 60 students studying in the third year participated in the research. Of them, 20 (33%) had very high emotional intelligence indicators, 20 (33%) had high, 20 (33%) had medium and low indicators. While no weak indicators of creative potential were observed, 59 (99%) had medium and only 1 (1%) had high creative potential.

Here, as in the second-year students, even if not all students with very high emotional intelligence have high creative potential, all students with high creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators. This can be clearly seen from the results presented in the additional section at the end of the article.

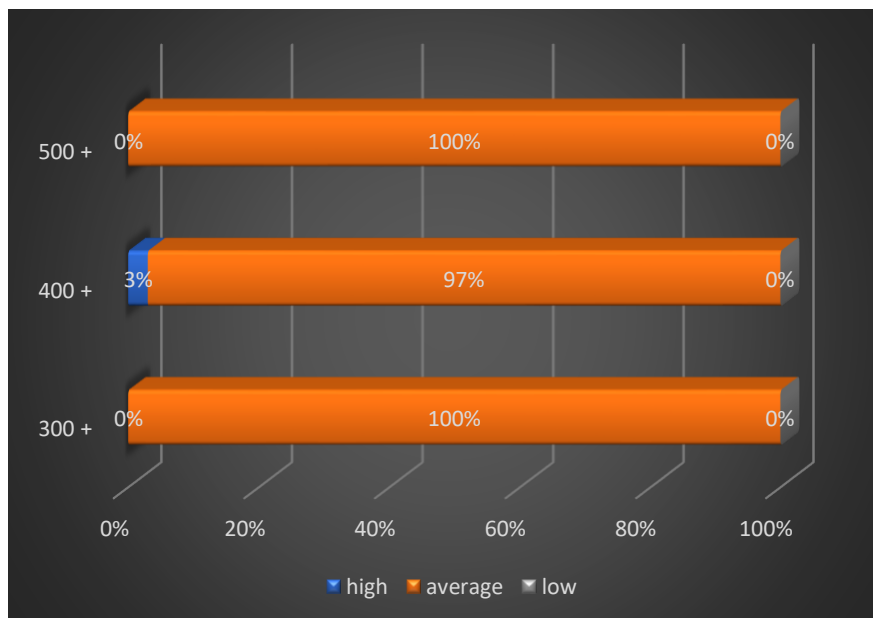


Fig. 4. Creativity results of the 3rd year students

As shown in the graph below, out of 6 students enrolled in the 4th year with scores between 200 and 300, 4 had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 67%, and 2 had high emotional intelligence indicators of 33%. No average or weak indicators were observed.

Out of 6 students enrolled in the 4th year with scores between 300 and 400, 3 had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 50%, and 3 had high emotional intelligence indicators of 50%. No average or weak indicators were observed here either.

Out of 29 students enrolled in the 4th year with scores between 400 and 500, 15 had very high emotional intelligence indicators of 52%, 9 had high emotional intelligence indicators of 31%, and 5 had average emotional intelligence indicators of 17%.

Of the 28 fourth-year students admitted to the university with scores between 500 and 600, 12 had very high emotional intelligence indicators (43%), 8 had high emotional intelligence indicators (28%), 7 had average emotional intelligence indicators (25%), and 1 had low emotional intelligence indicators (4%).

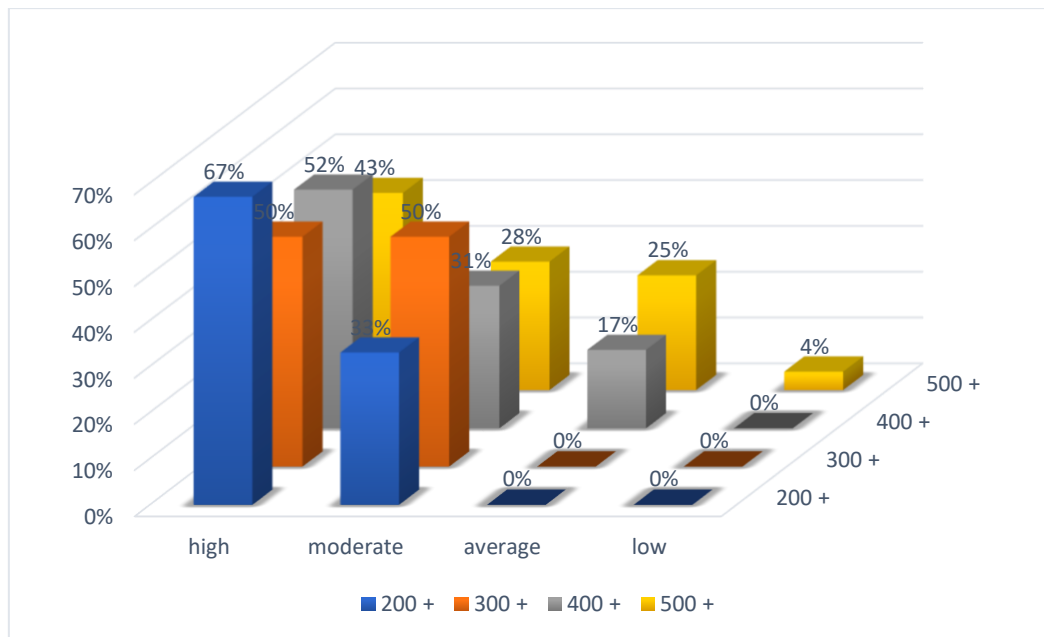


Fig. 5. Emotional intelligence test results of the 4th year students

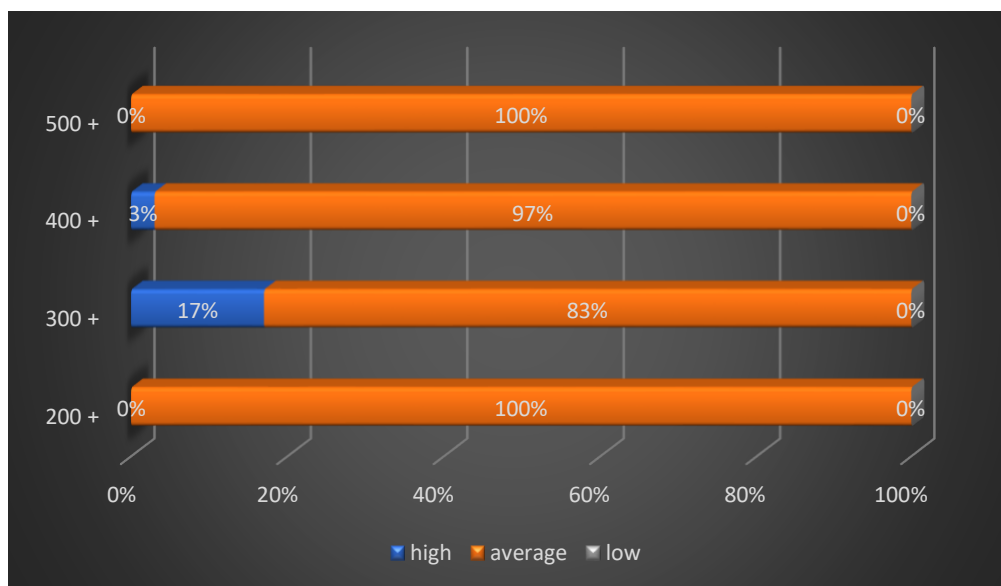


Fig. 6. Creativity results of the 4th year students

Based on the creativity indicators of the students studying in the 4th year mentioned above, it becomes clear that out of the 6 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 200 and 300 points, all of them have average indicators. 4 of them have very high emotional intelligence indicators, and the others have correspondingly high emotional intelligence indicators.

Out of the 6 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 300 and 400 points, only 1 (17%) has high creative potential, and 5 (83%) have average creative potential. 1 person with high creative potential has very high emotional intelligence indicators. 2 people with average creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators.

Out of the 29 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 400 and 500 points, 1 (3%) has high creative potential, and 28 (97%) have average creative potential. 1 person with high creative potential has very high emotional intelligence indicators. 14 people with average creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators.

Of the 28 students who were admitted to the university with indicators between 500 and 600 points, all have average indicators. 12 of them have very high emotional intelligence indicators, and the others have high, average, and weak emotional intelligence indicators, respectively.

In general, 69 students studying in the 4th year participated in the study. 34 of them (49%) had very high emotional intelligence indicators, 22 (32%) had high, 12 (17%) had average, and 1 (1%) had low indicators. While no weak indicators were observed in their creative potential, 67 (97%) had average and only 2 (3%) had high creative potential.

Here, as with students in the second and third years of study, it is observed that all students with high emotional intelligence have very high emotional intelligence indicators, even if not all students with high creative potential have high emotional intelligence indicators. This can be clearly seen from the results presented in the additional section at the end of the article.

Conclusions

As a result of the study, it was found that all students with high creative potential have very high emotional intelligence indicators. However, not all students with high emotional intelligence have high creative potential.

The study shows that the creative potential of the respondents is at a normal level and it needs to be developed. We must take into account that today the value given to creative thinking and the importance of creative ways of solving problems are increasing. Another point that emerged during the study is that among students of all three courses, students admitted to the university with an indicator between 400-500 points have a very high indicator of emotional intelligence. The highest indicators of creative potential are those admitted to the university with indicators between 300-400 and 400-500 points. Students admitted to the university with indicators between 300-400 and 400-500 points have high creative potential. Students admitted to the university with indicators between 300-400 in the second year, 400-500 in the third year, and both 300-400 and 400-500 points in the fourth year have high creative potential. However, if we take a general approach, it is obvious that there is a serious need to develop creative potential among students.

Research shows that effective and sustainable creativity requires not only technical skills but also deep emotional wisdom. Similarly, high levels of emotional intelligence, when combined with creative thinking, make people more agile and effective not only in their personal lives but also in their professional environments. Future models of learning and leadership should aim to synthesize these two forces, developing not only intelligent but also deep and innovative human potential.

Conclusions and Implications

This research shows that emotional intelligence and creativity are not separate aspects of human potential, but rather parts of a symbiotic system that mutually reinforces and builds on each other. This understanding requires fundamental changes across a wide spectrum, from education to work, from personal development to social policy. The future of human development lies not in the isolation of these two abilities, but in their synergy.

Suggestions for Future Research

As is known from the research, creative potential is at a normal level in students and it needs to be developed. It turned out that in people with high creative potential, the indicator of emotional intelligence is also quite high. This means that it is possible to achieve new successes by developing the symbiotic relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity.

Research proves that in the future, the development of these two factors in unity is indispensable for solving many problems. I think that including creativity and emotional intelligence in training programs as a unity, organizing special trainings that strengthen emotional creativity, and creating interactive programs that develop emotional intelligence and creative thinking would be successful. In the future, systematically evaluating these two factors in unity in educational policy can lead to the solution of many social problems.

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