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AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG MONGOLIAN BORDER PROTECTION PERSONNEL

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ABSTRACT

Military service is distinct from other professions in that it requires both physical and psychological capacity, involves high risks to life and health, operates within a strict system of rules, discipline, and accountability, and imposes certain limitations on individual rights within the framework of military regulations. These characteristics can lead to various psychological changes in individuals. Some military personnel, due to difficulties in regulating their emotions, exhibit behaviors such as loss of motivation for service, improper use of weapons and firearms, acts endangering their own and others' lives, and even violations of their military oath. Such actions, which bear characteristics of criminal offenses, have not decreased. Between 2015 and 2025, the National Legal Institute of Mongolia and the General Authority for Border Protection jointly conducted a study to identify the causes and conditions of serious crimes committed within the border protection organization. The findings indicated that 49% of these crimes were related to the emotional states of military personnel. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the impact of the specific nature of military service on the psychological condition of personnel and to conduct a more detailed analysis of the psychological factors influencing criminal behavior among servicemen. This study was undertaken to address this need. The results of our study show that 0.4% of military personnel demonstrate a low level of emotional intelligence (hereafter EI), 71.6% a moderate level, and 28% a high level. Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that the highest mean score was observed in the self-awareness dimension ($M = 36.43$), followed by self-motivation, activation, social skills, and empathy. The lowest mean score was found in the emotional regulation dimension ($M = 33.76$), indicating that emotional regulation among military personnel is at a moderate level. Therefore, it is concluded that this competency should be further developed through psychological training programs.

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Military Personnel.

Research Objective: The objective of this study is to examine and analyze the emotional intelligence of border military personnel.

Research Methods:

1. Daniel Goleman's Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI) was used to assess emotional intelligence;
2. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 26 software, including reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, ANOVA testing, correlation, and regression analysis.

Scope of the Study: The study included a total of 2,490 personnel from 19 border military units and specialized divisions. To ensure the reliability of sampling, participants were selected from different categories, including officers, non-commissioned officers, contract servicemen, and conscript soldiers.

Research Findings: The emotional intelligence of military personnel (hereinafter referred to as "military personnel") was assessed using the Daniel Goleman test. The results indicated that 0.4% of personnel were at a low level, 71.6% at a moderate level, and 28% at a high level of emotional intelligence. Within the research sample, the distribution of personnel across the three levels of emotional intelligence revealed that contract-based military personnel predominantly fell within the high level, non-commissioned officers were mainly represented at the moderate level, and conscripted soldiers were primarily at the low level.

Descriptive statistical analysis showed that the mean score for the self-awareness component of emotional intelligence (hereinafter referred to as the "self-awareness indicator") was the highest, at 36.43, whereas the mean score for the emotional regulation component was the lowest, at 33.76. This finding suggests that the emotional regulation indicator (hereinafter referred to as "emotional regulation") among military personnel is at a moderate level.

Correlation analysis examining the relationship between the five components of emotional intelligence and demographic variables revealed that the self-awareness indicator had a weak positive correlation with age ($R = 0.064^{**}$, $p = 0.002$) and education level ($R = 0.075^{**}$, $p = 0.000$). Furthermore, ANOVA results indicated that the p-values for self-awareness, self-motivation, and activation (hereinafter collectively referred to as "self-awareness, self-motivation, and activation") in relation to demographic variables were less than 0.05. This demonstrates statistically significant differences across age, gender, education level, personnel category, position, and years of service. Accordingly,

emotional intelligence varies depending on factors such as age, gender, and level of education.

INTRODUCTION

Within the framework of Mongolia's long-term development policy, Vision-2050, ensuring the inviolability of the state border, safeguarding the security of border areas, enhancing border protection capacity, and strengthening a technologically advanced border protection service based on skilled and professional personnel are key strategic objectives. In achieving these goals, the science of military psychology plays a significant role.

Military service differs from other professions in that it requires high levels of physical and psychological capacity, involves substantial risks to life and health, operates under strict rules, discipline, and accountability, and imposes certain limitations on individual rights within the framework of military regulations. These distinctive characteristics lead to a variety of psychological changes in individuals. Since its emergence, military psychology has studied the psychological characteristics of servicemen and military collectives, examining how military service and its unique conditions influence the psychological state of soldiers in relation to their duties, responsibilities, and living conditions.

Among the key research areas of military psychology are the emotional states, behavior, psychological stress, and crises of military personnel, as well as the causes of such conditions and effective methods for their prevention. The ability to perceive and properly regulate the emotional states of personnel is therefore considered a fundamental objective of psychological training.

However, some military personnel, due to an inability to regulate their emotions, continue to engage in misconduct such as loss of motivation for service, misuse of weapons and firearms, endangering their own and others' lives, and violating their military oath. These actions, which bear characteristics of criminal offenses, have not decreased.

Between 2010 and 2020, the National Legal Institute of Mongolia and the General Authority for Border Protection jointly conducted a study to determine the causes and conditions of serious crimes committed within border protection organizations.

According to the findings of this study, among all recorded cases in border military units and divisions, 129 cases (54.4%) were classified as minor offenses, 21 cases (8.9%) as serious crimes, 80 cases (33.8%) as moderately serious crimes, and 7 cases (2.9%) as extremely serious crimes.

Out of a total of 237 crimes, 43.0% (102 cases) occurred in border sub-units, 29.5% (70 cases) in border units, and 27.4% (65 cases) at border posts (Mongolia, 2020).

At the organizational level, analysis of the subjects involved in these crimes shows that 85 were non-commissioned officers, 82 were conscript soldiers, 63 were mid-level officers, 14 were contract servicemen, and 12 were senior officers (Proceedings of the Scientific Conference on Challenges in State Border Protection, 2022).

Regarding crimes involving weapons and firearms, 66.7% were committed intentionally, while 33.3% were unintentional. The majority of intentional crimes were committed by conscript soldiers and non-commissioned officers.

According to the conclusions of the joint study conducted by the General Authority for Border Protection and the National Legal Institute of Mongolia, 49% of the committed crimes were determined to be related to the emotional states and behavioral characteristics of military personnel. This finding clearly demonstrates the urgent need for military psychologists to: examine the impact of the specific nature of border protection service on the psychological condition of border guards; introduce comprehensive research methods into practice for assessing and diagnosing their psychological stability; and conduct in-depth studies on the influence of psychological factors on criminal behavior among servicemen. (Mongolia, 2020).

According to military psychologist, Doctor and Professor G. Myagmarjav, the primary objective of military psychology is to ensure the successful fulfillment of military service by developing in military personnel the necessary competencies, military science, and knowledge required in both routine and potential emergency situations. It also aims to identify the underlying principles and regularities of psychological science, as well as to improve psychological practices that enhance the effectiveness and activity of all personnel in both wartime and peacetime conditions. (Myagmarjav, 2023).

Therefore, recognizing the necessity to examine the emotional states of military personnel in relation to demographic factors, and to develop practical recommendations for enhancing their ability not only to regulate their own emotions but also to understand others' feelings, attend to their emotional states, and influence others through emotional competence, this study was conducted.

Emotion reflects an individual's attitudes and relationships toward oneself and external

phenomena. On this basis, individuals not only perceive and understand objects and events cognitively but also experience them affectively, responding through a range of emotional reactions. These include positive responses such as joy, pleasure, pride, and calmness, as well as negative responses such as dislike, fear, anxiety, anger, tension, disgust, rage, intimidation, disappointment, remorse, suspicion, loneliness, and irritation.

Emotional expression varies across individuals. It has an innate basis and is manifested through facial expressions, gestures, and muscular tension. Furthermore, the ability to perceive and recognize emotional expressions is, to some extent, inherited. However, not all external expressions of emotion are innate; many are shaped throughout an individual's life through learning, cognition, and the influence of socialization and education (Batsaikhan.B, 2013).

Researcher O. Myagmar emphasizes that emotion, as an essential mechanism for coping with uncertainty and overcoming challenges, is inseparably linked to the development of human intelligence. For example, as individuals age, accumulate experience, and enhance their cognitive abilities, their capacity to regulate and control their emotions correspondingly improves.

In other words, emotional processes are inseparably connected to the level of intellectual development. The higher the level of intellectual development, the greater the individual's ability to regulate and manage emotional responses. Individuals with higher cognitive abilities are better able to understand what they expect and what they encounter in reality, enabling them to control their emotions and make rational and well-considered decisions. (Myagmar.O, 2001).

He further argues that "one of the most essential requirements for individuals living in the modern era is the ability to regulate, control, and manage their own emotions, as well as to develop appropriate attitudes. Emotions play a crucial role in all aspects of human life, including making choices and decisions, mobilizing oneself, communicating and understanding others, and influencing others. Although numerous theories of emotion exist, theories that are purely psychological in nature are relatively rare. This is partly because it is impossible to define the content and essence of emotion without addressing related aspects such as physiological processes, cognition, and health." (Myagmar.O, 2012).

The scholar A. N. Leontiev classified emotions into three categories: emotion, affect, and feeling. Affect is characterized as intense, relatively short-

lived, and accompanied by pronounced motor expressions. Emotions, in contrast, may sometimes have less visible external manifestations, are relatively longer in duration, and can arise on the basis of imagination. Feelings represent the internal expression of an individual's attitudes toward their own activities, cognitive processes, and the surrounding environment.

Based on their expression, emotions are categorized as positive or negative. According to autonomic (vegetative) responses, they are further classified as asthenic (stimulating or activating the individual) and asthenic (inhibiting or suppressing activity). Emotional states are expressed not only through gestures but also at the level of muscular tone. For instance, during various conflicts or neurotic conditions, human movements tend to become rigid and slow, whereas in positive emotional states, actions and movements are typically more rapid and dynamic. (Leontov, 2003).

The American psychologist K. Izard, in his book *Emotion*, classifies emotions into primary and derivative categories. He identifies primary emotions as interest and excitement, surprise, distress and suffering, disgust, contempt, fear, shame, and guilt. He further categorizes the manifestations of emotional expression as joy, elation, emotional uplift, depression, frustration, anxiety, and irritation.

The primary function of human emotions is to enable individuals to perceive and understand one another at a deeper psychological level. Emotions allow people to assess each other's internal states without relying solely on verbal communication, thereby facilitating effective mutual preparation for interaction and cooperative activity. Individuals with a high degree of emotional expressiveness are more likely to create conditions that support mutual assistance at critical moments.

For instance, individuals raised in different cultural contexts are able, with remarkable accuracy, to perceive, interpret, and empathically understand one another's emotional states – such as joy, sadness, anger, fear, anxiety, surprise, doubt, shame, disgust, and friendliness. This ability to intuitively recognize and comprehend others' emotions, despite cultural differences, is considered particularly noteworthy. (Изард, 2000).

In contemporary society, one of the (Aguilar, 2019) most essential requirements for individuals is the ability to regulate, manage, and develop their emotional responses and attitudes. Emotions play a crucial role in all aspects of life, including making choices, decision-making, self-motivation, communication, mutual understanding, and

influencing others. Since the 1990s, the concept of emotional intelligence has attracted significant scholarly attention and continues to be extensively studied. However, the classification of emotions remains unresolved and continues to generate scientific debate. Although there is no single unified definition or framework of emotional intelligence, scholars generally agree that the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate one's own and others' emotions leads to higher effectiveness.

Emotional intelligence is conceptualized within a broad framework that encompasses an individual's capacity for effective living, success in life, the ability to overcome challenges, interpersonal communication skills, and the capacity to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions, thereby enabling individuals to live in a thoughtful and adaptive manner.

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Scholars J. Mayer, P. Salovey, and D. Caruso criticize the view that emotional intelligence should be regarded merely as a collection of personality traits, instead conceptualizing it as a distinct form of intelligence. They proposed a model of emotional intelligence that encompasses the abilities to perceive, use, understand, and regulate emotions.

Their research demonstrates that emotional intelligence can be measured and developed, and highlights its critical importance in high-stress professions such as military service, where emotional competencies play a vital role in effective decision-making and leadership. (Mayer, 2008).

Nelson and Low argue that “emotional intelligence is the most important variable influencing individual success, professional achievement, leadership, and life satisfaction. A person who experiences satisfaction in life is more likely to be healthy, mentally clear, productive, and capable of living effectively.” ((Nelson D.B., 2000).

Scholars D. Mayer and P. Salovey define emotional intelligence as “the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, and to guide one's thoughts and actions among others” (Salovey, 1990). In contrast, the scholar Allport interprets emotional intelligence as “the combination of cognition and behavior.” (Allport, 1960).

Emotional intelligence is the ability to make accurate judgments about emotions, and the knowledge of emotions and emotional processes contributes to the improvement of thinking. It reflects an individual's capacity to understand and regulate their own emotions. From this perspective,

emotional intelligence is considered potentially beneficial across nearly all fields of human activity. (Carrie H, 2009)

A leading representative in this field, Daniel Goleman, published his work *Emotional Intelligence* in 1995, in which he developed a model of emotional intelligence. This model laid the foundation for identifying and assessing human behavior, organizational capacity, attitudes, personality traits, and intellectual potential. He defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and understand emotions and to use them to enhance individual productivity and capability. Furthermore, he argued that success in life is influenced more by emotional intelligence (EQ) than by cognitive intelligence (IQ). (Goleman, 1995)

According to the theory of "Emotional Intelligence Ability" by D. Mayer and P. Salovey, it is defined as the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, and to guide and manage one's thoughts and actions among others. (Mayer JD, 2010)

Scholar V.A. Andreev stated that emotional intelligence differs from cognitive ability in that it is not solely concerned with accurately reflecting the essence and regularities of the external world, but rather represents the capacity to perceive and understand an individual's inner world, personal characteristics, behavior, and reality. He argued that a person with high emotional intelligence possesses the ability to regulate their emotions effectively, adapt to circumstances, and engage in productive interpersonal interactions. (Andreev, 2004).

Furthermore, scholar Golez Kriss defined emotional intelligence as the capacity to wisely regulate one's emotions in order to achieve personal and social success. (Chriss, 2011) Researcher **Steve Hein** stated that "Over the long term, the ability to regulate one's feelings and emotions plays a central role in enhancing human health, well-being, and the capacity to live safely. This refers to the ability to remain free from abnormal emotions and to transform negative emotions into positive ones. (Hein, 2005).

In addition to the ideas, discoveries, and works proposed by the aforementioned scholars, **D.V. Lusin** emphasized that an individual's ability to perceive and regulate their own emotions and those of others is closely linked to the overall patterns and tendencies of their behavior. (Lusin, 2000).

The scholar R. Bar-On introduced the Emotional-Social Intelligence (ESI) model, which encompasses skills such as self-awareness, tolerance, and social interaction. He posits that the ESI model plays a

crucial role in both personal and professional success. His research indicates that individuals with high ESI are better able to manage stress and establish supportive relationships, highlighting its critical importance for the adaptability and teamwork of military personnel. (Bar-On, 2006).

Scholars continue to develop new theories and approaches regarding emotional intelligence, which has also generated considerable debate. In other words, there is a recognized need to precisely define the concepts and indicators of emotional intelligence and general intelligence, and to focus attention on these processes. Emotional intelligence is emphasized as a tool for regulating emotions, reducing stress, and modifying behavior, and numerous innovations in this field have been highlighted as effective in improving mental health. Moreover, these new theories demonstrate a trend toward more detailed investigations at the neurobiological level compared to previous theories.

For example, researcher Lisa Barrett, in her theory of "Emotional Consistency and Neurobiological Correlates," posits that emotions are biologically generated in the brain and explains that emotional intelligence does not consist solely of reactive responses, but rather represents the result of predictive processes in the brain. (Lisa Feldman Barrett, 2017).

Additionally, scholar and researcher R. Davidson, in his "Dynamic Model of Affect," proposed that emotions are the result of dynamic processes within brain activity. He explained that emotional experiences reflect the responses of each individual's cognitive and biological processes, and while emotions are associated with specific regions of the brain, they change dynamically in response to real-world conditions (Davidson, 2012). James Gross conducted research on how emotions can be regulated at the behavioral level. In his theory of "Emotion Regulation," he defines the processes of generating, managing, and expressing emotions, emphasizing that effective regulation of emotions contributes to an individual's well-being. (Gross, 2015).

From the foregoing analysis, *emotional intelligence* may be more precisely conceptualized as a multidimensional psychological construct that functions in dynamic interaction with cognitive processes and general intellectual abilities, and is expressed through context-specific patterns of behavior and performance. Within this framework, emotional intelligence has been systematically examined in relation to its core dimensions, underlying mechanisms, and empirically measurable indicators.

Accordingly, emotional intelligence represents not only a relatively autonomous and integral component of psychological functioning but also a composite of essential human competencies. These encompass the capacity for goal attainment and adaptive functioning, resilience and effective coping with stress and adversity, as well as the ability to sustain well-being and lead a productive and fulfilling life.

Foreign Studies on Emotional Intelligence:

Among studies conducted in foreign countries and within the military of Mongolia, several have examined aspects related to emotional intelligence: Researchers Garcia, Zia, Sankar, and Isna (2020) conducted a study titled "The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Military Personnel in the Workplace," focusing on the emotional intelligence of Air Force technical service personnel. The purpose of the study was to examine how the insufficient application of emotional intelligence by commanding officers affects the performance of military personnel. The study surveyed a total of 2,302 service members, representing various levels of leadership. It found that leaders' inadequate understanding and application of emotional intelligence negatively impacted decision-making and reduced work performance.

The researchers recommended incorporating emotional intelligence development into leadership training programs, emphasizing self-awareness, self-improvement, and emotion regulation skills to enhance task performance outcomes (Garcia Zea, 2020).

- Aguilar, Jorge (2019) conducted a study titled "A Review of the Relationship between Military Leadership and Emotional Intelligence", aiming to examine the correlation between emotional intelligence and leadership within the military context. The researchers performed a comprehensive review of both theoretical frameworks and empirical research findings, identifying both positive and negative aspects. They found that leaders with high emotional intelligence are capable of effectively managing and coordinating challenging tasks, demonstrate resilience and perseverance, and adhere to ethical standards at a high level. The study concluded that military leadership training should be revised to balance the development of emotional intelligence. An integrated approach not only enhances leadership effectiveness but also provides military personnel with critical support in managing family-related difficulties after discharge. (Aguilar, 2019).

- A.V. Glybchak, K.R. Pakhamov, O.A. Savchenko, S.V. Popov, D.M. Dmitriev (2021) conducted a study titled "Results of the Study on the Psychological and Emotional Intelligence of Naval Military Personnel", which revealed through their research that there is a significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and psychological state of military personnel. (Gliibchak, Pahamov, Popov, & Sawchenko, 2021).

- Yan, Z., Cao, F., Lu, H., Zhu, Sh., Miao conducted a study on "Mood and Anxiety Changes among Chinese Military Personnel and the Level of Anxiety in Service Members". The research revealed that anxiety scores among Chinese military personnel are increasing over time. The study emphasized the importance of implementing measures to address this trend, highlighting the need to improve and treat the mental health of service members. (Yang, 2014).

- Cui, Yu, Zhang, H., Liu, N., Liu, Q., Zhang, L., & Zhang, Ya conducted a study titled "A Study on Stress, Psychological Well-being, and Emotional Intelligence among Naval Military Personnel" with 452 Chinese naval service members. The research examined the relationships between stress, psychological well-being, and emotional intelligence in these personnel. The study found that increased stress reduces psychological well-being and makes it more difficult for service members to respond positively to adverse events. (Cui, 2022).

- Purre, M., & Oja, L. conducted a study titled "Emotional State and Help-Seeking Behavior of Conscripts during Military Service" with the aim of examining psychological changes and the tendency to seek assistance among conscripted service members. The study analyzed participants' emotional states and help-seeking behaviors during their service. The results indicated that during conscription, symptoms related to psychological distress and anxiety increased, while social phobias, fatigue, and sleep disturbances slightly decreased. Additionally, the study found that approximately half of the conscripts did not utilize specialized psychological support services, such as those provided by psychologists or social workers. (Purre, 2018).

- Yang, Z., Cao, F., Lu, H., Zhu, and Miao conducted a study on changes in mood and anxiety levels among Chinese military personnel. Their research findings indicate that anxiety scores are increasing among members of the Chinese armed forces. The study emphasizes the importance of implementing interventions to address this trend and highlights the need to improve and treat the mental health of military personnel. (Yang Z. C., (2014).).

- Waxler, M. (2020), in the study "Emotional Intelligence and Modern Military Counseling," examined the significance of emotional intelligence for military counselors operating in culturally diverse environments. In addition to conducting a theoretical analysis, the study drew on existing theories, including Daniel Goleman's model of emotional intelligence and leadership research, as well as practical experiences of military counselors, to identify several key issues.

For example:

- **Communication skills:** Counselors with high emotional intelligence (EI) are better able to establish trust and mutual understanding with military personnel.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** EI facilitates a greater understanding and respect for cultural differences, enhancing the ability to successfully carry out assigned tasks.
- **Leadership effectiveness:** Counselors with high emotional intelligence are able to manage interpersonal relationships effectively and demonstrate successful leadership in challenging environments.

The study highlights the critical role of emotional intelligence in improving the effectiveness, adaptability, and leadership capacities of military counselors. (Waxler, 2020).

In Mongolia, Dr. B. Enkhbayar conducted a research study titled "A Study on the Emotional Intelligence of University Students". In this work, the emotional intelligence of 322 students from higher education institutions in Mongolia was examined using the methodologies developed by D.V. Lyusin, N. Hall, and P. Mohapill. Based on the findings of this study, Dr. Enkhbayar designed and piloted a program aimed at developing students' emotional intelligence, titled PDEIS - Program for Developing the Emotional Intelligence of Students. (Enkhbayar, 2019).

Research Results:

Table 1. Reliability Analysis of the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI) Study

	Cronbach's Alpha	Question Number
Emotional Intelligence (EI)	0.934	50

Before processing the research results, the validity and reliability of the collected data were analyzed,

In her study "Research on Adolescents' Emotions and Behavior," Dr. V. Bayarmaa found that, in terms of emotional and behavioral health, 60.5% of adolescents were healthy, 30.5% exhibited moderate or problematic issues, and 9% had disorders. The study identified persistent patterns in behavior, including attention deficits, hyperactivity, and changes in peer relationships, observed in 65% of the participants. Additionally, the research examined other commonly occurring behavioral characteristics and, based on these findings, developed practical recommendations, which represents a distinctive feature of the study. (Bayarmaa, 2019).

We conducted a review of recent international studies in the field of emotional intelligence that are similar to our research. However, in Mongolia, research in this area by scholars and researchers remains limited.

In this study, we focused on examining the emotional intelligence of border military personnel. For military personnel, performing official duties often requires coping with unexpected difficulties, obstacles, and emerging problems, as well as the ability to adapt to circumstances and demonstrate resilience in overcoming challenges.

Therefore, it is critically important for military personnel not only to regulate their own emotions and maintain focus, but also to accurately perceive and evaluate situations, direct themselves, take initiative, overcome obstacles, and additionally to sense, understand, share, and respond to the emotions of others, as well as to manage and influence others' emotional states within the operational environment.

To study the emotional intelligence of border military personnel, we employed Daniel Goleman's Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI), using a test composed of 50 questions across five dimensions to assess emotional intelligence.

and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.934, indicating a sufficiently high level of reliability.

Table 2. Demographic Information of the Participating Military Personnel

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-25	1512	61.0
	26-35	562	22.7
	36-45	376	15.2
	Over 46	28	1.1
Gender	Male	2091	84.4
	Female	387	15.6
Education	Higher Education	692	27.9

	Specialized Secondary Education	664	26.8
	Complete Secondary Education	1080	43.6
Personnel	Officer	486	19.6
	Non-Commissioned Officer	607	24.5
	Enlisted Soldier	240	9.7
	Conscription Service Personnel	1145	46.2
	Leadership	206	8.3
Position	Executive	2272	91.7
	1-10.	1588	64.1
Years of Service	11-20	786	31.7
	Over 21	55	2.2
	Central	331	13.4
Regions	Mountain	663	26.8
	Forest and Taiga	390	15.7
	Steppe area	462	18.6
	Gobi Desert	632	25.5
	Total	2478	100.0

Based on the frequency analysis of the demographic data of the participating personnel in the study: service members aged 18–25 accounted for 61% of the total sample, male personnel comprised 84.4%, those with a complete secondary education made up 43.6%, border

guard personnel (CSP) accounted for 46.2%, executive officers represented 91.7%, personnel with 1–10 years of service constituted 64.1%, and those working in mountainous regions made up 26.8% of the total sample..

Emotional Intelligence Level

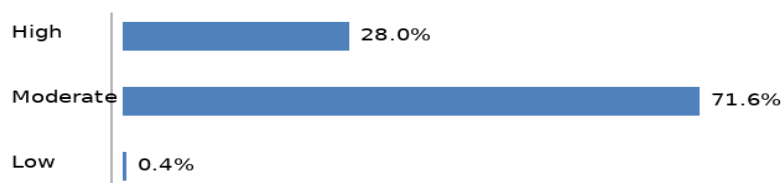


Figure 1. Emotional Intelligence Levels of the Participating Personnel in the Study.

The analysis of the three levels of emotional intelligence indicates that 0.4% of military personnel exhibit a low level, 71.6% demonstrate a moderate level, and 28% show a high level of emotional intelligence. This suggests that the majority of the

military personnel participating in the study possess a moderate level of emotional intelligence, as illustrated in the graph. In contrast, participants with low and high levels account for 0.4% and 28%, respectively.

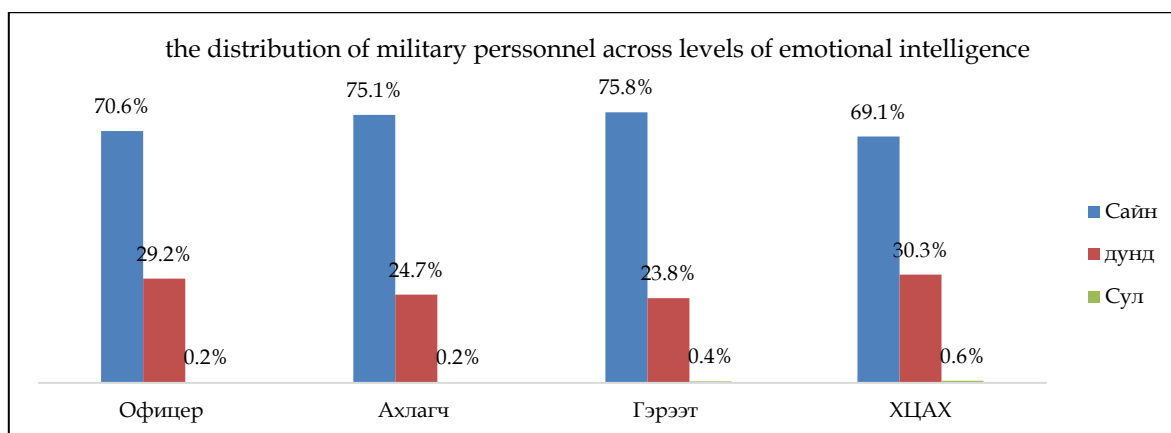


Figure 2. Proportion of Military Personnel by Level of Emotional Intelligence

An analysis of service personnel across the three levels of emotional intelligence (EI) indicates that 75.8%

of the total personnel—primarily contract service members—fall within the high EI category. Meanwhile,

30.3% of the total personnel—mainly conscripted soldiers—are classified at the moderate level, whereas

only 0.6% of the total personnel, also consisting of conscripted soldiers, are identified at the low EI level.

Table 3. Frequency Analysis of Emotional Intelligence Levels among Research Participants

		Low	Middle	Excellent
Self-awareness indicator	frequency	17	849	1612
	percentage	0.7%	34.3%	65.1%
Emotion regulation indicator	frequency	22	1350	1106
	percentage	0.9%	54.5%	44.6%
Self-motivation and self-activation indicator	frequency	18	908	1552
	percentage	0.7%	36.6%	62.6%
Empathy (understanding others)	frequency	22	1125	1330
	percentage	0.9%	45.4%	53.7%
Social competence	frequency	18	962	1497
	percentage	0.7%	38.8%	60.4%

Conclusions drawn from the frequency analysis are as follows:

- **Self-awareness indicator:** A total of 65.1% of the personnel demonstrate a high level of self-awareness. This suggests that military service members are capable of effectively mobilizing their personal capacities and internal resources in the course of duty performance, possess a clear understanding of how their emotional states influence task execution, and are able to accurately recognize and interpret their emotional responses.
- **Emotion regulation indicator:** Regarding emotion regulation, 54.5% of the personnel fall within the moderate level, while 0.9% are classified at a low level. This may be attributed to the specific conditions of military service, where intense emotional experiences can affect individuals' ability to maintain self-control, sustain attention, and engage in rational decision-making. Therefore, it is considered necessary to strengthen psychological interventions aimed at enhancing self-regulation and discipline within this group.
- **Self-motivation and activation indicator:** In terms of self-motivation and activation, 62.6% of the personnel demonstrate a high level, while 36.6% fall within the moderate level. For those at the moderate level, there is a clear need to implement psychological training programs focused on developing resilience, fostering realistic self-awareness and self-assessment, and enhancing intrinsic motivation and proactive engagement.
- **Empathy (understanding others):** With respect to empathy, 53.7% of the personnel exhibit a high level, 45.4% a moderate level, and 0.9% a low level. This competency is critically important for service members. Given that many are assigned to duties in socially isolated environments—such as border patrols and guard posts—there is considerable potential to further develop this capacity through targeted training and educational interventions.
- **Social competence:** In the domain of social skills, 60.4% of the personnel demonstrate a high level, while 38.8% are at a moderate level. It is therefore recommended that military psychologists place greater emphasis on developing competencies related to positive interpersonal influence, teamwork, leadership, and the ability to effectively guide and coordinate others during task execution.

Furthermore, this study aims to analyze each dimension of emotional intelligence among the participating service members in relation to key demographic variables, including age, gender, educational background, years of service, rank/position, and regional assignment, in order to derive comprehensive conclusions.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis between Emotional Intelligence and Demographic Variables

	Correlation analysis					
	Age	Education	Personnel	Position	Years of service	Regions
Self-awareness indicator	.064**	.075**	-.048*	-.010	.013	-.027
	.002	.000	.017	.615	.518	.182
Emotion regulation indicator	.003	-.023	.003	-.014	.022	-.024
	.864	.245	.901	.489	.276	.228
Self-motivation and self-activation indicator	.109**	-.097**	-.098**	-.045*	.089**	-.049*
	.000	.000	.000	.024	.000	.015
Empathy (understanding others)	.033	-.032	-.017	-.007	.024	.005
	.098	.114	.404	.732	.236	.802
Social competence	.584	-.007	-.036	-.014	.050*	-.038
	.640	.742	.075	.477	.012	.061

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the results of the correlation analysis:

1. Self-awareness indicator:

- A weak positive correlation is observed with age ($R = 0.064^{**}$, $p = 0.002$). This suggests that self-awareness tends to increase with age; however, it does not develop automatically. Rather, it improves depending on an individual's ability and effort to understand and develop awareness of their emotional strengths and weaknesses.
- A weak positive correlation is also found with educational level ($R = 0.075^{**}$, $p = 0.000$). While higher education may positively influence self-awareness, it is still possible for individuals with higher education to have underdeveloped emotional understanding. The weak correlation indicates that self-awareness cannot be sufficiently explained solely by age or education.

2. Emotional regulation indicator: No significant correlation is observed with demographic factors. This implies that the ability of personnel to regulate their emotions varies independently of demographic characteristics.

3. Self-motivation indicator:

- A weak positive correlation with age ($R = 0.109^{**}$, $p = 0.000$) indicates that self-motivation tends to increase as personnel grow older; however, the strength of this relationship remains limited.
- A weak negative correlation with educational level ($R = -0.097^{**}$, $p = 0.000$) suggests that despite

higher levels of education, individuals—particularly those in managerial positions—may experience a decline in self-motivation during changes in job or career conditions.

- A weak negative correlation with personnel category ($R = -0.098^{**}$, $p = 0.000$) indicates that self-motivation varies across different service categories (officers, non-commissioned officers, contract, and conscript personnel).
- A weak positive correlation with years of service ($R = 0.089^{**}$, $p = 0.000$) suggests that self-motivation tends to slightly improve with increased work experience; however, it is likely influenced by multiple factors beyond tenure.

4. Empathy (understanding others): No variables show a significant correlation with demographic factors.

5. Social skills: A weak positive correlation is observed with age and years of service ($R = 0.050^*$, $p = 0.012$), indicating that social skills tend to improve as personnel gain age and experience. This may be influenced by various factors such as the work environment, organizational climate, and interpersonal relationships.

Furthermore, based on the comparative correlation analysis between emotional intelligence and demographic factors, two indicators that showed significant relationships (self-awareness and self-motivation) were further examined using a **multifactor Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**.

Table 5. Comparative ANOVA Analysis of Self-Awareness and Demographic Variables

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	P value
Age	7.366	2	3.683	5.989	0.003
	1521.932	2475	0.615		
Gender	2.022	2	1.011	7.712	0.000
	324.538	2475	0.131		
Education	9.684	2	4.842	6.97	0.001
	1725.070	2475	0.697		
Position	0.055	2	0.027	0.359	0.698
	188.820	2475	0.076		
Years of service	0.139	2	0.070	0.225	0.798
	765.349	2475	0.309		
Personnel	8.626	2	4.313	2.956	0.052
	3611.363	2475	1.459		

Based on the ANOVA analysis of self-awareness and demographic variables, the p-values are less than 0.05, indicating statistically significant differences across age, gender, educational level, and

personnel category. This suggests that these demographic variables have a significant effect on the level of self-awareness.

Table 6. Comparative ANOVA Analysis of Self-Motivation and Self-Activation Indicators and Demographic Variables

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	19.734	2	9.867	16.177	0.000
	1509.564	2475	0.610		
Gender	1.316	2	0.658	5.009	0.007
	325.244	2475	0.131		

Education	16.478	2	8.239	11.867	0.000
	1718.276	2475	0.694		
Position	0.478	2	0.239	3.139	0.044
	188.397	2475	0.076		
Years of service	6.314	2	3.157	10.292	0.000
	759.175	2475	0.307		
Personnel	34.966	2	17.483	12.070	0.000
	3585.023	2475	1.448		

Based on the ANOVA analysis of self-motivation and self-activation indicators with demographic variables, the p-values are less than 0.05, indicating statistically significant differences across age, gender, educational level, personnel category, position, and years of service. The findings suggest that self-motivation and self-activation tend to improve depending on military personnel's age, gender, level of education, and their work and life experience.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to examine the emotional intelligence of border troop personnel. Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and become aware of their own and others' emotions, as well as to regulate and manage them effectively. It further encompasses competencies such as self-motivation, motivating others, empathy, adaptability, and decision-making. The concept of emotional intelligence—defined as the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, differentiate among them, and use this information to guide thinking and behavior—was initially proposed and theoretically developed by psychologists Daniel Goleman, Peter Salovey, and John D. Mayer. In this study, Goleman's Mixed Model of Emotional Intelligence was adopted as the theoretical framework.

A total of 2,490 border troop personnel were selected as the research sample, and the study yielded the following results:

1. **Emotional intelligence levels:** Based on the assessment using Daniel Goleman's emotional intelligence scale, 0.4% of military personnel were at a low level, 71.6% at a moderate level, and 28% at a high level of emotional intelligence. Within these categories, contract service personnel were more represented at the high level, non-commissioned officers at the moderate level, and conscript soldiers at the low level.
2. **Descriptive statistical analysis:** The highest mean score was observed for the self-awareness indicator ($M = 36.43$), while the lowest mean score was found for emotional regulation ($M = 33.76$). This indicates that the emotional regulation capacity of military personnel is at a moderate

level.

3. **Frequency analysis:** Among the respondents, 65.1% demonstrated a high level of self-awareness; 54.5% showed a moderate level of emotional regulation; 45.4% exhibited a moderate level of empathy (understanding others); and 0.9% displayed low levels of social skills.
4. **Correlation analysis:** When comparing the five dimensions of emotional intelligence with demographic factors, self-awareness showed a weak positive correlation with age ($R = 0.064^{**}$, $p = 0.002$) and with educational level ($R = 0.075^{**}$, $p = 0.000$).
5. **ANOVA analysis:** The analysis indicated that self-awareness, self-motivation, and self-activation indicators have p-values less than 0.05 when compared with demographic variables. This demonstrates statistically significant differences across age, gender, educational level, personnel category, position, and years of service. Therefore, emotional intelligence varies depending on demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and level of education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study on the emotional intelligence of border troop personnel, the following recommendations are proposed for commanding officers and military psychologists working with military personnel.

1. *In relation to training for the development of emotional intelligence:*

- Develop, approve, and implement training programs aimed at enhancing military personnel's emotional intelligence, including skills such as emotional regulation, understanding others' emotions (empathy), coping with occupational stress, and improving interpersonal communication.
- Incorporate psychological group counseling, psychological training sessions, and participatory learning methods into the "Initial Military Adaptation Training" programs for newly recruited conscript and contract personnel. These should focus on developing emotional

competencies identified in the study and strengthening behavioral stability.

- Organize both in-person and online training programs in a phased manner across border detachments and units, based on approved curricula, and systematically evaluate training outcomes to improve emotional intelligence levels among personnel.
- Include interactive exercises and practical techniques in training curricula to enhance emotional intelligence, with particular emphasis on developing self-awareness, self-activation, and self-motivation skills.
- Promote positive emotional states, improve stress management, and provide opportunities for self-development by recommending and utilizing additional resources such as training platforms, books, and instructional manuals within military service.

2. In relation to improving psychological assessment, monitoring systems, and crime prevention:

- Implement sector-wide projects and programs in cooperation with professional universities and international organizations to support crime prevention and psychological interventions, particularly focusing on emotional regulation programs.
- Enhance psychological assessment and monitoring systems by administering emotional intelligence assessments to newly recruited conscript and contract personnel at the beginning of their training. Based on the results, provide continuous and staged interventions aimed at improving their emotional intelligence throughout their service period.
- Conduct further research on psychological and behavioral factors that may contribute to criminal motivation and actions among military personnel. Analyze findings in depth and implement targeted measures to reduce disciplinary violations and criminal behavior.

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3. In relation to improving the psychological service system:

- Increase the accessibility of psychological counseling services by expanding conditions and opportunities for service delivery. This includes the broader use of remote, online, and digital counseling, as well as group counseling services for personnel stationed at remote border posts and guard units.
- Ensure that participation in psychological counseling is primarily based on the results of psychological assessments rather than solely on administrative decisions or recommendations. It is important to consider that compulsory referral may activate psychological defense mechanisms, reduce trust in psychologists, and create concerns about confidentiality of sensitive personal information, thereby negatively affecting outcomes. Therefore, appropriate conditions and a supportive environment should be established to enhance the effectiveness of psychological services.

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