

# The Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Rehabilitation of the Former Prisoners of War

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**Abstract:** The emotional state of military personnel engaged in the extensive operations taking place in Ukraine is undoubtedly impacted. This especially applies to former prisoners of war (POWs) who have experienced mental and physical trauma. Optimizing their subjective well-being and life satisfaction can contribute to the development of emotional intelligence during the rehabilitation process. The purpose of the study is to identify the importance of emotional intelligence in enhancing the subjective well-being of former POWs. Methods. The following psychometric tests were used for diagnosis: EQ-Test, the Scale of subjective well-being, and Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS). During the statistical analysis, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were utilized. Results. The study found that the subjects have low emotional intelligence ( $M=39.31$ ,  $SD=12.85$ ), low subjective well-being ( $M=50.19$ ,  $SD=11.06$ ), and an average level of life satisfaction ( $M=17.05$ ,  $SD=8.96$ ). Correlation analysis established a direct relationship between emotional intelligence and subjective well-being ( $r=0.483$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and life satisfaction ( $r=0.723$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Conclusions. The study statistically confirmed that emotional intelligence is an essential factor in the process of rehabilitation of former prisoners of war, as it contributes to their attainment of subjective well-being and life satisfaction. This aids in reinstating the individual's psychological balance after captivity, enhances the medical and physical recuperation process of the body, and ensures full reintegration. Prospects. The obtained results contribute to the rehabilitation system of rehabilitation for former prisoners of war, as they elaborate a comprehensive emotional intelligence approach to ensure their subjective well-being and life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Captivity, mental trauma, subjective well-being, emotional awareness, emotion management, emotional stability, reintegration.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The conflict that has persisted on Ukrainian soil for two years now continues to draw an escalating number of individuals who are actively engaging in the hostilities. Primarily, this pertains to military personnel who have been taken captive as a consequence of their involvement in combat operations. Prisoners of war (POWs) are often confined to inhumane living conditions that expose them to both physical and psychological abuse. Such circumstances disrupt normal life processes and can cause significant personal transformation. Upon release, these individuals require extensive medical and psychological support as well as a lengthy rehabilitation period.

According to military psychologists, a significant proportion of prisoners of war undergo a state of crisis

or shock that manifests as an identity loss [1], rapid fatigue, and emotional instability [2]. Captivity is a complete collapse of the worldview, and being in captivity is one of the most challenging circumstances for an individual as a psychosocial entity [3]. Traumatic experiences as a result of captivity leave a significant mark on the prisoners' mental health; these encounters possess a detrimental impact on interpersonal connections, eroding faith in the surroundings and individuals, including the loved ones [4]. However, if the first psychological aid is provided during the first two weeks, then the stage of physical and psychological recovery can be quite successful [5].

Regrettably, Ukraine has yet to establish an all-encompassing framework for the psychological restoration of the former POWs, which would enable them to undergo complete psychological recuperation in conjunction with medical intervention. This determines the search for ways and means of successful rehabilitation of the specified category of persons, which will make it possible to carry out the

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rehabilitation process more effectively. Cultivating emotional intelligence represents a compelling means for the rehabilitation of prisoners of war. Currently, emotional intelligence (EI) serves as an indispensable personal construct that empowers individuals to harness their inner resources, foster meaningful emotional and value-based connections with others, regulate their affective states, and manage the outward manifestation of their emotions [6]. EI enables people to perceive their environment differently and adapt to stress in their own unique way [7]. Individuals possessing elevated EI levels perceive and comprehend individuals constructively, resulting in the cultivation of favorable interpersonal connections [8].

The state system of comprehensive rehabilitation of the former POWs should be refined and a single link of psychological assistance should be created, which would ensure their full-fledged psychological rehabilitation to stabilize their psycho-emotional state and reintegration. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to address the impact of emotional intelligence on the subjective well-being and life satisfaction of former POWs as indicators of their effective rehabilitation. According to the established purpose, the following objectives were set:

- 1) Diagnose the level of emotional intelligence development of the former POWs;
- 2) Determine the degree of subjective well-being and overall life satisfaction among the former POWs;
- 3) Reveal the connection between emotional intelligence and subjective well-being and life satisfaction of the POW;
- 4) Determine the significance of the emotional intelligence of the former POWs in their rehabilitation and the prospects for its development.

According to the study purpose and objectives, a research hypothesis was formulated positing that emotional intelligence exerts a favorable impact on the subjective well-being and life satisfaction of the former POWs, which is the basis for elaborating an effective system of rehabilitation tools.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the definition of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of

War [9], prisoners of war are members of the armed forces of the party to the conflict; members of militias or volunteer corps forming part of such conflict; servicemen of the regular armed forces; persons accompanying the armed forces but actually members thereof, such as civilian crew members; residents of unoccupied territory who, when the enemy approaches, spontaneously take up arms to resist the invading troops. Likewise, in Ukraine, there is an Instruction on the procedure for the implementation of the norms of international humanitarian law in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, which defines prisoners of war as follows: "combatants who were captured during an international armed conflict" [10]. The Geneva Convention states that regardless of the responsibility of belligerent states, each of them is obliged to treat prisoners of war in accordance with the norms of international law and to ensure humane treatment, which strictly prohibits any discrimination [9].

Despite the established international norms of law, in reality, former POWs' stay in captivity does not meet any standards and norms. Even if prisoners experience physical comfort (clean clothes, daily showers, an abundance of nourishment), which happens extremely rarely, their psychological condition is quite difficult. Research shows that former POWs have more complex PTSD symptoms and emotional disorders than non-POWs [2]. In fact, captivity invokes a strong sense of fear and anxiety, frustration against the background of loss of autonomy, panic attacks, sleep disturbances and neurosis, and post-traumatic stress disorder [1]. Difficult experiences in the case of long-term captivity result in a depletion of the desire to continue living as well as suicidal thoughts. Therefore, captivity is considered one of the most difficult experiences of an individual [5]. All military personnel of NATO undergo the SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape) course as part of basic training, which is aimed at learning survival skills in the event of captivity as well as reducing stress thereafter [11]. However, even such a course does not guarantee the formation of emotional sustainability of military personnel, which would provide them with high-stress resistance, the ability to control emotions and express them, and to be resistant to external influences.

Thus, considering the aforementioned factors, we can infer that the plight of prisoners of war post-capture is exceedingly difficult. Accordingly, they require qualified rehabilitation. Rehabilitation is a set of organized medical, psychological, and social measures aimed at restoring the health, social status and ability

to fully function of persons who lost such ability [11]. As far as former POWs are concerned, rehabilitation primarily involves restoration of physical health and psychological well-being, as well as successful re-adaptation of such individuals in society. The principal objectives of rehabilitation include the minimization of mental illness hazards, full social reintegration, and restoration of personal status [12]. Currently, there is a lack of establishments within Ukraine's borders that offer comprehensive medical, social, and psychological aid to former POWs. It is expedient to create institutions focused on such patients in accordance with the medical reform [13]. Therefore, the general process of rehabilitation is complicated by the lack of a comprehensive system of providing targeted assistance to former prisoners of war. The principal goal of rehabilitation as regards this category of people is the return of the former POWs to society as full-fledged members capable of satisfying societal, occupational, and individual obligations [14]. The development of their emotional intelligence can speed up the rehabilitation process of the former POWs.

In recent decades, researchers across various disciplines have actively studied emotional intelligence as a scientific phenomenon. Mayer *et al.* [15] are credited with introducing this term into scientific discourse, defining it as a set of mental abilities that allow perceiving one's own emotions and the emotions of others, as well as the ability to process emotional information and develop on its basis. Goleman [16] elaborated the concept of emotional intelligence, which comprised as follows: resilience to experiences, emotional control, mood regulation, and empathy as the ability to empathize with others. Emotional intelligence is a set of personal qualities that make it possible to effectively manage one's emotions and their expression [17]. The developed emotional intelligence contributes to the adaptation of the individual and effective affect regulation [18]. EI is indispensable for effective teamwork [19], establishing trusting relationships [20], and communicative interaction with others [21]. To date, an increasing number of scholars focus on the importance of emotional intelligence in the structure of an individual's life satisfaction [21]-[23] and the subjective well-being of a person [24]. In fact, emotional intelligence contributes to the overall development of flexibility and adaptability in addressing problematic issues related to people and communications [25].

According to Placek [26], emotional intelligence is critical in combat situations, as the use of effective

emotion management strategies increases the chances of success [27]. Taking a closer look at the concept of EI, in the present-day conditions of the war in Ukraine, emotional intelligence ensures the formation of positive interpersonal relations, self-regulation, stress resistance, and optimization of operational decision-making [28]. Deyanira *et al.* [19] note that the development of emotional intelligence helps and improves the POWs to adapt to traumatic experiences, and contributes to their successful integration into society.

A critical takeaway from these analyses is that the emotional intelligence of the former POWs is the basis of their interpersonal interaction and well-being. Therefore, after the captivity, it is crucial to instill the basis of emotional intelligence in individuals, as this facilitates their awareness and management of their own emotions, find resources for their adequate expression and control, understands others, and responds accordingly to the emotional states of interlocutors. Frequently, individuals who have been liberated from captivity exhibit certain suspicion towards others, including those with whom they share intimate relationships. The sense of loneliness and isolation formed in captivity is the so-called paradox of control [29]. According to Shyrobokov [30], the primary technique for survival in captivity is strict self-control (actions and emotions), so the individual ceases expressing their emotions but constantly suppresses them. Consequently, a false sense of self-control is created. After captivity, such control skills are preserved, and at a subconscious level, a person begins to manifest them in everyday life. During the rehabilitation process, it is indispensable to enable the released prisoners to express themselves, alleviate emotional suffering, overcome mental trauma, and establish a stable bond with it as a prior encounter [4].

Therefore, the study of emotional intelligence in the rehabilitation process of POWs will enable the facilitation system to be extended, providing them with comprehensive assistance.

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1. Research Procedure

The study spanned a period of six months: from February 2023 to August 2023. During 5 stages, the role of emotional intelligence in the psychological rehabilitation of the former POWs was identified. In the first stage, a theoretical and methodological analysis of

scientific approaches to the research problem and the elaboration of the research program were carried out. In the course of the second stage, diagnostic methods were prepared, which were entered into Google Forms. The third stage involved processing the received answers, entering the obtained data into an Excel document, and calculating the results. In the fourth stage, the results were interpreted and presented in tabular and graphical forms. Further, quantitative and statistical data analysis was carried out. During the final, fifth stage, a description of the obtained results and their comparison with other studies was carried out, and the limitations as well as prospects of the study were outlined.

The study was carried out utilizing the Google Forms platform by sending the hyperlinks to the electronic mail addresses of participants. Remote diagnostics ensured not only confidentiality but also reduced the risk of emotional stress during tests. The subjects independently chose the time for passing the tests, which gave them a sense of autonomy, independence, and self-control.

### 3.2. Formation of the Sample

The study was conducted on a sample of 210 people between the ages of 23 and 49 who took part in hostilities since the beginning of the war in eastern Ukraine in 2014 and who were participants in the full-scale invasion from February 2022 and were captured. That said, of all the participants there were 187 men and 23 women. Diagnostics took place on the basis of the public organization "Blue Bird" (Kyiv), the Center for Mental Health and Rehabilitation of Veterans "Lisova Polyana" of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine (Kyiv); Public organization "Cherkasy Rehabilitation Center" (Cherkasy). In fact, all the individuals under study are clients of the above centers.

### 3.3. Methods

Standardized methods utilized for identifying emotional intelligence were chosen for diagnosis.

First, the "Test of Emotional Intelligence" (EQ-test) was developed by N. Hall to reveal an individual's ability to perceive, understand and express other people's emotional states as well as their own. The said methodology comprises the scales as follows: emotional awareness, managing one's emotions, self-motivation, empathy, and managing other people's emotions. The test contains 30 questions; each statement requires a response on a 6-point scale: from

-3, which means "strongly disagree" to +3, which means "I fully agree." This technique is one of the most widely used worldwide for measuring the level of emotional intelligence.

Second, the "Scale of subjective well-being" by Perrudet-Badoux, Mendelsohn, and Chiche adapted by Sokolova [31]. The technique is a screening psychodiagnostic tool aimed at identifying the emotional component of subjective well-being. The scale contains 17 questions and answer options from 1 (fully agree) to 7 (fully disagree). The methodology includes the following scales: tension and sensitivity, indicators accompanying the principal psycho-emotional symptoms, mood swings, the importance of the social environment, self-assessment of health, the degree of satisfaction with daily routine activities, and the overall well-being score.

Third, the "Satisfaction with life scale" (SWLS) [32] is a short screening questionnaire that diagnoses the subjective life satisfaction of respondents. The test has 5 questions and 7 answer options. The obtained total score makes it possible to assess the subject's level of life satisfaction.

### 3.4. Statistical Methods

Statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis using Pearson's linear correlation were utilized in order to process the research results.

### 3.5. Ethical Research Criteria

Prior to being diagnosed, all participants were provided with informed consent regarding the study's purpose, objectives, and duration. Additionally, confidentiality and anonymity of the diagnosis were ensured to maintain privacy. The collection of personal data was also subject to separate consent from each participant.

## 4. RESULTS

In the course of the conducted research, a low level of emotional intelligence of the former POWs under study was revealed (Table 1).

The study found that the former POWs had comparatively low values of the emotional intelligence parameters. Thus, only emotional awareness ( $M=9.03$ ,  $SD=2.98$ ) and managing other people's emotions ( $M=8.04$ ,  $SD=4.15$ ) are expressed therein at an

**Table 1: Indicators of Emotional Intelligence of the Former POWs (N=210)**

Parameters of emotional intelligence	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Emotional awareness	9.03	2.98	2.00	16.00
Managing one's emotions	7.70	2.78	4.00	18.00
Self-motivation	7.57	3.25	3.00	18.00
Empathy	7.98	3.92	2.00	17.00
Managing other people's emotions	8.04	4.15	2.00	18.00
EI	39.31	12.85	15.00	73.00

average level, while self-motivation (M=7.57, SD=3.25), empathy (M=7.98, SD=3.92) and managing one's emotions (M=7.70, SD=2.78) are quite low among the respondents. Given the above, it is difficult for them to regulate their emotional responses, appropriately articulate them in response to the context, and engage with others on an emotive level. The overall level of *students'* emotional intelligence is average (M=39.31, SD=12.85).

The findings obtained from assessing the subjective well-being of the former POWs are as follows (Table 2).

The obtained results demonstrate high values of tension and sensitivity of the subjects (M=20.77, SD=3.56), manifestations of negative emotional signs (M=20.62, SD=3.11), and frequent mood swings (M=17.46, SD=3.95). At the same time, low indicators of the social environment importance (M=10.04, SD=3.82), self-assessment of health (M=9.86, SD=3.25), satisfaction with daily routine activities (M=11.48, SD=3.49). Overall subjective well-being is in the range that is below the average (M=50.19,

SD=11.06). These data are indicative of the fact that the respondents are not emotionally stable, tense, distrustful of others, and dissatisfied with their health and daily routine activities.

According to the scale of life satisfaction, the data were obtained that indicate an insufficient level thereof (Table 3).

According to the table, the subjects have an average level of life satisfaction (M=17.05, SD=8.96). That being said, the former POWs devalue their personality, have a deformed internal coherence, have a negative attitude towards others, are disoriented in their own feelings and states, and have unsatisfied desires. Emotionally, it is difficult for such respondents to be included in the rehabilitation process, as they lack incentive and motivation.

Comparing the indicators obtained during the diagnosis, we can state that the former POWs have low emotional intelligence subjective well-being, and average life satisfaction (Figure 1).

**Table 2: Indicators of Subjective well-being of the Former POWs (N=210)**

Parameters of subjective well-being	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Tension and sensitivity	20.77	3.56	5.00	19.00
Indicators accompanying the principal psychoemotional symptoms	20.62	3.11	5.00	17.00
Mood Swings	17.46	3.95	2.00	16.00
Importance of social environment	10.04	3.82	3.00	16.00
Self-assessment of health	9.86	3.25	2.00	18.00
Degree of satisfaction with daily routine activities	11.48	3.49	5.00	18.00
Overall well-being score	50.19	11.06	39.00	85.00

**Table 3: Indicators of Life Satisfaction of the Former POWs**

Components	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Life satisfaction	17.05	8.96	7.00	35.00

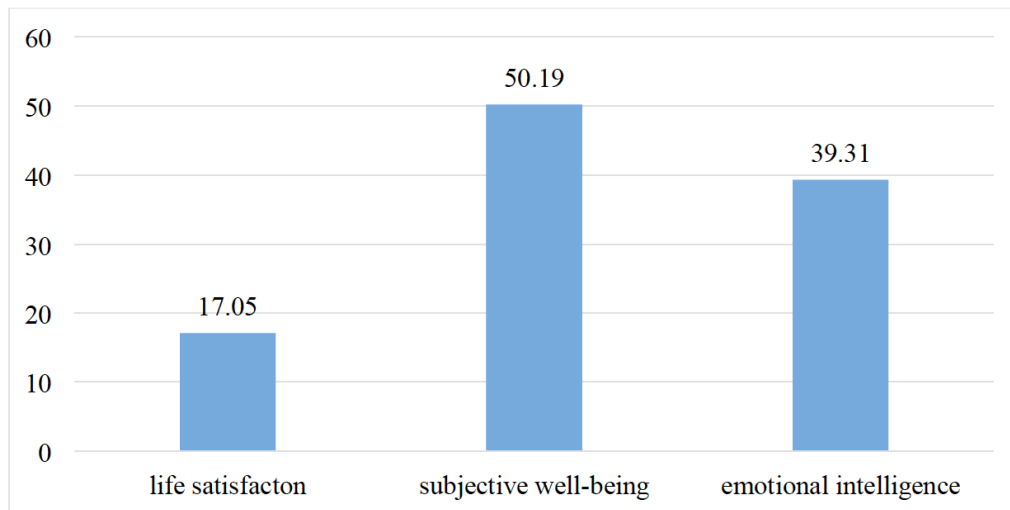


Figure 1: Comparison of emotional intelligence, subjective well-being, and life satisfaction indicators of the former POWs.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Emotional Intelligence and Subjective well-being of Former POWs (N=210)

Types of orientation in communication	Parameters of emotional intelligence					EI
	emotional awareness	managing one's emotions	self-motivation	empathy	managing other people's emotions	
tension and sensitivity	-0.343*	-0.427**				-0.538**
indicators accompanying the principal psychoemotional symptoms			-0.396*			
mood swings		-0.541**	-0.371*		-0.440**	-0.473**
importance of the social environment				0.454**	0.215**	0.218**
self-assessment of health	0.432**		0.560*	0.477**	0.209**	0.307**
satisfaction with daily routine activities	0.384**		0.290**	0.343**		0.302**
overall well-being score	0.572**	0.449*	0.416**	0.632**	0.361**	0.483**

Note: \*\* - correlation coefficients for  $p \leq 0.01$ , \* - correlation coefficients for  $p \leq 0.05$ .

The conducted correlation analysis revealed the correlation coefficients between the components of emotional intelligence and subjective well-being as well as life satisfaction (Table 4).

The identified coefficients indicate the existence of a relationship between emotional awareness and tension ( $r=0.343$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), mood swings ( $r=0.332$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), self-assessment of health ( $r=0.232$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), the degree of satisfaction with daily routine activities ( $r=0.384$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), the general level of subjective well-being ( $r=0.372$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Emotion management is associated with mood swings ( $r=0.343$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ) and overall well-being ( $r=0.259$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ). Self-motivation is inversely related to indicators accompanying the principal psychoemotional symptoms ( $r=-0.396$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), mood

swings ( $r=-0.371$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), and is positively related to self-assessment of health ( $r=0.560$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ), satisfaction with daily routine activities ( $r=0.290$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), overall well-being ( $r=0.416$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Empathy is positively correlated with the importance of the social environment ( $r=0.454$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), self-assessment of health ( $r=0.477$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), satisfaction with daily routine activities ( $r=0.343$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), overall well-being ( $r=0.632$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Managing other people's emotions is inversely related to mood swings ( $r=-0.440$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and directly related to the importance of the social environment ( $r=0.215$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), self-assessment of health ( $r=0.209$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), the overall well-being ( $r=0.361$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ).

The overall level of emotional intelligence has an inverse relationship with tension ( $r=-0.538$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ),

**Table 5: Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Life Satisfaction of the Former POWs (N=210)**

Types of orientation in communication	Parameters of emotional intelligence (EI)					EI
	emotional awareness	managing one's emotions	self-motivation	empathy	managing other people's emotions	
satisfaction with life	0.581**	0.352**	0.367**	0.808**	0.534**	0.723**

Note: \*\* - correlation coefficients for  $p \leq 0.01$ , \* - correlation coefficients for  $p \leq 0.05$ .

mood swings ( $r = -0.473$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), as well as a direct relationship with the importance of the social environment.

So, it was found that the emotional intelligence of POWs causes low tension and mood swings, and the importance is placed on the social environment, satisfaction with daily routine activities, self-assessment of health, and overall well-being.

The conducted correlation analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction of the former POWs showed the presence of high coefficients (Table 5).

According to the above table, life satisfaction of the former prisoners of war is positively correlated with emotional awareness ( $r = 0.581$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), emotions management ( $r = 0.352$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), self-motivation ( $r = 0.367$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), empathy ( $r = 0.808$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ), emotions identification ( $r = 0.534$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and the overall emotional intelligence level ( $r = 0.723$ ,  $p \leq 0.01$ ). Such a connection testifies to the high role of emotional intelligence in the life satisfaction of the former prisoners of war.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The study found that the former prisoners of war had a low level of emotional intelligence, which characterizes their inability to be aware of (their own and other people's) emotions, express them, manage them, show empathy, and motivate themselves to act. A low level of emotional intelligence is an obstacle in the rehabilitation process of the former POWs, as it reduces their resource capabilities and affects their engagement in the process of physical and psychological recovery. Such POWs face challenges in establishing communication, exhibit animosity towards their peers whom they perceive as a potential danger, and experience emotional reticence and detachment [4]. The above findings correspond to previous studies, which found that POWs have signs of emotional instability, and low emotional intelligence, which prevent them from undergoing full rehabilitation [12].

The established relationship between the emotional intelligence of POWs and the level of their subjective well-being and life satisfaction indicates that without an adequate level of emotional intelligence, such individuals cannot fully function in society, have low socio-psychological adaptation, and communication problems. Consequently, this reduces the effectiveness of rehabilitation. The subjective well-being of the POWs reflects their attitude to life, and the desire to be active in life, to interact with other people. The revealed low level of subjective well-being of the respondents testifies to the lack of motivation, the emphasis on past traumatic experiences, diminished attainment in daily pursuits, and distortion of aspirations, life goals and necessities. These findings are in line with the research of Ain *et al.* [23] who demonstrated that emotional intelligence has a significant impact on an individual's overall sense of well-being and determines adaptation.

The rehabilitation process of POWs requires their active involvement in this process, the desire to speed up rehabilitation and return as a full-fledged citizens to society, family, and friends. Our research revealed a significant correlation between reduced emotional intelligence and decreased subjective well-being, thereby impeding the efficacy of rehabilitation interventions among POWs. The findings are consistent with Jukić *et al.* [5] study, which demonstrated that psychological and social rehabilitation outcomes were contingent upon the emotional state of POWs.

The study established a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. Based on this, it should be noted that disabled people who are not aware of their emotions, do not know how to express them, do not know how to effectively communicate with others and show empathy, accordingly, have dissatisfaction with their lives. Furthermore, other research corroborated the link between emotional intelligence and contentment with life, revealing that adeptly handling emotions can propel individuals towards greater satisfaction in their lives [6], while the inability to manage emotions and the

inability to understand them provokes negativism about one's own life [7]. Solomon *et al.* [2] also established that long-term captivity is a psychotraumatic factor on the personality and that the development of emotional stability affects the life satisfaction of prisoners of war.

Thus, the investigation validated the hypothesis that emotional intelligence exerts a favorable impact on the POWs' subjective well-being and their overall level of life satisfaction.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Currently, the ongoing war in Ukraine persists and the count of captured combatants rises daily, as does that of liberated ones. Therefore, the importance of this study lies in the establishment of a significant influence of emotional intelligence on the rehabilitation process of the former POWs, which determines their achievement of subjective well-being and life satisfaction. Taking into account the number of former POWs and the duration of the war, the success and effectiveness of rehabilitation measures, full-fledged psychosocial rehabilitation of the former POWs is a guarantee of a secure democratic society and the well-being of the nation.

The present study is subject to certain limitations, which can be distinguished as follows. First, the duration of the war actively increases the number of former POWs with various physical and mental injuries, which makes it unfeasible to establish a sole consistent and methodical approach towards their rehabilitation, which would include the development of emotional intelligence as a guarantee of their well-being. Secondly, injuries received by the former POWs in captivity are of different degrees of severity, and in most cases the primary task is to provide them with medical assistance, while psychological support is relegated to a secondary position. Consequently, the precious time for providing effective psychological assistance is lost, after a couple of weeks of being free, all psychological and emotional responses become ingrained as personal characteristics for the former POWs, making it extremely challenging to rectify them in the future.

Therefore, the prospects of the research are the elaboration of a program for the development of the emotional intelligence of the former POWs, which would include the basic methodologies for the formation of emotional awareness, stress resistance, managing emotions, the ability to perceive the

emotional states of other people and control one's expression. This will enhance the individuals' flexibility and facilitate the establishment of a favorable psychological environment as well as the attainment of subjective well-being and life satisfaction, as the primary objective of rehabilitation is to restore one's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed equally to data analysis, drafting, and revising of the paper and approved this work.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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