

# Social and Emotional Skills in Adapting Students to the Academic Environment

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**Abstract:** The paper presents the results of a research that aims to identify emotional and social skills manifested in first-year students with a technical profile and its positive effects on their adaptation to the academic life. An important developmental task of young students is their increased participation at formal and informal peer groups, along with their interest to gain independence and assertion of their own beliefs in the context of professional development. Students who develop their emotional and social skills have more chances to be accepted and better integrated into peer groups and experiencing the well-being in psychological functioning and social relationships. We used a multidimensional instrument which allows the assessment of a wide range of social and emotional competencies that students may possess at various levels. Using the multidimensional Profile of Social and Emotional Competences, (Tufeanu & Robu, 2013) we tested the impact of emotional regulation competencies over the association between responsibility in social relationships and engagement. The research results allow us to identify training and personal development needs of students as well as social and emotional skills that support their effective adaptation and reduce academic dropout.

**Keywords:** *social skills; emotional skills; engagement; academic adaptation.*

**How to cite:** Jitaru, O., Bobu, R., & Bostan, C.M. (2023). Social and Emotional Skills in Adapting Students to the Academic Environment. *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională*, 15(1), 590-605. <https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/15.1/713>

## 1. Introduction

The contemporary society characterized by the dramatic changes experienced during the pandemic requires the use of vast skills and competencies involved in information, knowledge, critical analysis and decision, entrepreneurship, personal development, solving practical problems through creative strategies and ensuring optimal interactions in various social contexts. We will delimit below the meaning of the concepts related to social and emotional skills from the point of view of their role in the adaptation and integration of adolescents and young people. The term competence is used with two meanings: a) key resource needed by a person to perform a certain task (eng. competence and pl. competencies); b) result expected from a person in carrying out a task (engl. competence or pl. competencies) (Winterton et al., 2006). Social competences represent patterns of social behavior that individuals manifest and that help them produce the desired effects on other people (Argyle, 1998) and involve, in addition to social skills, other dimensions: manifest behaviors, cognitive processes, skills in regulation of emotions, etc. (Dirks et al., 2007; Topping et al., 2011). "Social-emotional competence is the capacity to interact with others, monitor and control cognitive processes, regulate one's emotions and behavior" and regarding students, it is important to motivate them to act and to achieve the targeted goals, to solve problems, and to communicate effectively (Ahmed et al., 2020, p.665). Topping et al. (2011, p. 43) define social competence as involving "the possession and use of the ability to integrate thinking, emotions and behavior, in order to perform tasks and obtain social results valued in the context and culture of origin." An important role is attributed to the emotional and social integration of individual experiences. In the case of adolescents, competencies refer to a set of characteristics (socially, emotionally and cognitively) and behaviors that they need to successfully adapt to social tasks (Welsh & Bierman, 2001). The literature in the field suggests several multidimensional models that describe the complexity of social and emotional skills important for a person's adaptation to social, school and professional life. Some of the most representative group the competencies in different dimensions between which we find similarities and correspondences.

Argyle (1998) described a model that includes the following social skills: assertiveness, gratification and support given to other people, verbal communication, non-verbal communication, empathy, cooperation, solving problems that arise in interpersonal relationships and self-presentation. Buhrmester and his collaborators (Buhrmester et al., 1998) suggested a

model of the competencies that young people activate in interpersonal relationships, within which they identified five components: a) the ability to initiate relationships; b) self-disclosure capacity; c) the ability to express in an assertive way the displeasure in relation to the actions of others or to defend one's own rights; d) the ability to provide emotional support and e) the ability to manage interpersonal conflicts.

Saarni (2011) perceives emotional competence as having at its center the belief in self-efficacy in interpersonal transactions, and the model he proposes includes: a) awareness of one's own emotional states and their cycles; b) recognizing the emotions expressed by other people; c) the ability to authentically express one's emotions using a rich vocabulary; d) the ability to cross multiple emotions in a mature way; e) showing empathy and compassion; f) the ability to recognize emotions based on behavioral indicators; g) effective integration of emotions in self-presentation; h) self-regulation of emotions; i) belief in emotional self-efficacy.

The observations of teaching staff, in the framework of disseminated research, confirm the fact that, among children and adolescents, the degree of development of social and emotional skills (especially the control of impulsive reactions at the age of adolescence, anticipating the behaviors expected by colleagues and teachers, the ability to asking for help in learning tasks, the ability to express one's emotions and needs) is an important predictor of the level of school and academic adaptability (Botnari, 2012; Tufeanu, 2016; Hewson, 2018; Luna et al., 2020; Gómez-López et al., 2022).

School and academic success and adjustment are based on the relationship between school development, career development, and personal and social development (Denham, 2010). One of the most important standards aims at the acquisition of knowledge, skills, abilities and positive attitudes that support the student's personal growth and success in interpersonal relationships. More specifically, the competencies followed in the career counseling programs include (Trip, 2007): a) acquisition of self-knowledge b) training and development of interpersonal skills and abilities.

Emotional and social development represents an area of competences that Romanian universities have begun to care about in recent years, through projects that provide as a result the development of self-knowledge, the formation of harmonious interpersonal relationships, group integration and engagement in activities and projects of personal promotion. "Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University in Iași has implemented a multitude of ROSE projects aimed at developing the socio-emotional skills of students to adapt to academic life and reducing school dropout. The

results presented in this article are part of the investigative and interventional investigation carried out in these projects.

Regarding the association between social responsibility in relationships and engagement, researchers place a high interest in developing policies for social responsibility in higher education because this motivates people to make efforts for them personally and for the others (Symaco & Tee, 2019). This not only relevant in the academic context for their personal and professional development, but rather it's a long-life learning goal for employee engagement (Kim & Kim, 2020; Supanti et al., 2015). Still, there is also interesting that the association between them is often bidirectional, indicating that this is a circular process of influence (Furze et al., 2011). For example, Hijzen and her colleagues (2007) found that engagement as a motivational component of mastery and social responsibility goals were specific to effective teams, collaborating well and indicating that the relational aspect of engagement also is linked to social responsibility. King & Mendoza (2021) recently emphasized the significant association between social responsibility goals and students' engagement, but they also point out to the socially embedded nature of motivation and goals in the academic context. Furthermore, they accentuate the importance of social processes for understanding motivational processes. Regarding on what kind of activities are important for social responsibility and engagement, Whitley & Yoder (2015) found that social activities as participating in living-learning community, as well as curricular and extracurricular civic engagement are important, but it is important to focus also on behaviors, not only on the attitude of students that is easily salient.

Finally, previous theoretical and empirical studies indicate that social-emotional competencies are important for young people in their development and motivation, personally and professionally, but these factors interact differently. For example, Segal (2011) emphasized in his model that social responsibility in relationships (i.e., manifested through social empathy) is regulated by awareness and the ability to regulate one's emotions to avoid being overwhelmed with the other people's emotions. Early results also indicate associations of social responsibility and emotions as they are expressed and regulated, but also indicating that these processes are also related to motivation (i.e., engagement; Ford et al., 1989). The enhancement of awareness is a direct factor for the improvement of social-development and results indicate that those going through programs based on awareness (i.e., mindfulness, Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015, De Vries et al., 2021) have better results regarding several psychological outcomes (i.e., motivation, cognitive control, etc.) and were rated by peers as more prosocial and

accepted socially. Other emotional experiences and their forms of regulations (i.e., impulse control) are integrated as components of emotional intelligence (Sparkman et al., 2012) and results indicate that these factors are involved also in students' success and graduation (Caprara et al., 2016). More specifically, these psychosocial dimensions seem to be involved in the motivation of student's competency to finish on time their academic studies. Without these competencies, it is probably that some students finish their studies later in life, with an average of two years delay (Sparkman et al., 2012) and students that do finish their studies are also high prepared in terms of values, attitudinal, psychosocial, and moral competencies.

## **2. Methodology**

### ***2.1. Participants and Procedure***

This study included 133 Romanian technical students (66,9 % males) with ages above 20 years old. Out of all participants, 68% age between 20 and 25 and the rest of participants age 26 or above. Regarding their studies, 63% are in the first year (i.e., bachelor studies), 29,6% in the second year and 7,4% in the third year. Regarding their home residence, 51,9 % reported to come from an urban area and the rest of them from the rural area. Regarding their employment status, most of them (i.e., 85%) reported to be unemployed and 15% as being employed. Finally, out of all participants, 96% reported to be unmarried and 4% as married.

### ***2.2. Assessment***

In this study we used the multidimensional measure for social and emotional competence (Tufeanu & Robu, 2013), validated on Romanian population. Because we are interested in the socio-emotional engagement of students, we used the scale regarding social relationships and emotional development. Specifically, the following measures below were used.

*Emotional awareness* reflects that people are aware of their own positive and negative affective states and they recognize them by using suggestive terms to name their content. This is generally the ability to identify and name them, as well as differentiate between own emotions and explain their cause (i.e., *It is hard for me to realize what I feel when confronted with failure*"; „*I can clearly differentiate between emotions that I feel, in different situations*” and „*I can clearly identify what caused my emotions*”). The scale is comprised of 8 items and evaluated on a five-point Likert Scale where 1 = it does not describe me at all and 5 = it totally describes me. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .81.

*Emotional expressiveness* reflects the capacity to express one's emotions clearly and openly, without the fear of being wrongfully judged and emotions expressed are sending a clear message to the others (i.e. "I openly express all my emotions"; "I use various ways in expressing my emotions, to show the others what I feel"; "I can easily tell my dear ones how I feel about them"). The scale comprises 8 items and they are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = it does not describe me at all and 5 = it totally describes me. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .77.

*Emotional regulation* reflects the ability to manage one's negative emotions and hold on to the positive emotions, depending on the social interactions that people have (i.e., "When others around me are scared, I manage to keep my calm"; "When facing difficult situations (i.e., an exam), I can control my emotions that could negatively affect me"; "When interacting with others, I know to manage my emotions"). The scale comprises 7 items and they are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = it does not describe me at all and 5 = it totally describes me. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .72.

*Independence in expression of thoughts and emotions* reflects the ability to resist to other people's emotions and thoughts when they try to convince or manipulate the situation. This also reflects the ability to detach oneself from other peoples and express one's thoughts and emotions (i.e., "When in a debate, I manage to form my own opinion and emotions about it"; "When someone is complaining to impress me, I usually don't fall for it"; "I firmly express my own opinions and emotions, especially when I know I am right"). The scale comprises 6 items and they are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = it does not describe me at all and 5 = it totally describes me. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .70.

*Emotional impulse management* reflects the ability to control one's tendency to act in an exaggerated way. This is the ability to manage one's impulse to lash out or express aggressively that could disrupt social relationships (i.e., "I resist the temptation to do thing that could hurt me emotionally", "I really think things through before doing or saying something"; "I generally manage to control myself when wanting to lash out"). The scale comprises 7 items and they are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = it does not describe me at all and 5 = it totally describes me. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .70.

*Responsibility in social relationships* reflects the ability to act and establish interpersonal relations, concordant with general accepted norm and decent rule. It generally reflects the presence of our own moral and social conduct (i.e., "When I feel sick, I am careful not to get anyone sick"; "I am not usually late when getting to a meeting" "I do not betray the trust that others offer me"). The scale comprises 7 items and they are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale where 1

= *it does not describe me at all* and 5 = *it totally describes me*. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .69.

*Engagement* as a motivational factor reflects the ability to initiate and involve in various activities that need alone or team effort. It generally reflects motivation to finish various activities (i.e., „*I usually gladly answer to my friends request to get involved in various projects*”; „*I usually stay involved in friendships on long periods of time*”; „*I am active in academic tasks when engagement in team works*”. The scale comprises 5 items and they are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale where 1 = *it does not describe me at all* and 5 = *it totally describes me*. Cronbach's Alpha computed is .75.

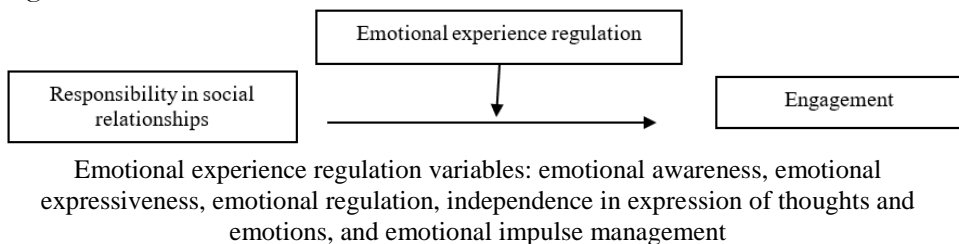
The data collection was carried out using the *Social and Emotional Competences Profile* (PCSE). The questionnaire used for the evaluation of social and emotional competences among adolescents and young people is a multidimensional questionnaire (PCSE) which represents the result of a complex approach to validate the complex conceptual model regarding social and emotional competence, carried out on a group of 1383 Romanian students (855 girls and 523 boys) from six public high school education institutions (Tufeanu & Robu, 2013; Tufeanu, 2016).

The test items refer to skills, attitudes and behaviors that are relevant for the adaptation of an adolescent/young person in age-specific social interaction situations. A high or very high score on each of the scales means a high (very high) level of the presence of the corresponding social or emotional competence in the profile of the individual characteristics of a respondent. Experimental data indicate satisfactory values (between 0.51 and 0.70) of fidelity (internal consistency) for the 17 scales. The factor analysis data indicated the tendency to group the PCSE scales on two dimensions: one of the competencies that an adolescent can possess as resources for adapting to social interaction situations, and the latter, the competencies that an adolescent actually manifests in interpersonal relationships, through responses, attitudes and behaviors that can be observed and appreciated by the other people with whom they interact (Tufeanu & Robu, 2013).

### **2.3. Data analysis**

We used IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 to test the association between main variables and the Process macro v.4.1 to test for interaction effects and to estimate the power of the moderators. To avoid multicollinearity with the interaction term, we mean centered the variables for the product terms. Following the literature and main guidelines for analysing the impact of the perception of being valued in the class by the teachers we: (a) test the associations between the main variables included in

the study, (b) tested the impact of emotional awareness, emotional expressiveness, emotional regulation, independence in expression of thoughts and emotions, and emotional impulse management over the relation between responsibility in social relationships and engagement as a motivational factor. Because of limited population that participated, we did not include any control variables (i.e. socio-demographic variables). Finally, we checked whether the main predictors are significant in the moderating model. The general tested model in the current research is represented in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1.** The model tested for the impact of emotional experience regulation on the association between responsibility in social relationships and engagement

### 3. Presenting the results

#### *Results*

First, we tested for the associations between main variables. In Table 1 we show the zero-order correlations among the main variables and the means and standard deviation. Results indicate generally medium and significant correlations. Responsibility for social relations is positively and significantly associated with emotional awareness ( $r = .42, p < .001$ ), emotional regulation ( $r = .36, p < .001$ ), independent in expression of thoughts and emotions ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ), emotional impulse management ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ), engagement ( $r = .31, p < .001$ ), but not with emotional expressiveness ( $r = .14, p = .09$ ). Emotional awareness is not significantly associated with engagement ( $r = .16, p = .06$ ). Emotional expressiveness is significantly associated with engagement ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ). Emotional regulation is not significantly associated with engagement ( $r = .05, p = .52$ ). Independent expression of thoughts and emotions is significantly associated with engagement ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ). Emotional impulse management is significantly and small associated with engagement ( $r = .17, p = .04$ ).

**Table 1.** Zero-order correlations of main variables ( $N = 133$ )

|  | M    | SD  | 1     | 2     | 3      | 4     | 5     | 6    |
|--|------|-----|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|------|
| 1. Responsibility for social relations             | 3.98 | .55 |       |       |        |       |       |      |
| 2. Emotional awareness                             | 3.31 | .80 | .42** |       |        |       |       |      |
| 3. Emotional expressiveness                        | 2.94 | .76 | .14   | .15   |        |       |       |      |
| 4. Emotional regulation                            | 3.32 | .72 | .36** | .58** | -.25** |       |       |      |
| 5. Independent expression of thoughts and emotions | 3.71 | .59 | .28** | .20*  | .11    | .18*  |       |      |
| 6. Emotional impulse management                    | 3.75 | .63 | .62** | .49** | .01    | .54** | .26** |      |
| 7. Engagement                                      | 3.27 | .78 | .31** | .16   | .46**  | .05   | .28** | .17* |

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

Results of the moderation analysis for the cross product for responsibility of social relations and emotional awareness shows a significant predictive model and accounting for a significant amount of variance in engagement as motivational factor ( $R^2 = .36$ ,  $F[3, 129] = 6.65$ ,  $p = .0003$ ). The moderation cross product is significant for engagement ( $R^2 = .031$ ,  $F[1, 129] = 4.67$ ,  $p = .03$ ; see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Moderation effect of emotional awareness over engagement

| Predictors  | b(se)            | t     | 95% confidence interval |
|---|------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| Constant  | 3.21<br>(0.07)** | 45.43 | 3.075;3.355             |
| Responsibility for social relations                                     | .50(.13)*        | 3.77  | .239;.767               |
| Emotional awareness   | .006(.08)*       | .07   | -.170;.182              |
| Cross_product Responsibility for social relations X Emotional awareness | .34(.15)*        | 2.16  | .029;.658               |

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

On the low level of the moderator emotional awareness the impact is not significant ( $b = .22$ ,  $se = .16$ ,  $p = .16$ ,  $95\%CI [-.092; .544]$ ), but there is a significant effect on the medium level ( $b = .50$ ,  $se = .13$ ,  $p = .002$ ,  $95\%CI [-.092; .544]$ ), and on the high level of the moderator ( $b = .78$ ,  $se = .20$ ,  $p = .002$ ,  $95\%CI [-.092; .544]$ ).

Results of the moderation analysis for the cross product for responsibility of social relations and emotional expressiveness shows a significant predictive model and accounting for a significant amount of

variance in engagement as motivational factor ( $R^2 = .54$ ,  $F[3, 129] = 17.84$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The moderation cross product is nonsignificant for engagement ( $R^2 = .015$ ,  $F[1, 129] = 2.54$ ,  $p = .113$ ; see Table 3). The individual predictors included in the model are significant for engagement.

**Table 3.** Moderation effect of emotional expressiveness over engagement

| Predictors  | b(se)            | t     | 95% confidence interval |
|---|------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| Constant  | 3.26<br>(0.58)** | 55.67 | 3.149; 3.382            |
| Responsibility for social relations   | .34(.10)*        | 3.23  | .134; .560              |
| Emotional expressiveness  | .42(.07)**       | 5.56  | .275; .578              |
| Cross_product Responsibility for social relations<br>X Emotional expressiveness | .22 (.13)        | 1.59  | -.053; .496             |

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

Regarding emotional regulation as a moderator Results for the cross product for responsibility of social relations and emotional awareness shows a significant predictive model and accounting for a significant amount of variance in engagement as motivational factor ( $R^2 = .34$ ,  $F[3, 129] = 5.89$ ,  $p = .0008$ ). The moderation cross product is nonsignificant for engagement ( $R^2 = .014$ ,  $F[1, 129] = 2.15$ ,  $p = .14$ ; see Table 4). Only responsibility for social relations is a significant predictor in this model.

**Table 4.** Moderation effect of emotional regulation over engagement

| Predictors  | b(se)            | t     | 95% confidence interval |
|---|------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| Constant  | 3.24<br>(0.06)** | 47.34 | 3.110; 3.382            |
| Responsibility for social relations   | .51(.12)*        | 3.77  | .263; .768              |
| Emotional regulation  | -.07(.08)*       | -.77  | -.263; .115             |
| Cross_product Responsibility for social relations<br>X Emotional regulation | .22(.15)         | 1.46  | -.080; .539             |

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

Results of the moderation analysis for the cross product for responsibility of social relations and independent expression of thoughts and emotions shows a significant predictive model and accounting for a significant amount of variance in engagement as motivational factor ( $R^2 = .15$ ,  $F[3, 129] = 7.53$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The moderation cross product is nonsignificant for engagement ( $R^2 = .004$ ,  $F[1, 129] = .71$ ,  $p = .39$ ; see Table 5). The individual predictors included in the model are significant.

**Table 5.** Moderation effect of independent expression of thoughts and emotions over engagement

| Predictors   | b(se)            | t     | 95% confidence interval |
|--|------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| Constant   | 3.26<br>(0.06)** | 49.44 | 3.134; 3.395            |
| Responsibility for social relations  | .37(.12)*        | 3.06  | .131; .610              |
| Independent expression of thoughts and emotions  | .30(.11)*        | 2.67  | .079; .535              |
| Cross_product Responsibility for social relations X independent expression of thought and emotions | .16(.19)         | .84   | -.216; .540             |

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

Results of the moderation analysis for the cross product for responsibility of social relations and emotional impulse management shows a significant predictive model and accounting for a significant amount of variance in engagement as motivational factor ( $R^2 = .35$ ,  $F[3, 129] = 6.26$ ,  $p = .005$ ). The moderation cross product is significant for engagement ( $R^2 = .025$ ,  $F[1, 129] = 3.65$ ,  $p = .04$ ; see Table 6).

**Table 6.** Moderation effect of emotional awareness over engagement

| Predictors   | b(se)            | t     | 95% confidence interval |
|--|------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| Constant   | 3.20<br>(0.07)** | 42.56 | 3.056; 3.354            |
| Responsibility for social relations  | .55(.15)*        | 3.58  | .250; .864              |
| Emotional impulse management   | -.08(.06)        | -.65  | -.348; .175             |
| Cross_product Responsibility for social relations X Emotional impulse management | .34(.17)*        | 2.01  | .011; .691              |

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .001$

On the low level of the moderator emotional impulse management the impact is significant ( $b = .34$ ,  $se = .16$ ,  $p = .04$ ,  $95\%CI [.005; .676]$ ), there is a significant effect on the medium level ( $b = .55$ ,  $se = .15$ ,  $p = .0005$ ,  $95\%CI [.250; .864]$ ), and on the high level of the moderator ( $b = .773$ ,  $se = .21$ ,  $p = .0004$ ,  $95\%CI [.353; 1.119]$ ).

#### 4. Limits of the study

This study has some potential limitations. First, the current research is based on self-reported data, which increases the subjectivity of responses and the tendency for desirable answers. Still, our consent or indicating that responses are not right or wrong and collecting data online ensure participants the psychological space to feel free to evaluate themselves

sincerely. Furthermore, the instruments that we used are autochthonous from the national context and participants can easily relate to each item. Future research using this design should also test using more objective measures so that results ensure more valid comparative results for specific groups. Another limitation of the research is that our population of participants is small, but they are representative of the technical educational setting in the academic space, so we believe that the results should be limited to their educational-specific context. Regarding this limitation, other research should focus on expanding the sampling procedures for this specific population to ensure more validity of results and make use of interpretations. Finally, results are primarily descriptive and they lack the power to make causal interpretations or indicate general differences between groups of participants when considering our social and emotional variables, but they are in line with most of the research's limited theoretical background in this domain and they offer insight about how specific emotional experience regulation impact association between responsibility in social relationships and engagement.

## 5. Conclusions

Two general ideas from psychology stand out to explain human motivation in general (i.e., engagement), but in terms of motivation-specific abilities. Human social interaction and recourse to formal or informal social norms regulate human motivation and is a trigger at the same time, but it is still a stable factor in social life, unlike the way of regulating emotional experience which although normal and used in the life of day to day, it varies as a result of the situation, the characteristics of the affective experience and the tendency to use some strategies more than others. We therefore tested the association relations between the main variables as follows: on the one hand, social responsibility as a stable factor through regular social interaction, from everyday life in association with engagement, and on the other hand, the self-regulation strategies of the emotional experience that we know that it varies, as a result of different social contexts with social responsibility and engagement. So, on the one hand, we have significant association relationships of social responsibility with engagement, but the coefficients are small, on the other hand, we have small or insignificant relationships between emotional regulation strategies and engagement, which leads us to test the moderator role of the latter (emotional regulation strategies) as small or non-significant coefficients may indicate that there are differences between groups (i.e. emotional regulation strategies moderate/better explain human motivation when we take into account

group differences in terms of emotional regulation strategies). Of all the models tested, only emotional awareness and the last one, emotional impulse management, explain motivation even better when we take group differences into account. Both models explain that an average and a high level of the use of these emotional strategies and social responsibility increase engagement greatly. This does not mean that the others are not important, but only that they do not explain as much the motivation of young people in interaction with social responsibility. Also, the others, as the results indicate, are rather stable predictors that independently explain motivation, so they are important and most likely very close to the traits.

We can conclude that the problems of maladjustment of students, failure or even dropout that exclude cognitive factors can be due to factors that belong to the sphere of motivation, emotional balance. One of the most important skills involved in academic performance and adaptation to this environment is the student's ability to self-regulate, that is, the degree to which he actively participates in the learning process (Chemers et al., 2001). The ability to self-regulate includes the ability to monitor one's own school progress, organize time and orient oneself in the academic space, these being characteristic of students with a high level of self-regulation (Pylypenko et al., 2022). Snow and his colleagues (1996) show that we can talk about self-regulation capacity. The authors define 5 categories of volitional control strategies that the student can use in order to adapt: metacognitive, attentional strategies, environmental control, motivational and emotional control. It is shown that the last two influence academic performance, through the effect of protection/maintenance of the intention to learn. A training of students in order to develop volitional strategies, especially the ability to control motivation and emotions is absolutely necessary when they face difficulties, disinterest or distractions. In support of this idea are the results obtained following the development of some programs addressed to students that emphasize the development of an optimistic attitude (Ruthig et al., 2009) which basically can mean a positive attitude towards the commitments already assumed, we mean those specific to the student status.

### **Acknowledgment**

**Note:** the authors' contributions to the creation of the material are equal.

This study was carried out with the voluntary participation of a group of students, first year, Gheorghe Asachi Technical University in Iași,

beneficiaries of the activities of the projects financed by the Grant Scheme for Universities, the Secondary Education Project (ROSE).

This paper was presented at the 8th edition of the ENSEC Conference on the topic Social Emotional Learning and Positive Development held at Suceava, Romania, between 30th of June to 3rd of July 2022.

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