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Preparation of future bachelors in psychology to support the war witnesses in information and educational environment

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Preparação de futuros bacharéis em Psicologia para apoiar as testemunhas de guerra em ambiente informativo e educativo

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Preparación de futuros licenciados en psicología para apoyar a los testigos de guerra en el ámbito informativo y educativo

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Abstract. *The relevance of the selected topic stems from the imperative to equip psychologists with the requisite skills to effectively support individuals who are witnessing the war under martial law in Ukraine as well as to navigate the socio-economic adversities that arise during such tumultuous times. The purpose of the current study is to empirically validate the efficacy of an integrated model for training future bachelors in psychology to support war witnesses, while evaluating its impact on their knowledge, skills, and competencies. Such methods as monitoring academic performance, questionnaires, testing were utilized. To analyze the results obtained, the methods of descriptive statistics, the Mann-Whitney U test, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, the Pearson correlation and the estimation of the effect magnitude were used. The sample capacity was 120 students. As a result of the study, the experimental program improved academic performance, crisis intervention, and self-education. The results of the study highlight the importance of an integrated approach to the professional training of psychologists, which includes the development of both academic knowledge and emotional and digital competencies for effective work. Future research may focus on the long-term impact of the program and expanding its application to other categories of professionals.*

Keywords: *Depression. Global instability. Psychological training. Uncertain environment. PTSD.*

Resumo: A relevância do tema selecionado decorre do imperativo de dotar os psicólogos das competências necessárias para apoiarem eficazmente os indivíduos que testemunham a guerra sob lei marcial na Ucrânia, bem como para enfrentarem as adversidades socioeconómicas que surgem em tempos tão tumultuosos. O objetivo do presente estudo é validar empiricamente a eficácia de um modelo integrado de formação de futuros bacharéis em psicologia para apoiar testemunhas de guerra, avaliando simultaneamente o seu impacto nos seus conhecimentos, aptidões e competências. Foram utilizados

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métodos como a monitorização do desempenho académico, questionários e testes. Para analisar os resultados obtidos, foram utilizados os métodos de estatística descritiva, o teste U de Mann-Whitney, o teste de Wilcoxon, a correlação de Pearson e a estimativa da magnitude do efeito. A capacidade da amostra foi de 120 estudantes. Como resultado do estudo, o programa experimental melhorou o desempenho académico, a intervenção em situações de crise e a autoeducação. Os resultados do estudo sublinham a importância de uma abordagem integrada da formação profissional dos psicólogos, que inclua o desenvolvimento tanto de conhecimentos académicos como de competências emocionais e digitais para um trabalho eficaz. A investigação futura pode centrar-se no impacto a longo prazo do programa e na expansão da sua aplicação a outras categorias de profissionais.

Palavras-chave: Ambiente incerto. Depressão. Instabilidade global. Treinamento psicológico. TEPT.

Resumen. *La relevancia del tema seleccionado se deriva del imperativo de dotar a los psicólogos de las habilidades necesarias para apoyar eficazmente a las personas que son testigos de la guerra bajo la ley marcial en Ucrania, así como para navegar por las adversidades socioeconómicas que surgen durante tiempos tan tumultuosos. El propósito del presente estudio es validar empíricamente la eficacia de un modelo integrado para formar a futuros licenciados en psicología en el apoyo a testigos de guerra, evaluando al mismo tiempo su impacto en sus conocimientos, habilidades y competencias. Se utilizaron métodos como el seguimiento del rendimiento académico, cuestionarios y pruebas. Para analizar los resultados obtenidos se utilizaron los métodos de estadística descriptiva, la prueba U de Mann-Whitney, la prueba de rango con signo de Wilcoxon, la correlación de Pearson y la estimación de la magnitud del efecto. La capacidad de la muestra fue de 120 alumnos. Como resultado del estudio, el programa experimental mejoró el rendimiento académico, la intervención en crisis y la autoeducación. Los resultados del estudio destacan la importancia de un enfoque integrado de la formación profesional de los psicólogos, que incluya el desarrollo tanto de los conocimientos académicos como de las competencias emocionales y digitales para un trabajo eficaz. Futuras investigaciones podrían centrarse en el impacto a largo plazo del programa y en ampliar su aplicación a otras categorías de profesionales.*

Palabras clave: *Depresión. Inestabilidad global. Entrenamiento psicológico. Entorno incierto. Trastorno por estrés postraumático.*

1 INTRODUÇÃO

The relevance of the current study is underscored by the rapid transformation of the information and educational environment and its impact on the professional training of future psychologists (Fogaça, Quartiroli, Wagstaff, 2024). Trends such as globalization, digitalization, as well as ongoing social challenges are actualizing new requirements for the professional competence of specialists, in particular in the field of psychological assistance during crisis situations. The professional activity of a psychologist necessitates the mastery of effective intervention strategies to engage with diverse social groups, including witnesses of war and victims of violence. From this, the paramount significance of providing students with exemplary training in these domains becomes clear (Dupree, Di Mattia, 2025; Woods-Jaeger, Cho, Briggs, 2024).

The principal issue addressed by the current study is the insufficient emphasis placed on the cultivation of essential professional competencies of future psychologists, such as empathy, emotional intelligence, and crisis intervention skills. According to a number of scientific papers, these competencies are decisive for effective work in stressful situations (Kurapov, Pavlenko, Drozdov, Bezliudna, Reznik, Isralowitz, 2023; Migda, Buheji, 2025). Insufficient levels of training in these domains can precipitate a decline in the effectiveness of psychological support and exacerbate the rehabilitation process for war witnesses.

The prerequisites for this study include numerous works stating the insufficiency of existing programs for training future psychologists in higher education institutions (Lavrysh, Lytovchenko, Lukianenko, Golub, 2025). In this line, the education system needs to introduce more integrated and practice-oriented methods for the development of students' emotional and professional skills. Hence, training programs must take into account the needs of the contemporary labor market and be tailored to address the new challenges that arise from evolving social conditions.

The impetus for the study stemmed from the multifaceted challenges of our time, characterized by a proliferation of crisis situations and an increasing demand for psychological support. In particular, armed conflicts, natural disasters and pandemics pose new tasks for psychologists, which necessitates the revision and improvement of their training programs. Given the above, the study is aimed at assessing the effectiveness of innovative pedagogical approaches and training programs for future psychologists capable of responding to current challenges.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the development and testing of a model for training bachelors in psychology to accompany war witnesses in the information and educational environment. It combines the development of professional competencies, empathy and emotional intelligence (EI). For the first time, the effectiveness of integrating digital and traditional teaching methods to enhance preparedness for crisis intervention is demonstrated. The hypothesis posits that a comprehensive program encompassing emotional intelligence, gamified methodologies, and the enhancement of familial interactions effectively alleviates the anxieties experienced by preschoolers, tailored to align with contemporary digital realities and individual requirements. The purpose of the study is to examine the effectiveness of an integrated model of training bachelors in psychology to support war witnesses in the information space, assessing the impact on professional knowledge and competencies. In alignment with this objective, the following tasks were set:

to ascertain the level of knowledge of the undergraduate psychology students in psychology regarding the foundational principles of trauma psychology, crisis psychology and psychosocial support of war witnesses, as well as their awareness as regards the impact of the information and educational environment;

to develop and test a model for training bachelors in psychology to support war witnesses in the information and educational environment, we are focusing on the essential professional competencies;

to evaluate the effectiveness of the training model by comparing the students' level of knowledge, skills and competencies in the experimental group with the control groups, studying according to the standard curriculum.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent studies emphasize the importance of building professional competencies in psychologists, especially in crisis situations. Zhang and Adegbola (2022) analyze the role of empathy and EI in training psychologists to work with survivors, and Raina (2022) investigates the impact of interactive learning methods on students' practical skills in a virtual environment. Both studies focus on preparing psychologists to work in the information and educational environment. The work of Limaj, Yaroshenko, Melnychuk, Moskalenko and Chung (2024) explores individual work with the traumatic consequences of war, in particular preparation for working with PTSD, and Kauffman's thesis (2024) highlights the effectiveness of group therapy for military personnel with a focus on social support through online technologies, which is essential for current research.

A study by Sætren, Vaag and Lund (2024) and Toymurodov (2024) showed that traditional methods of training psychologists often do not sufficiently take into account the specifics of crisis situations. Wang, Norman, Xiao, Li and Leamy (2021) proposed a model for integrating simulation trainings into the educational process, which demonstrates practical value for the formation of skills in working in crisis conditions. However, this model has limitations in covering specific aspects of working with vulnerable groups, in particular witnesses of war. A study by Woods-Jaeger, Cho and Briggs (2024) focuses on preparing psychologists to take into account the social determinants of mental health, which is relevant in the context of modern challenges. Among the strengths of the work, it is worth noting the emphasis on the integration of an interdisciplinary approach and practical recommendations for changes in curricula. However, the limitation is the lack of coverage of specific tools for assessing the effectiveness of such changes, as well as the focus mainly on

the American context, which complicates the application of the results on an international scale. The authors of the current study consider the mentioned works important for understanding the degree of development of the issue of using additional educational courses in the training of future psychologists.

The analysis of scientific research reveals gaps in existing approaches to the training of specialists. In particular, methods of preparation for providing psychological support to war witnesses in the information space have not been sufficiently developed. Instead, the labor of Liu (2024) provides compelling arguments about the effectiveness of digital models of preparing future psychologists to perform their professional duties in a crisis. However, the application of this model requires additional analysis due to the risk of reorienting learning to technical aspects instead of developing critical thinking and empathy.

Sansysbayeva, Tursunai, Laura and Yergeshov (2024) note that current curricula often do not sufficiently take into account the impact of the media on the psychological state of victims. At the same time, unlike other authors, Ditonto, Mattes and Tobin (2025) emphasize the need to integrate digital technologies into the educational process to prepare psychologists to work in the online environment. While this offer has promising potential, it also raises questions about the balance between practical skills and the ethical challenges that arise when working in a digital environment. The authors of the study agree with the remark of the above scientists and consider the topic chosen in the current work to be extremely relevant.

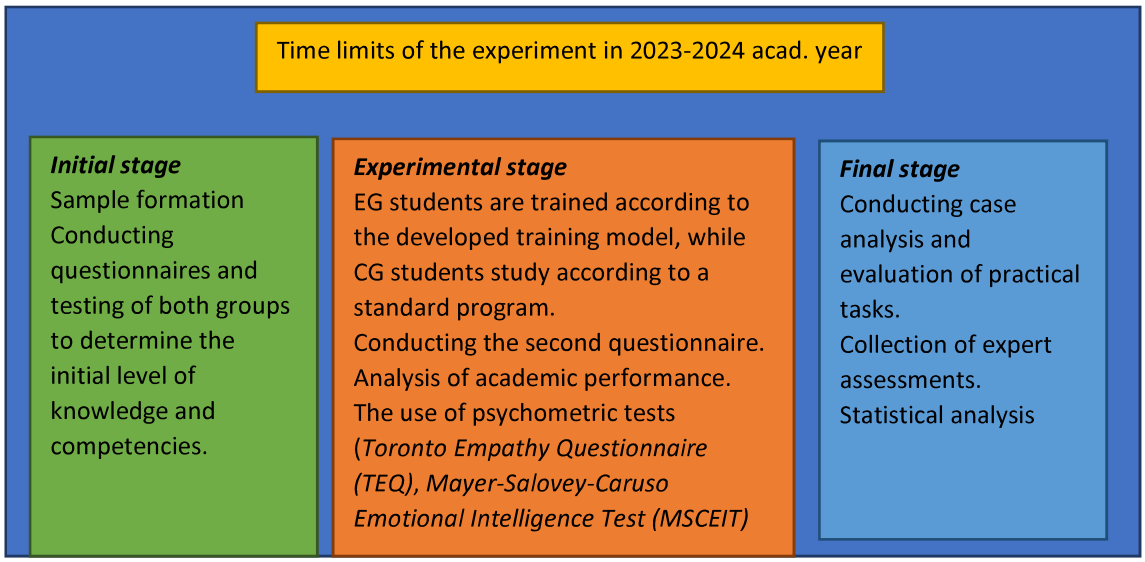
However, the issue of preparation for work in the information and educational space remains poorly studied. However, in the works proposed for consideration, insufficient attention is paid to the specifics of working with war witnesses who did not directly participate in hostilities. Also, the issue of integrating crisis intervention into curricula is still insufficiently developed.

3 METHODS

3.1. DESIGN

The research procedure included 3 consecutive stages. A number of research activities were carried out at each of them. Figure 1 marks a description of these stages and activities, which made up the design of the study.

Figure 1- Stages of research



Source: Developed by the authors (2025).

3.2 PARTICIPANTS

For the study, a non-random sample was utilized based on the criterion of accessibility, encompassing students from the Department of Psychology and Pedagogy at Alfred Nobel University. This approach to sampling is advantageous for conducting research under resource-constrained conditions; however, it may restrict the potential for generalizing the findings to the broader population of psychology students. This type of sampling is expedient as it enables to attract participants who are easily accessible to the researcher, which is especially important in conditions of limited financial, time, and organizational resources.

The study involved 120 students, of which 60 people were included in the experimental group (EG) and 60 people in the control group (CG). Such a distribution allows comparing the effect of an experimental intervention on two comparable groups of participants. As inclusion criteria, the following stipulations were established: participants must be students aged 3-4 years, must willingly consent to participate in the experiment, and must be enrolled in the field of study "Psychology". The exclusion criterion was the lack of consent to participate in the experiment. EG participants were trained according to the developed training model.

The model provides for the synthesis of theoretical insights pertaining to crisis psychology with practical competencies aimed at stabilizing the psycho-emotional state of war witnesses. Particular attention is paid to the use of digital platforms to provide psychological assistance and counter disinformation. As regards the CG, the studies proceeded according to the standard curriculum. The experts from the department faculty participated in the study, undertaking the administration of questionnaires, conducting assessments, and interpreting the results in accordance with rigorous scientific standards.

In the course of the study, ethical principles were observed, in particular, informed consents were obtained from all participants, confidentiality of the data received and anonymity of respondents were ensured. The focus of the study was primarily aimed at studying the formation of professional competencies necessary for future psychologists to effectively work with the war victims in the media space. Accordingly, the following dependent variables were identified: *crisis intervention proficiency level, empathy and EI, motivation*. Control variables such as *academic performance, professional self-assessment of students* and *formation of self-educational competence*.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

To address the objectives of the study and evaluate the efficacy of the developed program, a number of methodologies was employed.

With the help of the experts, an evaluation of academic performance was conducted, and the degree of proficiency in crisis intervention was ascertained. Further, an assessment of the formation of students' self-educational competence was carried out (Khotimah, Batunan, Mukminatien, 2024). For this purpose, the efficacy of performance of both cohorts in educational tasks undertaken by students was examined.

With the help of the questionnaire method, the professional self-assessment of students was examined. The formation of such components as knowledge and understanding of professional foundations, practical skills and abilities, professional qualities of a psychologist, readiness for professional activity was studied. Also, considerable attention was devoted to the enhancement of students' self-assessment within the context of the information and educational environment, particularly focusing on their proficiency in navigating online resources, understanding the impact of information in an online format.

With the help of the testing method, the level of empathy and EI was investigated, which is an important component of the competence of a psychologist. Using the *Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ)* the empathy of respondents was studied (SPRENG, MCKINNON, MAR & LEVINE, 2009). The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) was em-

ployed to assess the EQ (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, Sitarenios, 2003). Such studies will help determine the readiness of future psychologists to support the war witnesses, including in the information and educational space.

In order to systematically analyze the collected data and derive reasonable conclusions regarding the efficacy of the devised model for training the bachelors in psychology, a wide range of statistical methods was used. The study utilized the *Methods of descriptive statistics*, which includes averages to assess the central trend of indicators in each group before and after the experiment. *Standard deviation* is used to determine the spread of data around the mean, and *Median* — to estimate the central trend in the case of an asymmetric distribution. *Frequencies and percentages* are used to describe the demographic characteristics of the sample and analyze the answers to individual items of questionnaires and tests.

For the comparative analysis of the results between the two groups, the *Mann-Whitney U test* was employed. This statistical method was utilized to evaluate the distributions of indicators between the experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG). The U-test facilitates the assessment of the significance of differences observed in independent samples. The above statistical methods were chosen because of their correspondence to the data structure, in particular for the analysis of non-normal distributions and paired changes.

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was employed to assess the fluctuations in indicators within each group prior to and subsequent to the intervention. With the help of the criterion, the significance of differences in paired samples is assessed. It allows checking the effectiveness of the implemented learning model.

The Pearson correlation used to assess the linear relationship between dependent variables, such as levels of empathy, emotional intelligence, and academic performance. The method was chosen because of its effectiveness in the study of quantitative indicators. It facilitates the identification of both the strength and direction of the connection, which is crucial for evaluating the impact of pedagogical conditions (Nursichati, Susongko, Mulyono, 2025).

The choice of non-parametric criteria is reasonable, since the normal distribution of data cannot be guaranteed. The statistical methods correspond to a quasi-experimental design with two groups and an analysis of changes over time. For all statistical tests, the *Level of statistical significance* was set at $p < 0.05$. In addition to the level of statistical significance, the *Estimation of the magnitude of the effect (R)* for key comparisons is to be provided.

3.4 TOOLS

Online questionnaires created using Google Forms were used to collect data, which ensured convenience and accessibility for respondents. The processing of the obtained data was carried out in the statistical software SPSS for quantitative analysis. Also, Microsoft Excel tools were utilized to visualize and prestructure the results.

4 RESULTS

Table 1 presents the results of monitoring academic performance and assessing the level of proficiency in crisis intervention of students of the experimental and control groups. Median values and ranges of indicators before and after the implementation of the experimental training program are given. The results of statistical analysis of changes in each group and an assessment of the magnitude of the effect are also demonstrated.

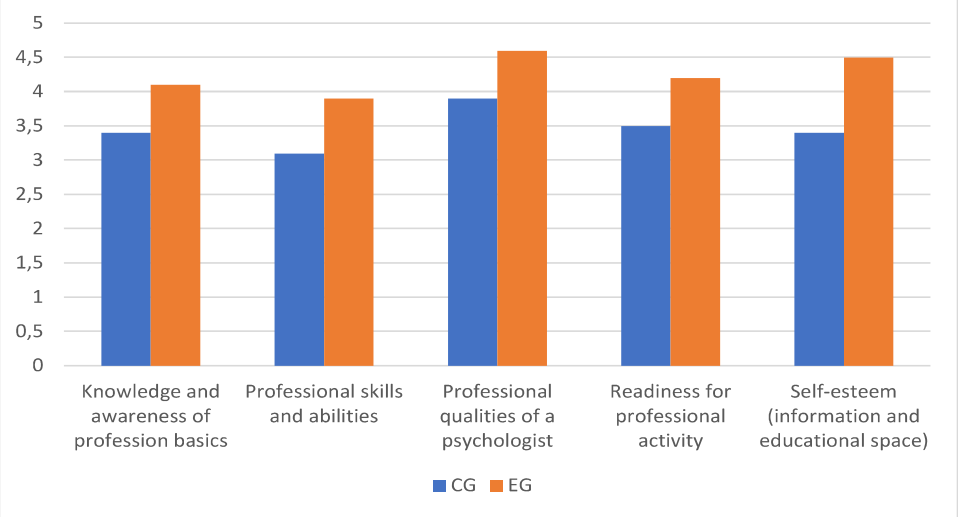
Table 1- Results of monitoring academic performance and assessment of proficiency level in crisis intervention

Criterion	Group	Before the experiment (Median)	Before the experiment (Range)	After the experiment (Median)	After the experiment (Range)	Statistical test (p-value)	Effect magnitude (r)	Conclusion
Academic performance (GPA)	EG	3.2	2.5 - 3.8	3.7	3.0 - 4.0	0.015	0.25	Significant growth ($p < 0.05$)
	CG	3.1	2.4 - 3.7	3.2	2.6 - 3.8	0.185	0.12	Minor changes ($p > 0.05$)
Crisis intervention proficiency level	EG	2	1 - 3	4	3 - 5	0.008	0.32	Significant improvement ($p < 0.05$)
	CG	2	1 - 3	2.5	1 - 4	0.312	0.10	Minor changes, not statistically significant
Assessment of self-educational competence formation	EG	3	2 - 4	4	3 - 5	0.021	0.28	Significant improvement ($p < 0.05$)
	CG	3	2 - 4	3.5	2 - 4	0.098	r = 0.15	Minor changes ($p > 0.05$)

Source: Developed and calculated by the authors during the study (2025).

Analysis of the data in Table 1 showed a statistically significant improvement in academic performance and the level of crisis intervention in EG, while in CG the changes were insignificant ($p > 0.05$). In EG, there was also a significant increase in self-educational competence, while in CG these changes were not statistically significant ($p = 0.098$). The results validate the effectiveness of the program for EG students. At the end of the experiment, a questionnaire was conducted to measure professional self-assessment, the results of which are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2- Results of the questionnaire on the professional self-assessment of the participants of the CG and EG



Source: Developed by the authors during the study (2025).

In EG, after the intervention, there was a statistically significant advantage in all units of self-assessment ($p < 0.05$). The median value for "Practical skills" in EG was 3.9, in CG — 3.1. The magnitude of the effect (r) for EG ranged from 0.26 to 0.35, indicating an average positive effect. In CG, the effect was significantly lower, validating the effectiveness of the experimental conditions. To assess the effectiveness of pedagogical conditions, the level of empathy and emotional intelligence was studied, the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2- Empathy Level (TEQ), Emotional Intelligence (MSCEIT) and Understanding Emotions (MSCEIT) test results

Variable	Group	Before the experiment (Median)	Before the experiment (Range)	After the experiment (Median)	After the experiment (Range)	Statistical test (p-value)	Effect magnitude (r)	Conclusion
Empathy level (TEQ)	EG	45	35 - 55	58	48 - 68	0.003	0.40	Significant improvement ($p < 0.05$)
	CG	44	34 - 54	46	36 - 56	0.280	0.12	Minor changes ($p > 0.05$)
Emotional intelligence (MSCEIT)	EG	100	90 - 110	115	105 - 125	0.001	0.45	Significant improvement ($p < 0.05$)
	CG	101	91 - 111	103	93 - 113	0.350	0.09	Minor changes ($p > 0.05$)
Understanding emotions (MSCEIT)	EG	80	70 - 90	92	82 - 102	0.002	0.42	Significant improvement ($p < 0.05$)
	CG	81	71 - 91	83	73 - 93	0.320	0.10	Minor changes ($p > 0.05$)

Source: Developed and calculated by the authors during the study (2025).

The results show a statistically significant improvement in the level of empathy, emotional intelligence, and emotion comprehension in the EG ($p < 0.05$), whereas no changes are observed in the CG ($p > 0.05$). The effect values (r) for EG indicate an average and significant positive effect of the program, in CG the effect is insignificant. Correlation analysis (Table 3) confirms the influence of pedagogical conditions on professional training and the development of emotional intelligence for working with the war witnesses.

Table 3- Correlation analysis (Pearson coefficient)

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation coefficient (r)	p-value	Conclusion
Crisis intervention proficiency level	Empathy level	0.55	0.005	A statistically significant positive correlation is observed on all scales.
Emotional intelligence	Readiness for professional activity (questionnaire)	0.65	0.001	
Self-assessment (information and educational space)	Crisis intervention proficiency level	0.48	0.012	
Academic performance	Changes in empathy levels	0.35	0.030	
Academic performance	Changes in EQ	0.40	0.020	
Professional self-assessment (questionnaire)	Crisis intervention proficiency level	0.60	0.002	

Source: Developed and calculated by the authors during the study (2025).

The correlation analysis showed a statistically significant positive correlation between the proficiency level in crisis intervention and empathy (r=0.55, p=0.005), which The study substantiates the significance of an empathic approach within professional activities. A high relationship between emotional intelligence and readiness for professional activity (r=0.65, p=0.001) indicates the key role of EI in the formation of professional competencies. Self-assessment in the information and educational space is positively correlated with the level of proficiency in crisis intervention (r=0.48, p=0.012), which indicates the importance of digital skills for working in a modern environment. Academic performance has a significant, albeit weaker, relationship with changes in levels of empathy (r=0.35, p=0.030) and EQ (r=0.40, p=0.020), which confirms its influence on the development of emotional competencies. The data obtained validate the hypothesis of the study.

5 DISCUSSION

The analysis of the results indicates that the developed model substantially enhances the proficiency in crisis intervention, thereby corroborating the validity of the hypothesis. An increase in students' empathy and emotional intelligence was observed, which indicates the effectiveness of the integrated approach. The findings of the study are consistent with the conclusions of Tol *et al.* (2021) and Bürgin, Anagnostopoulos, Vitiello, Sukale, Schmid and Fegert (2022), which substantiate the positive impact of specialized programs on the improvement of professional knowledge and adaptation mechanisms.

However, the results of the current study partially contradict the conclusions of the Aguirre (2024) dissertation, which recorded a slight improvement in digital competence after trainings with digitalization elements. At the same time, the data of the current study show a more significant effect in the development of self-assessment and crisis intervention skills, which may be due to a more holistic approach to the formation of professional competencies. Comparable findings underscoring the efficacy of online modules in fostering emotional intelligence and enhancing preparedness for professional endeavors are presented in the research conducted by Mao, Huang and Chen

(2021). Researchers have proven a significant improvement in professional readiness in students enrolled in specialized programs. These data are consistent with the results of the current study, which noted an enhancement in emotional intelligence after completing the proposed program.

According to the findings of a study conducted by Chu, Wippold and Becker (2022), it has been substantiated that integrated digital learning exerts a beneficial influence on the enhancement of professional competencies. The aforementioned conclusions align with the findings of the present study, which demonstrated significant advancements in the domains of crisis intervention and emotional intelligence among participants in the experimental group. The paper by Javanbakht (2022) also confirms that the students' exploration of additional methods of helping victims in crisis conditions helps to strengthen their resilience to stress. The above-mentioned study is of particular importance in the context of this topic, since it is devoted to trauma-focused therapy against the backdrop of a real military conflict.

The work of Mesa-Vieira et al. (2022) highlights the importance of trauma-informed digital interventions in humanitarian crises, which validated the effectiveness of utilizing digital technologies in emergency situations. The analysis of the results elucidates the remarkable efficacy of employing digital technologies to enhance the training processes of prospective psychologists. Comparable conclusions can be found in the research conducted by Haer, Scharpf and Hecker (2021), highlighting the role of digital literacy in improving the effectiveness of crisis interventions.

Recent research published by Dragayeva, Bodner, Mann and Stone (2025) elucidates a consistently affirmative impact of digital interventions on psychological well-being. Also, it would be prudent to reference the work of Leshem, Zasiekina, Guterman and Pat-Horenczyk (2025), which expresses skepticism regarding the efficacy of online interventions. The authors articulate several critiques concerning the effectiveness of telepsychology and the potentialities of the digital landscape. The work provides the basis for improving existing methods of training future psychologists, which can suggest additional ideas for further research. That being said, the results of the current study largely coincide with the findings of contemporary scientific works confirming the effectiveness of integrated curricula in the training of psychologists. However, taking into account the differences in the scientific literature, certain aspects, such as the cultivation of self-assessment in the context of digital learning, require further enquiry.

The theoretical significance of this work lies in the comprehensive generalization and systematic organization of methodologies pertaining to the cultivation of professional competencies among prospective psychologists. They are indispensable for functioning effectively in times of crisis, such as warfare, natural calamities, or social unrest. Another important aspect is to identify the role of the information environment as a factor influencing the mental health of the individuals who have experienced a crisis. Undeniably, this facilitates the emergence of innovative approaches in the training of psychologists to operate effectively within the realm of digitalization and the constant information flow. The practical significance of the results lies in their potential to improve educational programs in the field of crisis psychology. They can be used to create new curricula and integrate digital tools for training psychologists. It will also facilitate the development of training programs that integrate theoretical insights with practical competencies essential for navigating crisis situations.

5.1 LIMITATIONS

The study has a series of limitations that must be taken into account when interpreting its results. First, the sample size of the students was relatively small, which may limit the generalization of the findings obtained. Second, the duration of the experiment may not reflect the long-term effects of the implemented program. Thirdly, the assessment of the studied indicators was based on the data of the participants' self-reports, which can potentially affect the

objectivity of the results obtained. Moreover, the research was conducted within a singular higher education institution, thereby constraining its generalizability to other educational contexts. Accordingly, the influence of students' individual characteristics was not fully controlled. Finally, further research is needed in other settings and among a variety of social groups to fully verify the program effectiveness.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing on the results obtained, it is expedient to persist in the implementation of the experimental training program for future psychologists, as it has yielded significant enhancements in key professional competencies. Greater emphasis should be placed on cultivating empathy and emotional intelligence, given their profound correlation with the efficacy of performance in crisis situations. Furthermore, it is advisable to incorporate digital technologies into the educational framework to further enhance the students' self-directed learning capabilities. It is crucial to sustain and deepen the established correlations between academic performance and the cultivation of emotional competencies among future specialists.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The relevance of the present study is underscored by its emphasis on equipping psychologists to engage effectively with war witnesses, integrating digital and traditional teaching methods. An experimental training program for future psychologists demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in academic performance (median from 3.2 to 3.7, p=0.015). Notably, a significant enhancement in the proficiency of crisis intervention was observed (from 2 to 4, p=0.008) and self-directed educational competence (from 3 to 4, p=0.021) among the EG students, in contrast to the CG. Further, there was a significant increase in empathy (from 45 to 58, p=0.003, r=0.40) and EI (from 100 to 115, p=0.001, r=0.45) in EG, without significant changes in CG. Correlation analyses revealed a significant positive association between empathy and crisis intervention proficiency (r=0.55, p=0.005). Furthermore, a correlation between EI and professional readiness was established (r=0.65, p=0.001), which emphasizes the importance of cultivation emotional competencies for effective professional training.

The results obtained can be used to improve the training programs of psychologists and develop more effective methods of professional training. Further research will concentrate on enhancing the training of psychologists, underscoring the significance of cultivating both emotional and digital competencies. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the long-term implications of employing digital technologies in the training of future psychologists.

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