

Analysis of Children's Emotional Intelligence in Families of Migrant Workers during Pandemic Covid-19 in Ukraine

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Abstract: *The paper presents the results of children's EQ analysis in families of migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine. The following methods have been applied: theoretical methods – analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, systematization of scientific practices in issue of children's EQ in families of migrant workers; empirical methods – interviewing, questionnaire, self-esteem, adapted methods 'Dictionary of emotions', 'Complete the sentence', preliminary methodology 'My dream', adapted samples 'My three wishes' – for preliminary diagnostics; for data processing – comparative method, methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of diagnostic data, graphical methods of statistics processing (tabulation, diagrams), method of experts' assessments; methods of mathematical statistics, the Pearson criterion of homogeneity. The EI problem of children from migrant workers' families has social, pedagogical, psychological and legal aspects that are exacerbated and need to be addressed during the pandemic. It is found that basic environments – family; social environment; general secondary education institution; peers; the Internet and social networks, which are comfortable for the EI formation of children from migrant workers' families, are subject to restrictions/localizations in quarantine conditions and cause changes in EI. It is stated that in the absence of parents, the institution of general secondary education is the environment where control, efficiency and optimization of the process of forming the children's EI are ensured. The scientific novelty of the obtained results of children's EQ analysis in families of migrant workers during pandemic COVID-19 in Ukraine has both theoretical and practical value on the international level for researchers and social work experts, dealing with issues of work migration, including children of migrant workers. The solution of the problem involves making special psychological and pedagogical programs for children's EQ development in families of migrant workers.*

Keywords: *emotional intelligence; children from families of migrant workers; pandemic COVID-19; legal status; environment; preliminary diagnosing.*

How to cite: Danylchuk, L., Romanovska, L., Popyk, Y., Holova, N., & Kravchyna, T. (2022). Analysis of Children's Emotional Intelligence in Families of Migrant Workers during Pandemic Covid-19 in Ukraine. *BRAIN. Broad Research in Artificial Intelligence and Neuroscience*, 13(3), 30-46. <https://doi.org/10.18662/brain/13.3/352>

Introduction

Transformational processes of the last decade in Ukraine caused political and, consequently, economic crisis. According to different data, more than 3-4 million (according to non-formal statistics – about 7 million) Ukrainian migrants work abroad. The number of internal migrants remains indeterminate because of legislation imperfection, the lack of control by the authority. Sociology is unpromising: 90% of migrant workers have children, staying without custody because of their absence. In home scientific discourse, a family with absence of one or two parents (because of employment and having special features and peculiarities of family life) is considered to be a family of migrant workers.

Let's make a note that when it is told about children from families of migrant workers, mainly, they say about external migrant workers, with internal labour migration being widespread in Ukraine, namely: region inhabitants (with low level of life and income coefficient) go to earn money in big cities or to have temporary / season jobs.

Sometimes both parents go to earn money (the period of absence varies from 1-6 months to several years), but children stay at their primary residence with relatives, neighbours or other personalities, becoming responsible for providing a child with essential needs (accommodation, food, clothes). But the issue about child protection, proper upbringing etc. remains open. And, as a rule, legal power for temporary custody of a child is not registered (parents are afraid of being deprived of parental rights etc., they are legally-unacceptable). This causes a range of critical situations and a conflict of laws tied to a child's life and health. Under such circumstances children from families of migrant workers are a peculiar social and demographic category of children in Ukraine who with one or two parents, going to earn money, have inappropriate parents' care and legally approved status and consequently – social guarantees.

The conditions of life in society, the influence of social and cultural environment, interpersonal conflicts, the change of family life pattern (because of parents' absence) influence the emotional intelligence (EQ) of children from families of migrant workers; adjust and change the conditions of efficient personal fulfillment in life, develop social behaviour. But, keeping to fundamental term conditions of living and upbringing in a family; being a feature of a positive pattern of a family, cause the EQ development of children, their identifying peculiarities.

The spectrum of social backgrounds and factors for EQ development is large, but the majors are: syntony as 'true harmony with environment, that is '... syntonic personality hardly feels those emotions that coincide with the people he/she is in immediate contact with' (Mayer et al., 2003); material welfare of a family; the level of parents' culture and relations between them; location environment. We consider the environment (a family, social environment, secondary education environment, peers, internet and social networks) to be main for childrens' EQ development in families of migrant workers.

After parents' departure, a child seriously faces the problem of emotional deficiency, which, as a rule, children from families of migrant workers try to balance with communication with friends, classmates in the internet and social networks, social environment. Children from migrant workers' families mostly spend time in general secondary educational establishment (GSEE), because, according to the Constitution of Ukraine, article 53, full general secondary education is compulsory (while preschool education, higher education and non-school establishments are not compulsory). GSEE is the environment where it is possible to control and adjust behaviour patterns of children from migrant workers' families and provide them with their EQ development process efficiency and optimizing.

The deepness of EQ issue is worsened by the problem of pandemic COVID-19, being a worldwide problem. Because of several reasons (both internal and external labour migration), migrant worker parents and their children are separated socially. At the same time Ukraine supported the worldwide experience – introduced the quarantine, so children couldn't attend schools and stayed in comfortable environments, which surely influenced their EQ.

Taking into account the circumstances mentioned above, we consider the issue about emotional intelligence of children from families of migrant workers during the pandemic COVID-19 in Ukraine to be actual, the one which needs diagnosis and practical solution.

Analysis of literature sources and publications

Theoretical principles about EQ have been studied in the works of foreign researchers: Duangkaew and Tangchitnusorn (2021), Goleman (2009); Kevereski et al. (2016); Tataru (2019).

Applied aspects of tests and basic methods of studying EQ have been found out in the works of foreign scientists: Aigunova et al. (2016); Ivanova (2008).

Some contribution into the research of EQ of different groups has been made by Ukrainian scientists: Opanasyuk (2017); Rudenok et al. (2020).

There are a lot of researches about the issues of children from families of migrant workers done by Ukrainian scientists, namely: social, pedagogical and psychological work with children of migrant workers (Sayko, 2020); the upbringing of migrant workers' children under the conditions of social and educational environment (Gevchuk, 2012); the interaction of social services and comprehensive educational establishments for providing social and pedagogical support for migrant workers' children (Pigida, 2013); the peculiarities of custody activities with migrant workers' children (Sabat, 2015); social adaptation of teenagers from migrant workers' families (Lizun et al., 2017); enforcement of rights of children from migrant workers' families (Makovetska, 2017).

But notwithstanding a number of publications about the children from families of migrant workers, written in national science, the issue of children's EQ in such families still remains unexplained.

The purpose and tasks of the study

The purpose of the paper is theoretical analysis of children's EQ in families of migrant workers in Ukrainian scientific society and empirical analysis of children's EQ during pandemic COVID-19 in Ukraine.

According to the outlined aim, the following tasks of the study are defined:

1) to do theoretical analysis of children's EQ in families of migrant workers in Ukrainian scientific environment.

2) to do empirical analysis of children's EQ during pandemic COVID-19 in Ukraine.

3) (on the basis of the obtained experimental data) to generalize and show the perspectives for further research of children's EQ in families of migrant workers during pandemic COVID-19 in Ukraine.

Methods of the study

The following methods for receiving diagnosis data have been used:

1) theoretical methods – analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization, systematization of scientific practices in the issue of children's EQ in families of migrant workers;

2) empirical methods – interviewing, questionnaire, self-esteem, adapted methods 'Dictionary of emotions', 'Complete the sentence', preliminary methodology 'My dream', adapted samples 'My three wishes' – for preliminary diagnostics; for data processing – comparative method,

methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis of diagnostic data, graphical methods of statistics processing (tabulation, diagrams), method of experts assessments;

3) the methods of mathematical statistics for finding out the statistical meaning of differences of diagnostic selection, the Pearson criterion of homogeneity for finding out the accuracy of diagnostic data differences.

Research procedure

Theoretical analysis has assured that there are a lot of methods for EQ diagnosing. Their peculiarity is in the necessity of direct contact with the diagnosed person, that is his/her presence in the real time. It should be mentioned that we have not found a special methodology for diagnosing the state of children's EQ in families of migrant workers. As Ukraine has been on the quarantine in pandemic COVID-19 since March, 16, 2020, there have not been any possibilities to make preliminary diagnosing in the immediate presence of those being diagnosed. So children don't go to GSEE (they stay at home or with relatives). Under such circumstances, the necessity has appeared to make a special program and tooling for diagnosing the children's EQ in families of migrant workers.

It is important to emphasize the following: the novelty and peculiarity of the researched problem involved the solution of specific issues, that is, while making the program for diagnosing the children's EQ in families of migrant workers, our purpose was to solve several key tasks, namely: 1) who will be involved in preliminary diagnosing (as experts, coordinators and members of a working group) and would-be partners for expanding the geography of diagnosing; 2) to determine possible diagnosing locations; 3) how to diagnose under the conditions of quarantine; 4) to make special tooling for diagnosing; 5) on the basis of generalized results of preliminary diagnosing of children's EQ in families of migrant workers, to conclude and decide the priorities of further researches. The very approach allowed to formulate the vision of preliminary diagnosing of the problem.

According to the specified tasks:

1. The preliminary diagnosing involved:

– (as experts) teachers: social work and social pedagogy department in Khmelnytsky National University (KhNU); workers of social and psychological service in Khmelnytskyi region. The following criteria have been used for selecting experts: higher education, length of service not less than five years; doctorate degree; professor; enough life experience; high

level of social and pedagogical, psychological and pedagogical, law knowledge etc.; objectivity and responsibility; authority. Besides, the selection depended on their expert knowledge, objectivity, efficiency, and interest. The size of the expert group was determined according to the V. Cherepanov's methodology (Cherepanov, 1989). The selection of experts, depending on their expert knowledge, was according to P. Volovyk's methodology (Volovyk, 2010);

– (as coordinators and members of work group) teachers: social work and social pedagogy department in KhNU (14 people); Master's degree students of speciality 231 Social work in KhNU (full-time and correspondence education) (35 people); Master's degree students have been chosen, because they have already had Bachelor's degree, thus, they know basic professional methodology of social and pedagogical diagnosing.

2. Khmelnytsky region has been chosen for preliminary diagnosing, because according to statistics this region has both internal and external migrant workers. The time of diagnosing –2020-2021.

Diagnosing locations have been determined depending on agreements about the collaboration of HEE and GSEE where students have practical training. It has been found with executives the forms where the children from migrant workers' families study. It has been agreed with head teachers, accompanied by psychologists and social teachers the program of diagnosing and the age, gender of children, the absence of one or both parents and the country or region of their stay.

3. As in the quarantine during the pandemic COVID-19 children studied distantly, the preliminary diagnosing has been decided to be done with the help of messengers Viber, Telegram, communication software Zoom, Skype and telephone. As it was mentioned above, there were compulsory conditions and ethical demands for voluntary agreement, keeping privacy and personal information of a child and his family. It has been suggested that 243 children should be involved in diagnosing, but only 195 children agreed to participate (the main condition was voluntary agreement); 8 children refused to take part in the work process. So 187 people took part in diagnosing.

The researched children groups have been distinguished for accurate results of preliminary diagnosing:

DG1 – children from families of migrant workers (who live on the territory of Ukraine, whose parents work outside their accommodation);

DG2 – children from full families (who live together with parents on the territory of Ukraine).

Diagnosing groups have been arranged according to the following criteria: the levels of getting full general secondary education and each age category – review groups have been distinguished in the approximate proportionality (each group has approximately the same number of researched people from Khmelnytsky region with almost equal number of boys and girls for each group, being diagnosed): review group 1 – children 6-10 years (DG1 – 32 people, DG2 – 31 people); review group 2 – children 11-14 years (DG1 – 30 people, DG2 – 31 people); review group 3 – children 15-17 years (DG1 – 31 people, DG2 – 32 people). The overall number is DG1 – 93 people, DG2 – 94 people.

It should be noticed that the validity of preliminary diagnosing is due to the accuracy of diagnosing groups distinguishing, appropriate analysis of the size and representing of selection with influence of independent and additional variables taken into account.

Taking into account the specification of the studied problem and the researches of native and foreign scientists, the indicators of children's EQ have been distinguished: emotional – feeling emotions (intensity, extension, the complex of emotions, the expression of emotions and the major mood); cognitive – understanding other people's emotions (the ability to empathize); behavioral – managing own emotions (the ability to self-control, self-resistance, behavioral reactions). It should be noticed that each of the distinguished indicators is significant and all together they provide the understanding of children's EQ.

According to the assessment of cognizant experts, due to the previously distinguished indicators of children's EQ, levels of its state have been distinguished: high, medium and low.

Preliminary diagnosing was done with indicators, indices and levels of children's EQ taken into account, being interdependent and interconnected. The actuality and appropriateness of previous theoretical search enabled to modify author's view on the content and the algorithm of the program and special tooling for preliminary diagnosing.

4. Special tooling for preliminary diagnosing has been done according to foreign and native scientific researches and methodologies, published in science and with the peculiarities of the described problem taken into account. The algorithm of the program and special tooling for diagnosing have been discussed at a scientific and methodological study tour of social work and social pedagogy department in KhNU.

The most popular classical methodological means are: test MSCEIT V2.0 (Mayer et al., 2003) – standard procedure of assessment EQ of adults; questionnaire EQ-I (Bar-On, 1997), which has a scale of adaptation of stress

control and general mood; test Emin (Lyusin, 2006), questionnaire EQ Holla (Ilyin, 2001). But these tests, being widely used nowadays, are for EQ assessment of adults as they involve diagnosing procedure of verbal evaluation / self-evaluation. Scientists have controversial views on using these tests and their accuracy for assessment of children's EQ, because, at junior school age, children may have problems with adequate understanding of the question, being increased in teenage and senior school years.

As it has already been mentioned, to make a special tooling for preliminary diagnosing, we have previously analyzed the existing methodologies of diagnosing children's EQ and found out the absence of special methodologies for diagnosing the children's EQ in families of migrant workers. The following methodologies have been chosen for the basics: EQ assessment and the diagnosing of emotional barriers in interpersonal communication (Boiko, 2020). There has been an author procedure set and means, having different diagnosing methodologies: modified adapted variants: methodologies 'The dictionary of emotions' (Ivanova), methodology 'Complete a sentence' (Aigunova), project methodology 'My dream', adapted samples 'My three wishes'.

Besides it should be remarked that the chosen set of procedures and means was not the only one for obtaining information about the children's EQ, including families of migrant workers.

5. Preliminary diagnosing involved the process of preparing and collecting data, analysis, mathematical processing, checking for significance and also concluding, finding the priorities and perspectives for further scientific research.

Results of the study

The preliminary diagnosing involved diagnostic data processing, obtained after the finishing of realization of author procedure set for finding the state of children's EQ in families of migrant workers during pandemic COVID - 19 in Ukraine.

The level indices of EQ in DG1 and DG2, depending on the diagnosing results, have been calculated according to the formula: $(P/K)*100 = X$

where P – number of people, achieving a level; K – the number of group participants; X – percentage ratio.

The authors show EQ indices of DG1 and DG2 of respectively distinguished review groups according to the diagnosing results in tables 1, 2, 3.

Table 1: The state of children's EQ (review group 1)

Marker	Levels					
	High		Middle		Low	
	DG1	DG2	DG1	DG2	DG1	DG2
Emotional	1	3	16	21	83	76
Cognitive	-	4	10	17	90	79
Perceptual	4	5	35	31	61	64
Behavioral	2	4	14	18	84	78
Mean value %	1,8	4	18,8	21,8	79,5	74,3

Source: Author's own conception

According to an emotional indicator, the state of children's EQ of review group 1 DG1 and DG2 have approximately similar indices of high level – 1% and 3% respectively. There are differences in medium level – 16% and 21% and low level – 83% and 76% respectively, showing the benefits of experiencing emotions, their expression by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers.

According to a cognitive indicator, the indices of high level in DG1 are absent, while the indices of high level in DG2 – 4%, that is, we have not found any indices in review group 1 while diagnosing DG1. Significant differences in medium level indices – DG1 – 10% and DG2 – 17% and low level ones – DG1 – 90% and DG2 – 79% prove the advantage of understanding emotions and identifying them as basic ones by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers.

An interesting fact has appeared about medium level indices in DG1 – 35%, DG2 – 31% according to a perceptive indicator, proving the advantage of understanding another person's emotions, the ability to empathize by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers. The indices of high level are nearly similar in DG1 and DG2 – 2% and 4%. There are slight differences in low level in DG1 and DG2 – 61% and 64% respectively.

An approximate difference in high level indices according to a behavioral indicator of DG1 and DG2 – 2% and 4%, some differences in medium level – 14% and 18% and significant differences in low level indices in DG1 and DG2 – 84% and 78% respectively prove not enough ability to control emotions, self-control, stress resistance, behavioral reactions both in DG1 and DG2.

Both review group 1 and review group 2 according to an emotional indicator of the state of children's EQ in DG1 and DG2 are approximately similar: high level indices – 4% and 7% respectively. Significant differences in medium level – 31% and 38% and low level – 65% and 55% respectively also prove the benefits of experiencing emotions, their expression by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers.

Table 2: The state of children's EQ (review group 2)

Marker	Levels					
	High		Middle		Low	
	DG1	DG2	DG1	DG2	DG1	DG2
Emotional	4	7	31	38	65	55
Cognitive	3	11	34	42	63	47
Perceptual	13	19	45	51	42	30
Behavioral	6	9	31	36	63	55
Mean value %	6,5	11,5	35,3	41,8	58,3	46,8

Source: Author's own conception

As in the review group 1, the state of children's EQ of the review group 2 on the emotional marker in DG1 and DG2 has approximately similar high levels – 4% and 7%, respectively. Significant differences between the average – 31% and 38% and the low level – 65% and 55%, respectively, also indicate the benefits of experiencing emotions, their expression by children from full families compared to children from migrant families.

According to a cognitive indicator, indices prove the advantage of understanding emotions, identifying them as basic ones by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers' families. It has been proved by significant differences in indices of high level – DG1 – 3% and DG2 – 11% and low level – DG1 – 63% and DG2 – 47%, that are overall higher indices of medium level in DG1 – 34% and DG2 – 42%.

According to a perceptive indicator, indices of all levels have significant differences in DG1 and DG2 – 13% and 19%; – 45% and 51%; – 42% and 30% respectively, proving the advantage of understanding another person's emotions, the ability to empathize by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers. It is interesting that the index of medium level in DG2 – 51% is bigger than the overall index of high and low levels – 49% respectively.

The indices of high level according to a behavioral indicator are approximately different in DG1 and DG2 – 6% and 9%, significantly

different in medium level – 31% and 36%. But the indices of low level in DG1 and DG2 – 63% and 55% in comparison to overall high and medium levels prove the inability to control emotions, self-control, stress resistance, behavioral reactions in both groups.

Table 3: The state of children's EQ (review group 3)

Marker	Levels					
	High		Middle		Low	
	DG1	DG2	DG1	DG2	DG1	DG2
Emotional	10	12	46	49	44	39
Cognitive	7	16	37	46	56	38
Perceptual	16	21	49	53	35	26
Behavioral	9	13	34	39	57	48
Mean value %	10,5	15,5	41,5	46,8	48	37,8

Source: Author's own conception

According to an emotional indicator, the state of children's EQ of review group 3 in DG1 and DG2 has approximately similar indices of high level – 10% and 12% and medium level – 46% and 49% respectively. Some differences in low level – 44% and 39% respectively prove the the benefits of experiencing emotions, their expression by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers.

According to a cognitive indicator, significant differences of indices prove the advantage of low level in DG1 – 56% to high and medium (overall) in comparison to 38% in DG2. Thus, the understanding of own emotions (their identification as basic ones) is significantly lower by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers.

According to a perceptive indicator, the indices of high and medium levels are approximately different in DG1 and DG2 – 16% and 21%, 49% and 53% respectively. But the indices of low level – 35% and 26% respectively prove the advantages of understanding another person's emotions, ability to empathize by children from full families in comparison to children of migrant workers.

According to a behavioral indicator, the indices of high and medium levels are also approximately different in DG1 and DG2 – 9% and 13%, 34% and 39% respectively. But the indices of low level in DG1 – 57% in contrast to high and medium (overall) levels prove not enough ability to control emotions, self-control, stress resistance, behavioral reactions in comparison to DG2 – 48%.

Thus, according to four distinguished criteria the state of EQ in DG1 is lower than in DG2 in all three review groups, except the advantage of a perceptive criterion index DG1 – 35% to DG2 – 31% in review group 1.

The authors show the viewing of dynamics, happening in levels of children’s EQ in DG1 and DG2 in three distinguished groups in diagrams 1, 2, 3.

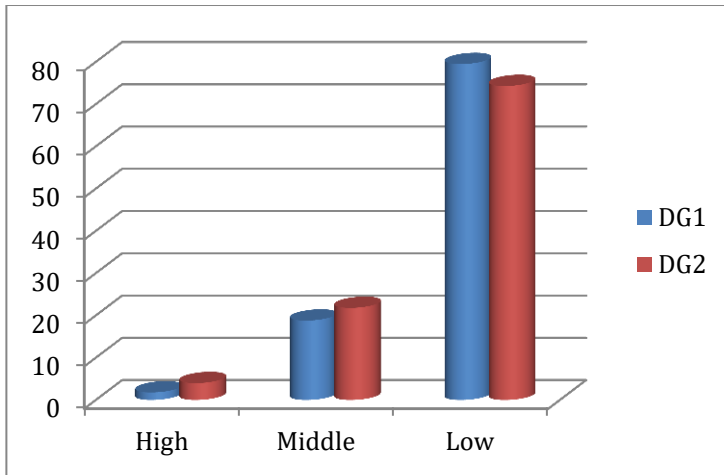


Figure 1: Dynamics of levels of children’s EQ (review group 1)
Source: Author’s own conception

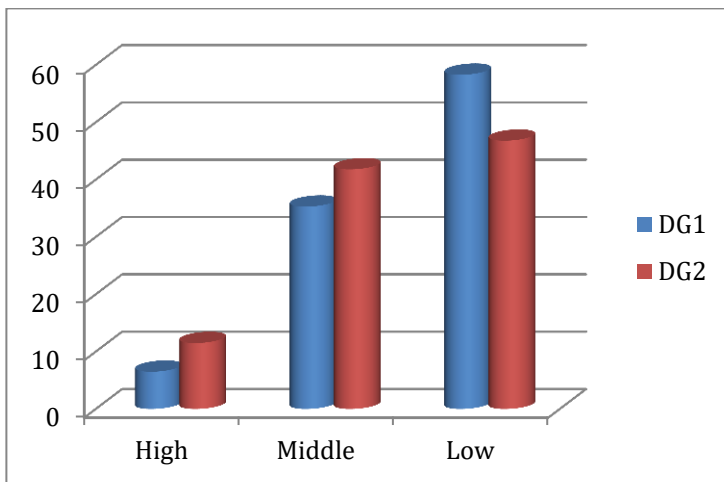


Figure 2: Dynamics of levels of children’s EQ (review group 2)
Source: Author’s own conception

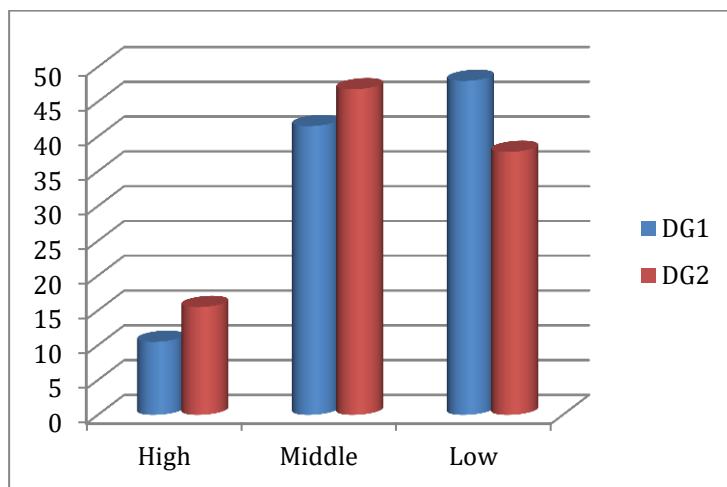


Figure 3: Dynamics of levels of children's EQ (review group 3)

Source: Author's own conception

As it is possible to see in a diagram, the results of preliminary diagnosing prove excellent indices in DG1 in comparison to DG2 on all levels respectively in three review groups.

The analysis of dynamics proves the following: the state of children's EQ of group 3 is significantly higher than in review group 2 and 1, but in review group 2 it is higher than in review group 1 in all levels. Such circumstances are firstly explained by age peculiarities of children's development, their formed world view, socialization and social adaptation, emotional intenseness of their life etc. and certainly the state of EQ. According to all distinguished levels EQ indices are higher in DG2 than in DG1, that is, children's EQ from families of migrant workers is lower than children's EQ from full families.

The significance of coincidence and divergence in preliminary diagnosing results has been taken into account according to Pearson homogeneity criterion. The obtained results prove accuracy, reliability and authenticity of obtained quantitative data and affirm the dynamic difference of children's EQ levels in DG1 in comparison to DG2.

Conclusions

The results of preliminary diagnosing allow us to ascertain the following: the children from families of migrant workers have some problems with EQ: to experience emotions, to identify them as basic ones,

to understand another person's emotions, to control own emotions in comparison to children from full families.

Most children from migrant workers' families of all review groups have low level of understanding their feelings, their differentiation, which proves the inability to understand the significance of emotions in person's life, control them, especially it refers to group 1, that is, the problem of EQ is caused by the parents' departure and accompanies them during the childhood. The children from full families of all review groups understand emotions, behavioral reactions better and are more able to control emotions than the children from migrant workers' families.

We tried to avoid formulations, having concepts 'disease', 'fear', 'death', 'be afraid of' etc., in developing special tooling while diagnosing, because they are traumatic for children's psyche. But children were using such concepts describing their attitude to pandemic COVID-19 and own emotions and emotional experience. It should be noticed that children from full families worried about their parents catching COVID-19, whereas the children of migrant workers' families mostly were afraid of their parents, working abroad, catching the disease and not coming back home/dying. Such circumstances prove loneliness, overstated anxiety, fear, and as a consequence, changes in EQ, reflecting on general mental health. On the whole, the children from families of migrant workers in three review groups mentioned the feeling of insecurity, the necessity for parents' presence, communication, that is, children, despite their age, need emotional contact with parents. We have noticed emotional miserliness and poverty of emotional words among the children from migrant workers' families in comparison to the children from full families.

The absence of permanent parents' love, care, friendly atmosphere in families of migrant workers influences directly the inner world, perceptive abilities of a child, adjoining with EQ – self-esteem, the understanding of social norms and rules of behavior, relations in groups etc.

Research prospects

The results of preliminary diagnosing prove the necessity of developing a special psychological and pedagogical program for making children's EQ in families of migrant workers, which can be efficiently used in the job of social workers – social teachers of educational establishments where the children from migrant workers' families study; social service workers, who take care of children from families of migrant workers; workers of rehabilitation social centers can be also involved.

The problem can be solved in case of following elementary children's rights according to international conventions depending on the protocols ratified by Ukraine; legislative regulation of legal status of children from migrant workers' families; and consequently, introduction of changes to social service activities; the improvement of educational program for professional training and retraining of social field specialists.

Taking into account the scientific novelty of the researched issue, the obtained results are considered to be interesting and scientifically valuable at the international level for scientists, studying the problems related to EQ and social work experts, involved in trade migration problem, especially children of migrant workers.

Acknowledgement

The contribution of the authors to the paper was as follows: documentation: Larysa Danylchuk, Liudmila Romanovska, Yurii Popyk, Nataliia Holova, Tetiana Kravchyna; data gathering: Larysa Danylchuk, Liudmila Romanovska; data processing: Tetiana Kravchyna, Yurii Popyk, Nataliia Holova; English translation and proofreading: Tetiana Kravchyna.

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