

NININS 2020**International Scientific Forum «National Interest, National Identity and National Security»****EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES OF MIGRANT CHILDREN:
FACTORS OF HEALTH, SAFETY AND SOCIOCULTURAL
ADAPTATION**

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Abstract

Migrant children's physical and mental health is an important condition of their adaptation in their new country of residence. The paper considers case studies regarding the problem presented in international and Russian literature, including World Health Organisation's materials. The study is based on a methodological humanistic model of a multicultural school. In the process of socialization, the assimilation of cultural attitudes, in the first place, of those people and communities with which the individual interacts and identifies himself, takes place. The basic vectors of cultural development are family, ethnic, civil / social circles of communication. Cultural increment in these areas ensures the successful socialization of migrant children in the host community and helps to build constructive inter-ethnic relations. The authors scrutinise migrant children's acquisition of festive culture in a metropolis, analyse their extracurricular activities at school and communication building in the school environment based on the example of the applied sociological study of migrant schoolchildren's social and cultural adaptation. The authors make conclusions concerning a considerable contribution made by school authorities and teachers in the sociocultural adaptation of migrant students. Simultaneously, the article emphasizes the need of involving all migrant children in the festive culture, activation of their participation in celebrations, assistance in building communications in the school environment, necessity to search for new forms of collaboration with the migrant children's parents, including club activities. A total of 393 students from Novosibirsk migrant families took part in the survey.

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1. Introduction

Migrant children's physical and mental health is an important condition of their adaptation in their new country of residence.

The problem under consideration is especially urgent in the face of global migration crisis that was in its active phase in 2015–2017. Migrant and refugee children have been among groups representing population at risk (Abbas et al., 2018); moreover, a significant number of migrants around the world are underage (Tulloch et al., 2016). Thus, the implications of this situation need close scholarly scrutiny and literature analysis.

It has been shown that health safety in migrants represents a pressing global issue since a considerable number of migrant workers are engaged in hazardous jobs (Moyce & Schenker, 2018). Among the problems in this regard are pay inequality, poor labour conditions and lack of legal security; all of these can lead to factory accidents and even fatalities. According to Moyce and Schenker, overcoming language and cultural barriers as well as being mindful of the political environment is also crucial for avoiding these potential negative consequences at workplace.

McLaurin and Liebmann (2012) dwell upon the specific problems intrinsic to the adolescents and young adults residing in agricultural settings. One of the most important discrepancies here is defined as “gaps in knowledge and practice”, which could be bridged with the help of so-called transformative change framework. It is highlighted that meeting special needs of this category of population is necessary in order for these children to integrate into the society in a successful manner.

As far as case studies are concerned, European Union and World Health Organisation have been devoting their attention to migrant children's health and safety in Europe, which can be proved by a comprehensive guidebook entitled “Health of Refugee and Migrant Children” (World Health Organisation, 2018). Interestingly enough, it claims that mental health in migrant children is largely predetermined by socioeconomic factors. Discussing the measures aimed at improving health and safety conditions for migrant children, the experts suggested resorting to psychoeducational interventions, also promoting health education at family and school levels. These tailored programmes (most of them being implemented in Northern Europe) are culturally sensitive by nature, taking into account parents' origin and traditions. In England, Healthy Child Programme has been focused on refugee and migrant children, and local authorities have been made responsible for implementation of the programme (Renton et al., 2016). As for its content, it is quite notable that this document puts threats to mental health first when enumerating the most dangerous threats to children's well-being.

A vast majority scholarly articles dedicated to migrant children's health and safety prescribe avoiding migrant children's detention. Other negatively assessed practices include parent-child separation and other punitive immigration policies (Wood, 2018). This harsh environment can lead to anxiety and depressions, drug abuse and even suicide attempts in migrant children and adolescents (Carballo & Nerurkar, 2001), their proneness to traffic and domestic accidents and poisoning due to poor childcare and their parents' work schedules.

American authors (Linton et al., 2017) have come to similar conclusions, stating that detention practices have a long-term detrimental effect on migrant children's health and well-being. Besides, it is

vital that medical assistance meet the corresponding culturally and linguistically sensitive standards. From the American authors' point of view, recreational activities and health-promoting practices also represent an opportunity for these children to integrate into the society being socially and culturally enriching experience.

UNICEF is yet another international organisation concerned with the problem of integrating migrant children into the host societies, including but not limited to refugee children. Combatting xenophobia, stigmatisation and discrimination in these countries is considered to be the responsibility of not only governments, but also religious groups, NGOs and private sector (UNICEF). Russian studies in the field of migrant children's adaptation also reflect health and safety problems characteristic of this category of children. Examining the issues of health and barriers in migrant children's successful adaptation, Poletaev points out that "some migrant children from Central Asia in Russia work instead of studying at school; since they cannot work on lawful business, this is connected with the risks of worker exploitation and violation of labour rights" (Poletaev, 2017, p. 116). The subject of children, issues of education and medical care is reviewed in the study devoted to migrant women's status (Turukanovoj, 2011).

It is interesting that children and younger immigrants are more flexible when it comes to social integration in their host country compared with adults (Carballo & Nerurkar, 2001). Psychosocial facilitation can also be conducted thanks to art and cultural projects, which has already taken place in various European countries (McGregor & Ragab, 2016). This holistic approach should embrace and promote best practices shared by governmental and non-governmental establishments. On a global level, it is a matter of political will and cooperation between the donor and recipient countries (Tulloch et al., 2016).

Holiday celebration is one of the factors that can assist in integration of the migrant children into the host society and constructing their identities, also contributing to the mutual enrichment of the local population and the immigrants. This aspect can be scrutinised through the prism of intercultural communication (Wojtyńska, 2011), which shows the globalisation of cultures and traditions in this connection.

Participation in festivities plays a crucial role in sociocultural adaptation of migrant children. Festivals form conditions for a broader and more creative interaction with the peers, teachers, neighbours, result in a broader social circle, saturating leisure activities inclusively. The preparation for a celebration creates as a platform for communication and creativity. Involvement in the social life at school creates sustainable and constructive communities.

The notion of a festival, festive culture, typology, its functions are presented in the works by Genkin (1975); Lazareva (2017). Psychology of holiday and research methods retaining to social image of festivals have been studied by Volovikova et al. (2003).

Festivals in the aspect of their importance for children's culture have been researched in the work by Leshchinskaya (2009). Festivals as a socialisation institute mainstreaming the acquisition of cultural values have been studied in the paper by Lyahovec and Mostickaya (2011). The authors pay special attention to sociocultural conditions of the cities as the most adequately corresponding to the maximum realisation of such festival's aspects as communalism, civic consciousness and patriotism (Lyahovec &

Mostickaya, 2011). Borisova scrutinises the notion of a festival in the context of personal meaning, supposing that “personal acceptance of a new festivity will only happen when the declared values or significance of the event will be included in the conceptual sphere of a personality as their own” (Borisova, 2017, p. 45). The status of modern Russian culture and prospects of its development have been analysed by Krylova (2015). The study of constructive elements in a feast rite as technological steps of the personality identification process has been conducted by Mostickaâ (2016). A festival is regarded as a communicative space, “creating a condition for forming ideals and values, uniting people into one and the same community” (Mostickaâ, 2016, p. 35). The study by Monastyrskaâ et al. (2017) reflects the issues of migrant children’s sociocultural adaptation at school with a majority of migrant students, including their involvement in the festive culture of the host society.

On the other hand, migrant children’s integration can be naturally conducted through enhancing their communication levels, whether it is communication in their mother tongue or in a foreign language (Vižintin, 2013). Definitely, language barrier can represent a difficulty for that matter, however, children are apt to learn quickly in the process of direct communication with their peers in the host society. As research undertaken in the EU shows, while it is clear that parents play a crucial role in children’s socialisation, the position of schools is less clear (Herzog-Punzenberger, 2016). B. Herzog-Punzenberger analysed the examples of using bilingual and trilingual media and sources for integrating migrant children through communication, including those with the use of information and communication technologies. At the same time, individual approach is a must, as some migrant children can freely communicate with their peers in class, while the others require language training to do so.

Russian researchers highlight the importance of the structure of migrant children’s extracurricular, friendly communication due to its special significance. Investigating the children’s communication practices, Mayorova-Shcheglova underlines that:

Children and adolescents independently expand their own social world through communication, whereby they discover a new quality of communication with peers, which they then bring into the institutions and their family. In the group of peers, younger generation searches for the correspondence of rules of behaviour and their innovative concepts with the changing living conditions (Majorova-Shcheglova, 2015, p. 100). Certain researchers mark out the peculiarities of migrant children’s building communication only with their peers who arrived from the same country. As such, one of the authors comes to a conclusion that “national segregation of children is more palpable outside the school”, “...migrant children form compact communities and they befriend each other. They only spend time outside the school with “their kind” (Turukanovoj, 2011, p. 57).

Pogrebickaya (2015) presents a description of a complex programme facilitating adaptation and integration of migrant children, the main focus in which is made on psychological and pedagogical, linguistic and sociocultural directions. There are three levels of work with children which have been singled out in the programme on migrant children’s adaptation: teaching, communication and cultural enrichment. “Constant communication with the representatives of local community is important for children, this leads to a faster socialisation” (Deminceva et al., 2017).

A number of authors scrutinising the problems of children’s adaptation note that successful adaptation (let alone integration) is impossible without including migrant children in close friendly

interactions with their peers in the host society (Shevcova et al., 2017; Zaripova, 2019). This kind of communication can be built both through purposeful work in the educational institutions and through horizontal links, such as district or neighbourhood communities, as well as local city projects, oriented at communication and daily interaction of migrants with the local communities.

2. Problem Statement

The above studies examined various factors affecting the preservation of health, safety, and the success of the socio-cultural adaptation of migrant children during their studies at a comprehensive school. However, not all factors affecting the health and safety of children have been studied equally thoroughly, which necessitates focusing on them in this article.

3. Research Questions

The subject of this study is extracurricular employment and social circle of children of migrants, secondary school students. The study was aimed at identifying forms of extracurricular employment (circles and sections that children attend, activities in which they are included outside of school hours, joint work, holidays and events in which they participate, as well as identifying social circles (social circles), in which children have the opportunity to join). Extracurricular activities and the potential for communication with peers from both the migrant environment and the host community are considered as a significant condition for health, safety and socio-cultural adaptation in a large metropolis.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is the analysis of extracurricular employment and the circle of communication of migrant children. Particular attention is paid to identifying holidays in which children take part and which are determined to be significant for their families, since the festive culture preserves and reflects identities, forms a multicultural educational environment based on understanding and respect for the traditions of various cultural communities.

5. Research Methods

The analysis of extracurricular activities and migrant children's social circle was a part of the investigation into educational and sociocultural adaptation of migrant schoolchildren on the example of a Russian metropolis (Novosibirsk). Survey questionnaire was developed within the study. Defining the structure of migrant children's extracurricular activities, their attitude towards the festive culture of the host society, activity of their participation in the festivals, as well as structure of their forming social circle were particular objectives of the survey. The sociological study among children from migrant families was conducted on the basis of Novosibirsk secondary schools with the support of Head Office for Education, Novosibirsk City Hall.

393 students from migrant families took part in the study, 61.1 % of them were boys and 38.9 % were girls. 27.2 % among those surveyed have been studying in a Russian school for 1 year, 20.8 % for

2 years and 52 % for 3 years and more. An overwhelming part of the participants of the survey have lived in Russia for no more than 3 years: 21.6 % for 1 year, 16.3 % for 2 years, 56.4 % for 3 years. Most of the students surveyed arrived from Tajikistan (26.4 %), Kyrgyzstan (24.9 %), Kazakhstan (11.7 %) and Uzbekistan (12.9 %). The rest of the respondents is represented by the students who arrived from Abkhazia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine. The students arrived to Novosibirsk mostly from cities.

6. Findings

Extracurricular activities are an important condition of migrant students' successful social and cultural adaptation. Since the pupils and their parents do not have the full information about opportunities for students in the sphere of leisure in the neighbourhood upon their arrival, school plays a big part in organising the extracurricular activities for students from migrant families. The structure of migrant children's extracurricular activities at school is presented in Figure 1.

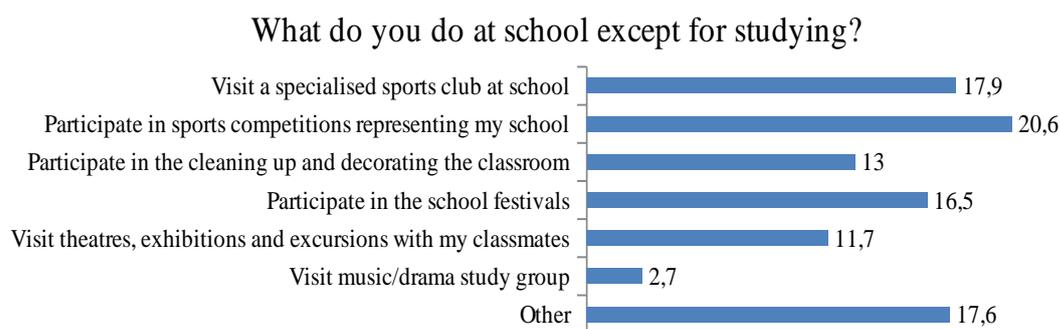


Figure 1. Structure of migrant children's extracurricular activities at school (N of answers: 294, %)

One of the active forms of extracurricular activities at school is doing sports (22.4 % of respondents) and participation in sports competitions (25.9 %). We can come to the conclusion about this category of students that these children display physical well-being and physical health. Athletic training requires discipline and single-mindedness, taking regular and prolonged time periods in the extracurricular activities. Quite many children from the host society leading a healthy lifestyle will be in these children's social circle. Doing sports collectively not only provides physical health maintenance but also forms conflict-free interpersonal relations, transferring competitive interaction into the area of sport.

Collective labour activities, collective ennoblement and decoration of classrooms also draws students together, helping them develop collaboration skills, as well as tolerance in their evaluation of what can one consider beautiful or comfortable. Less than a quarter of the students pointed that they take part in cleaning up and decorating their classrooms (16.3 %). Therefore, these forms of collective activities also deserve special attention.

14.6 % of migrant students noted that they visit outdoor cultural events together with the rest of their class. An earlier investigation into the migrant children's sociocultural adaptation at school, where the number of migrants exceeded the number of students from the host society, showed that some

children do not visit outdoor cultural events for financial reasons, as well as insufficient understanding of the importance of these events by their parents (Monastyrskaya et al., 2017). However, the school authorities and teaching staff work actively for this cause, trying to find financial support in order for these children to participate in such outdoor events, also giving talks to parents, emphasising the importance of acquiring the new culture for children.

Among the festive events in which the migrant students took place are Mother's Day, Victory Day, Constitution Day, Teacher's Day, Autumn Fair, Leaf Fall Princess, Autumn Turmoil, Michaelmas, Maslenitsa, Easter, KVN, Outpost, St. Valentine's Day, Self-Governance Day, Choir Battle, Masked Ball, Quick Starts etc. The list of the events provided by the students enables one to make the conclusion that the teaching staff acquaints the migrant students both with the Russian traditional holidays and with the entertainment traditions of the schools. Migrant children are given great opportunities to study the traditions of the host society deeper thanks to the festive culture. The transformation of the migrant student's role from a passive contemplator to an active participant (doer) is an important educational and socialising factor in this process. The opportunity to present migrant children's festive culture to the children from the host society is an important factor of socialisation. As such, polycultural education environment, based on understanding and respect to the traditions of various cultural communities, is formed.

Social circle plays an important role in the adaptation to the environment of another culture. If a migrant student, due to his poor Russian skills or other reasons, is limited to communication only with the students of their own country, both language, educational and sociocultural adaptation is much slower. Figure 2 shows agents of migrant students' social circle in the school environment.

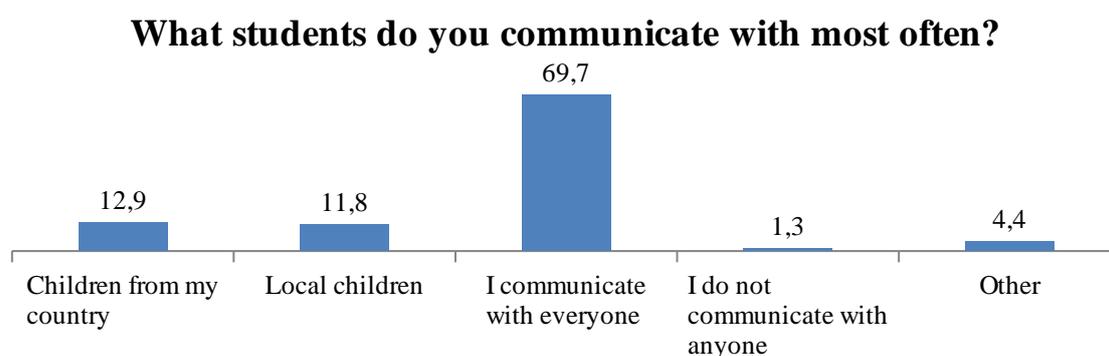


Figure 2. Social circle (N of answers 389, %)

Most of the students mentioned that they communicate with all students, i.e., both from the host society and from their country (69.7 %); 1.4 % of those surveyed admitted that they do not communicate with the students around them. Even though the percentage of such students is low (1.4 %), these students need special attention of the school psychologist, social workers, teachers and the students of the host society. Attention of the social pedagogical workers should also be paid to the students whose social circle is limited to students who arrived from the same country. Even if this problem is related to poor Russian skills at the first stage of education, it is necessary to find forms of collaborative activities of all the students. This will not only enable the migrant students to learn the language of the host society faster

but will also facilitate a faster acquisition of the new space and academic subjects as well as adaptation in the environment of a different culture on the whole.

7. Conclusion

Migrant children's health and safety in the host society play an important role in their adaptation to the new country. If the physical conditions of the migrant children arriving to Russian Federation with their parents are under control of the healthcare institutions, their psychological comfort depends on a variety of factors.

The faster a child acquires cultural norms of the host society, the broader their social circle in the new environment, the more diverse his leisure activity, the less probable are the personal conflicts with the children from the host society, the faster is the adaptation. In general, the positive role of such processes increases the level of safety, which, in its turn, positively affects children's mental and physical health.

Analysis of the results of the survey among the students from migrant families allows one to draw a conclusion that schools actively work towards adapting this group of students. They try to involve the students to extracurricular educational activities, extracurricular work and participation in various festivals and projects.

It is necessary to search for new forms of work with the parents of migrant students. In this regard, club activities could be of assistance: namely, family clubs, female clubs (mother clubs), father clubs. They could be the informal platform for discussing the issues of children's upbringing, their behaviour and leisure, family weekend clubs, when not only children but also their parents can take part in the outdoor activities.

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