

ISCKMC 2020**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****FORMATION OF EMOTIONAL STABILITY OF TEACHERS-
DEFECTOLOGISTS: PROGRAM, RESULTS**

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Abstract

The study is relevant due to an increasing number of risk factors affecting mental and physical well-being of all educational agents engaged in a special remedial environment. An evidence-based contribution to the objective factors concerned relies on some crucial principles, including humanism, voluntariness, confidentiality, responsibility, competence, consistency, regularity, involvement in activities, etc. The foregoing serves as a fundamental basis for a psychological and pedagogical program designed to facilitate the development of emotional stability in teachers-defectologists (10 classes for 10 weeks were conducted once a week and lasted 45 minutes). The participants were tested before and after the implementation of the program, based on the two techniques: “A Study of Emotionality” by V.M. Rusalov and “Characteristics of Emotionality” by E.P. Ilyin. The data were processed using the Wilcoxon T test (T_{emp} fell into the rank of significance, hence, the hypothesis is accepted stating that the intensity of shifts towards an increase in the degree of emotional stability of teachers exceeds the intensity of shifts towards its decrease). The answers were obtained as to whether the level of competence exhibited by teachers-defectologists in relation to emotional stability has increased, whether emotional burnouts have reduced, whether self-regulation skills have been consolidated, and whether the level of psychological climate among the teaching staff has increased.

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Keywords: Special education, teacher-defectologist, emotional stability, emotional burnout, self-regulation skills, program



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1. Introduction

It is relevant to develop emotional stability in teachers-defectologists as stipulated by the state policy of the Russian Federation in the field of education, and the creation of a regulatory framework for children with disabilities. Due to the fact that inclusive and remedial education implies the provision of education to all students, regardless of their educational needs, the requirements for a teacher-defectologist are also increasing (Kim et al., 2017; Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Lavy & Eshet, 2018; Prasojo et al., 2018).

The study is also relevant due to an increasing number of risk factors affecting mental and physical well-being of all educational agents engaged in a special remedial environment organized for teaching and upbringing children. Today, teachers-defectologists can fulfil their functional and professional duties both within the framework of a general educational organization, and in special remedial institutions, inclusive schools, orphanages, and boarding schools. In the education system and among parents, homeschooling, family learning and distance learning are popular, which can also be delivered by teachers-defectologists through classes with students.

In their professional activity, teachers-defectologists often feel fatigue, mental strain, stress, etc. that all can reduce emotional stability, entailing emotional burnout (Dolgova et al., 2016; Schoeps et al., 2019; Yin et al., 2019).

The objective factors that reduce emotional stability involve (Abos et al., 2019; Capone et al., 2019; Malinen & Savolainen, 2016): unfavorable socio-psychological environment, emotional overload, low social status, lots of paperwork, routine work, helplessness, etc.

An evidence-based contribution to those factors concerned relies on some crucial principles: humanism (creation of a benevolent atmosphere and relations), voluntariness (conscious and voluntary participation in the program), confidentiality (information available during the work could not be disclosed), responsibility (the outcomes should not be used to inflict harm), competence (defining clear boundaries of one's own competence).

When the skills of mental regulation just start to develop, the teachers are offered simple exercises that do not require special conditions and special equipment. However, mastering or improving efficacy should comply with the principles of consistency, regularity, and involvement in activities.

The foregoing serves as a fundamental basis for the development of emotional stability in teachers-defectologists, involving skills to control emotional stability through concentration of attention; to regulate concentration and muscle relaxation; to pronounce affirmations to mentally refer to yourself and give a positive attitude; to recall pleasant and positive images associated with the earlier and emotionally colored sensations.

2. Problem Statement

Action plan aimed at promoting the mental health of teachers is one of the most urgent tasks facing the modern education system. The problem of self-control over the emotional sphere is one of the most important psychological and pedagogical challenges relevant for the personal and professional

development of a modern teacher. There is a need to train them in such a way they could handle stressful situations and life difficulties.

3. Research Questions

Research questions are geared towards such a form of professional deformation of teachers-defectologists as a low level of emotional stability.

What psychological and pedagogical program should be created in order to:

- form emotional stability in teachers-defectologists;
- enhance the competence of teachers-defectologists on the issues of emotional stability;
- reduce emotional burnouts;
- develop self-regulation skills;
- create enabling conditions for improving the psychological workplace atmosphere.

4. Purpose of the Study

The study aims to develop a psychological and pedagogical program that contributes to the formation of emotional stability in teachers-defectologists.

5. Research Methods

The study was based on the two techniques: “A Study of Emotionality” by Volkova and Rusalov (2016) and “Characteristics of Emotionality” by Ilyin (2001). The participants were tested before and after the implementation of the program. The data were processed using the Wilcoxon *T* test.

In the beginning, the subjects were tense and insecure. However, due support was provided from the school administration. Once informed of the purpose of the study, the topic of classes and its significance, the teachers became interested in the problem and encouraged to attend classes.

From that moment on, the teachers gave each other help and support. Overall, the classes were attended with pleasure. The difficulties were to schedule the classes to suit everyone engaged. The classes were held once a week, for 10 weeks, and lasted 45 minutes each.

The program was aimed at the development of emotional stability in the teachers-defectologists.

The objectives of the program involved:

- to acquaint teachers with the concepts of ‘emotional burnout’, ‘emotional stability’, stages of emotional burnout, causes and methods of prevention;
- to reduce the frequency of emotional burnouts exhibited by teachers-defectologists;
- to master the techniques of self-regulation;
- create favorable conditions for improving the psychological atmosphere among the teaching staff.

Material and technical equipment for conducting classes included desks, chairs for each participant, audio player, multimedia projector, computer, scanner, printer, white board, handouts, including paper, colored pencils, ballpoint pens.

Each class within the emotional stability program was divided into three parts (Khokhlova, 2017; Semenova, 2006):

1. Introduction including problem statement and warm-up exercises.
2. Main part taking most of the time.
3. Conclusion highlighting feedback and summary of a class.

The psychological and pedagogical program included three functional modules: Information module (1-2 classes); Psychological culture of a teacher (3–8 classes); Final module (9-10 classes).

Name and summary of classes.

Class 1. Lecture for teachers. Objectives: to establish contact between teachers and a teacher-psychologist; to break the ice with group members; to get to know basic concepts like ‘burnout syndrome’.

Exercises “To come up with an adjective starting with the initial letter of a name” and “Count”; Mini-lecture “The phenomenon of Burnout Syndrome”.

Class 2. A rainbow of emotions. Objectives: to train awareness of one’s feelings; to develop an ability to call and understand one’s feelings and emotions.

Exercise “Circle”, aimed to arrange interactions between the participants, to relieve tension through movement exercises; A talk with educators on the topic “The Ability to Maintain Emotional Balance through a Hobby”; Exercise “Positive Thinking” aimed to develop an ability to cope with difficult situations; Mini-lecture “Music Therapy in our life”; Exercise “Elements of Aromatherapy” aimed at the relaxation and making the group members feel better.

Class 3. Stress in Teaching Activity. Wider objective: to develop stress resistance through exercises aimed at psycho-emotional relaxation and release.

Exercise “Dancing”; Mini-lecture “Stress in Teaching Activity”; Recommendations for increasing stress resistance; Drawing made by the teachers on the topic “No Stress at Work”; Exercise “Wish for a Day” to put a smile on one’s face.

Class 4. Communication skills. Objectives: to improve the quality of interpersonal relations; to form the idea of communicative competence between educational agents; to investigate the conditions for effective interaction.

Game to create a working mood; Mini-lecture “Determination of Communicative Competence”; Exercise “A Guide” aimed to build trust; Game “Eastern Market”; Exercise “Pick an Apple” aimed to relax muscles, relieve psycho-emotional stress; Exercise “Listen and Repeat” aimed to teach the participants active listening techniques.

Class 5. Conflict situations and ways to settle conflicts. Objectives: to create a favorable psychological climate between the participants; to develop positive self-perception; to practise to avoid conflict situations.

Exercises “Greeting in Pairs”, “Problem Situation”, “From Denial to Acceptance”, “Methods and Techniques of Psychological Defense and Self-regulation”; Mini-lecture “Methods of Self-regulation”; Exercises for mastering the skills of self-defense and self-regulation.

Class 6. Self-regulation techniques in creativity. Objective: to encourage the group members to be creative.

Exercises “Psycho-gymnastic Exercise to Create Working Capacity”, “Ten I”; “Magic Sticker”; “Draw a Good Mood”; “Positive Attitude”).

Class 7. Who am I? Objectives: to develop the abilities of psychological personal analysis; to form an understanding of multidimensional human perception of the world and the courage of expressing one’s own point of view.

Exercises (Warm up: “Fire – Ice”; “Reading Aloud”).

Class 8. Autogenic training. Objectives: to train the teachers to acquire psychic self-regulation; to relieve psychological stress; to form the skill of mobilizing one’s spiritual efforts to overcome everyday difficulties; to learn to manage one’s emotions, feelings and behavior.

Exercises “Rhythm in a Circle”, “Center of Gravity”; Autogenic training

Class 9. Reflection. Objectives: to shape psychological insight of the individual; to form delicate and polite relationship; to study personal characteristics of colleagues and their interests, abilities and hobbies.

Greetings from the participants present in class; Exercise “Making Wish in a Circle”; Reflection “Today for me ...”.

Class 10. Final class. Objective: to reflect the experience gained.

Exercises “An Exercise to Promote Efficacy”, “Useful Tips”; Feedback questionnaire.

6. Findings

Upon the completion of the program, emotional stability was evaluated again. The purpose of the repeated evaluation was to study the effectiveness of psychological and pedagogical activities aimed at the development of emotional stability in teachers-defectologists.

The emotionality results exhibited by the teachers-defectologists based on the technique proposed by Rusalov (as cited in Volkova & Rusalov, 2016) before and after the implementation of the program are presented in Fig. 1.

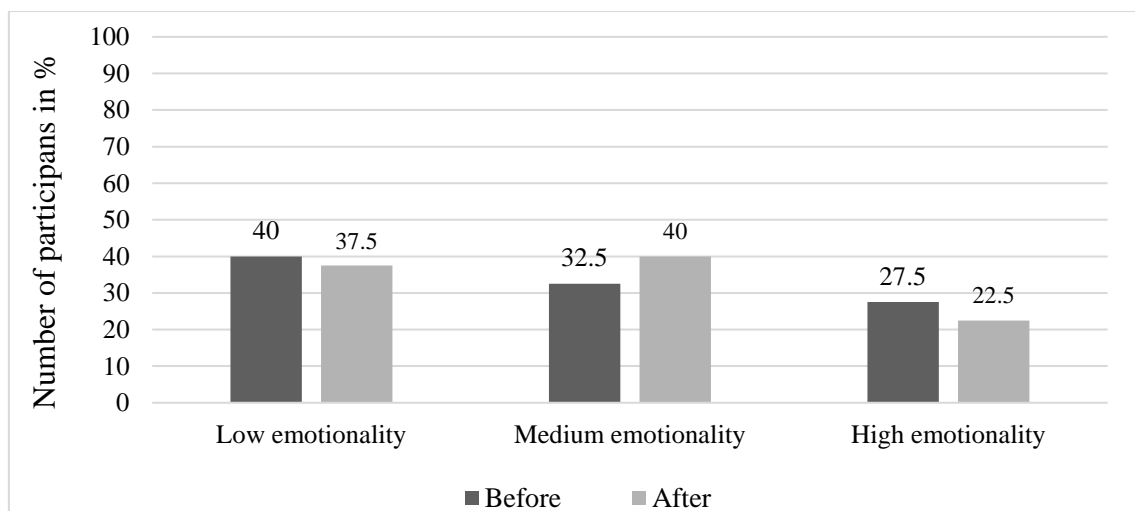


Figure 1. Emotionality results among the teachers-defectologists (Rusalov’s technique)

The results suggest that the level of emotionality among the teachers-defectologists changed, namely: 15 people (37.5 %) out of 40 (100 %) had a low level of emotionality, 9 people (22.5 %) out of 40 (100 %) had a high level of emotionality. The number of teachers with a medium level of emotionality increased to 40 % (16 people).

The teachers in the group were emotionally balanced, keeping a stable mood, which had a beneficial effect on relationships in the team and on their health (Dolgova & Mamylna, 2018; Stepanova, 2007).

The characteristics of emotionality among the teachers-defectologists based on the technique proposed by E.P. Ilyin before and after the implementation of the program are presented in Fig. 2.

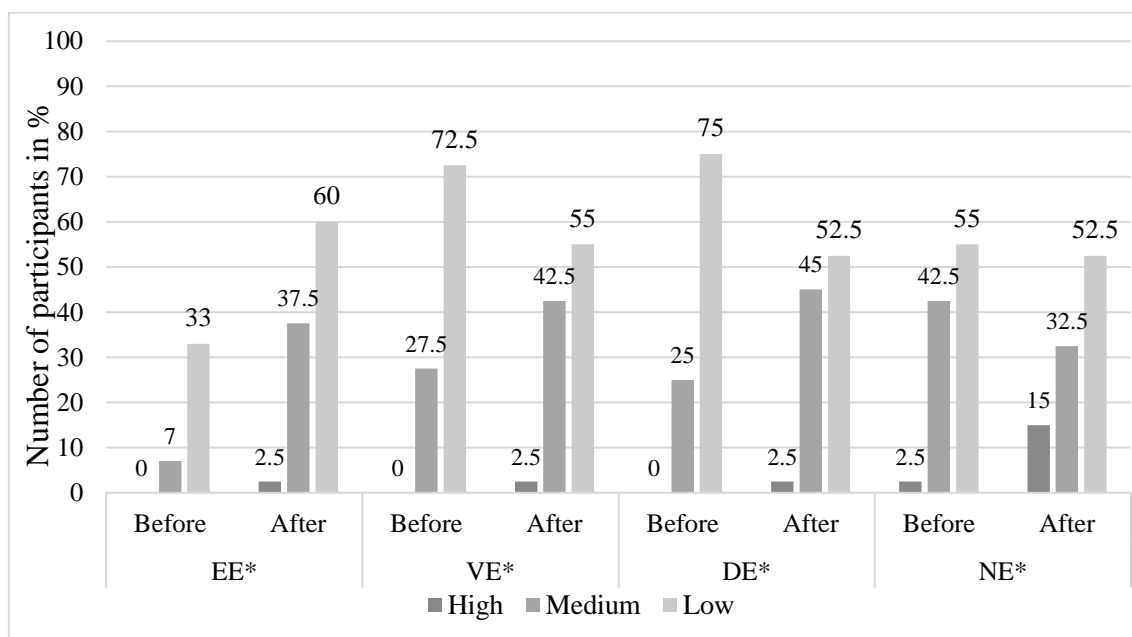


Figure 2. Characteristics of emotionality among the teachers-defectologists (Ilyin’s technique): EE – emotional excitement, VE – vividness of emotions, DE – duration of emotions, NE – negative effect of emotions on effective activity and communication

The above results suggest that the number of subjects with a medium level of emotional excitement increased by 4.5 %; the number of subjects with a low level increased by 27 %; the number of teachers with a high level increased by 2.5 %.

The level of overall nervous excitement in the teachers-defectologists after the implementation of the program went down. The teachers became more balanced and calm, better concentrating their attention on achieving the objectives set.

The reduced emotional excitement can favorably affect the psychological climate in the team and the overall performance of teachers.

As per the vividness of emotions, the number of teachers with a high level increased by 2.5 %, with a medium level – 15 %, whereas the number of subjects with a low level reduced by 17.5 %.

Thus, it is seen that the level of emotional excitement exhibited by the teachers-defectologists decreased, i.e. frequently changed emotions, both positive and negative emotional reactions, were not typical of the teachers, which favorably affected interpersonal interaction with other educational agents.

The DE results signify that the number of subjects with a high level increased by 2.5 %, with a medium level – by 20 %, whereas the number of teachers with a low level decreased by 22.5 %.

The duration of emotions is characteristic of both positive and negative emotions (Atmaca et al., 2020; Perepelicyna, 2017).

The NE results confirm that the number of subjects with a high level increased by 15 %, with a medium level decreased by 10 %, and the number of teachers with a low level decreased and amounted to 2.5 % of respondents (1 person).

Arguably, a positive effect of emotions on the efficacy of pedagogical activity began to prevail among teachers-defectologists.

Thus, the majority of teachers got a feeling that emotionally they could no longer help the subjects involved in their activity, and were also unable to get into the situation, sympathize and empathize, respond to situations that should touch, encourage them to strengthen intellectual, volitional and moral returns.

The hypothesis was confirmed using mathematical data processing based on the Wilcoxon *T*-test. The significance of the hypothesizes is revealed in Figure 1.

H0: The intensity of shifts towards an increase in the level of emotional stability in teachers does not exceed the intensity of shifts towards a reduction.

H1: The intensity of shifts towards an increase in the level of emotional stability in teachers exceeds the intensity of shifts towards a reduction.

Let us find the value of the Wilcoxon *T*-test by the formula (1).

$$\Sigma Rr = \frac{N \times (N+1)}{2} \quad (1)$$

$T_{emp} = \Sigma Rr$, where *Rr* are rank values of shifts with a rarer sign.

$$\Sigma Rr = \frac{16 \times (16+1)}{2} = 136$$

$$T_{emp} = 2.5 + 1 + 2.5 = 6$$

$$T_{crit} = \begin{cases} 35 (p \leq 0,05) \\ 23 (p \leq 0,01) \end{cases}$$

$$T_{emp} < T_{crit} (p \leq 0,01)$$

Let us build an axis of significance (Figure 3).

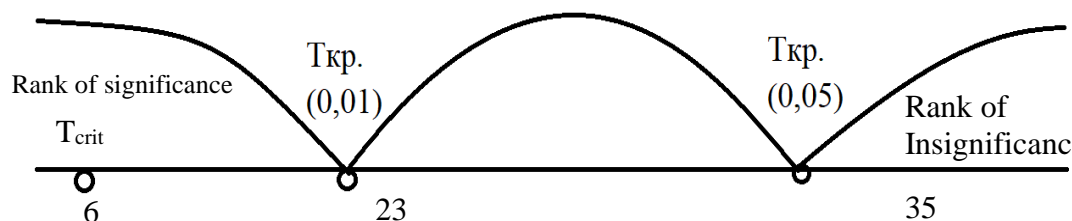


Figure 3. Axis of significance

T_{emp} falls into the rank of significance, therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

H1: The intensity of shifts towards an increase in the level of emotional stability in teachers exceeds the intensity of shifts towards a reduction.

Thus, the outcomes of the experiment confirm the provisions of the hypothesis put forward in the study that the level of emotional stability of teachers-defectologists will change resulting from the implementation of the program.

7. Conclusion

The study enabled to obtain the answers to the research questions and elaborate a psychological and pedagogical program aimed at the development of emotional stability in teachers-defectologists. The level of competence of teachers-defectologists on the problems of emotional stability increased. The frequency of emotional burnout decreased. Self-regulation skills were consolidated and the level of psychological climate in the teaching staff increased.

According to the results of the program for the development of emotional stability in teachers-defectologists, the most effective methods and techniques for the development of mental regulation skills are thought to involve attention control, creation of sensory images, affirmations – verbal forms of suggestion, breathing exercises, autogenic training, including techniques that help to establish interaction between people, relaxation exercises, sleep normalizing exercises.

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