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# Migration Safety in Education: Adaptation of Migrant Students to Conditions at Higher Educational Establishments

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The topicality of the problem under study stems from the changed geopolitical and socioeconomic conditions in Russia, which resulted in uncontrollable international and migration processes, changes in the ethnic composition of territories, worsening of ethnic and social relations of migrants and members of the society receiving them, search for educational paradigms complying with new conditions of the country's development. The aim of the research is to determine specific features relating to adaptation of migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments and to draw up a programme of social, psychological and pedagogical activities to adapt migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments. The leading research method is an experimental one, which enables us to fully consider the problem of adapting migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments. The article outlines a system of social, psychological and pedagogical help to migrant students needed to optimise a process of their adaptation to an educational environment. The programme is aimed at creating social, psychological and pedagogical conditions for the efficient interaction of all members of an educational process, as well as full fulfillment of a person in conditions of a poly-cultural educational process. Teachers, curators, heads of subdivision and administrations of higher educational establishments may find the materials of the article useful.

**Keywords:** adaptation, higher educational establishment, migrant students, social, psychological and pedagogical activities

#### INTRODUCTION

The global problem of migrants and migration, which has lately became especially topical, remains one of the most pressing issues in the world. First of all it is caused by the geopolitical conditions, as well as socioeconomic and sociocultural processes of human development. The world is experiencing a mass migration wave and Russia, where thousands of people from other countries migrate, is no exception. The bulk of migrants arrive to Russia from friendly Central Asia countries, the former Soviet Union republics. Specialists claim that at the beginning of 2016 there were 10 000 000 foreign citizens in the country and the number of migrants flowing into the country is continuing to grow. As a result of uncontrollable intensive migration relocations we see the formation of a society comprising fundamentally different and mainly divided communities. Here we face a problem relating to the national safety of members of the receiving society on the one hand and of migrants on the other hand. The same situation is in the Urals region. Yekaterinburg is becoming more and more attractive for migrants willing to leave their countries. The city is attractive economically, politically and due to its developing infrastructure needed for cultural and social adaptation of migrants [1]. For example, Yekaterinburg can boast conditions for labour and educational adaptation of migrants being created here: free Russian language courses, dynamically forming and being implemented social policy. Currently, higher educational establishments see a massive influx of migrant

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students. The global community is doing its utmost to find solutions for new difficult life conditions. Those solutions also relate to the pedagogical science and educational practice, reacting to changes to fill the existing education paradigm with new trends and approaches, corresponding with the changed state of the society. Specific features of adapting migrants to changes of the social environment require social and pedagogical activity rather than pedagogical activity with migrants' children, which is regulatory and programme in its nature and is done in some definite period of time as part of the education system. The social and pedagogical activity has a wider range of application and is always targeted, aimed at a definite person and his problem. The notion of "social adaptation" is the main notion of social and pedagogical activities. Social adaptation is needed when a person has problems interacting with the environment [2]. Migrants' children constantly deal with changes in the social environment. Such factors, affecting the success of the social adaptation process, as natural and climatic, language-related, cultural, ethnic, religious and psychological, make adaptation more difficult in a real-life situation. In educational organisations children once again find themselves in a new living space and deal with other problems, being subjected to new influences of a microcommunity. They need social, psychological and pedagogical support, namely: in mediation, in protection of their rights for full development and education, in overcoming difficulties for personal growth, in settling conflicts in relations with people, in resolving different psychological problems. According to researchers, timely adaptation for conditions at higher educational establishments is seen as one of the main predictors of a student's effective learning, which takes place in conditions, where goals, requirements and teaching methods significantly differ from those ones used at secondary school [3, 4, 5]. The fact that a migrant student has to adapt not only to the educational environment, but also to a different sociocultural environment of an unfamiliar city makes the adaptation of a migrant student more difficult. At the same time, he may find no social teacher or education psychologist at a higher educational establishment who could have provided social, psychological and pedagogical help to him. That is why curators of groups, where migrant students study, and teachers encounter new professional goals: to take initiative in establishing comfortable relations of a foreign student with a group and teachers, to help with self-esteem, to provide additional educational services (consultations), to develop their ability to cope with difficulties themselves (to master efficient self-help techniques), to plan and implement their actions in difficult situations. Researches relating to the social adaptation of migrants in particular regions, carried out by R.I Akyulov and E.I. Akyulova [6], played a special role in resolving the problems. The adaptation of migrant students as part of an educational process was also studied by O.G. Domorovskaya [7]; problems of social and psychological and social and cultural adaptation were studied by A.S. Ilyina [8] and N.K. Radina [9]. The studying of the problem assured us that despite the existing scientific literature on the problem of migration and adaptation of a person of traditional culture leaving his country, we feel acute shortage of scientific researches aimed at finding an all-round solution of a problem relating to adaptation of migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### **Research Methods**

The following methods were used to carry out the research: theoretical (theoretical analysis of the subject-matter and the problem being studied, based on learning and logical summary of scientific literature, studying of pedagogical experience, forecasting of pedagogical phenomena); diagnostic (written questionnaires, examination of documents); empirical (participant observation, comparison, analysis of individual and group interactions, conversation); experimental (psychological research methods of personal states and qualities, planning of pedagogical goals, planning of a personal growth path, approbation of a programme of social, psychological and pedagogical activities for adapting migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments), methods of processing quantity indices and methods of graphic presentation of results.

## **Experimental Resources of the Research**

Russian State Vocational Pedagogical University was the experimental resource of the research. A total of 15 migrant students, studying intramurally in their first year (10 boys and 5 girls) took part in the research.

#### **Research Stages**

The problem was studied in three stages:

The first stage dealt with the theoretical analysis of the subject-matter and the problem being studied, based on learning and logical summary of scientific literature, studying of pedagogical training practice and development of migrant students of a vocational and pedagogical university, forecasting of pedagogical phenomena. Preparations for the initial and starting stage of an experimental and searching work was made. The group of tested people was determined. The diagnostic set of tool was chosen.

The second stage focused on experimental and searching work to diagnose the emotional condition of migrant students, the level of emotional intelligence, self-esteem, anxiety and personal self-conception. The second stage was also used to draw up a programme, which outlined kinds of activities and set of measures for social, psychological and pedagogical adaptation of migrant students to a new sociocultural environment of a higher educational establishment, aimed at full personal fulfillment in different sectors – activities, communication and actualization of self-consciousness.

The aim of the third stage was to implement the programme of social, psychological and pedagogical adaptation of migrant students, to determine the dynamics of adaptation of migrant students during the experimental and searching work, to check, process and systematize results of the experimental and searching work.

#### RESULTS

Using the principles of tolerance and cultural conformity, Sverdlovsk Region's capital is dynamically resolving the problem of adapting migrants to the new sociocultural environment and adjustment of the receiving party to them to live friendly and to develop relations with them. Consultative services for migrants, centers to study the Russian language were set up in Yekaterinburg. The migrants' children study at educational organizations of the city free of charge. However, foreign citizens, namely young people who entered higher educational establishments, are a rather vulnerable group, taking into account those problems which they face studying at a higher educational establishment. A higher educational establishment and teachers also have to cope with the changed education conditions, requiring different approaches and forms of professional help to influence the development of a personality of a migrant student, his behavior in society and receiving of full education. To resolve some problems of modern education we offer a system of social, psychological and pedagogical help to migrant students to adapt them to the educational environment. To develop the system, we should resolve the first problem: to determine the initial adaptedness level of migrant students to new conditions. To resolve this task, we determined priority personal traits of migrant students, quality indices of adaptedness levels of migrant students, which could have demonstrated interrelation between a process and a result, and a relevant set of tools. We believe that the diagnosis of the following traits can guarantee the expected result: 1) the emotional state to reveal their rueful feelings, emotional disposition [author's questionnaire]; 2) emotional intelligence of a migrant student to determine their abilities relating to effective communication, interaction, self-control (N. Hall's method); 3) an anxiety level of a migrant student (state anxiety - anxiety at the given moment and personal anxiety - as a stable trait of a person) to reveal the level of tension, discomfort, nervousness and existence of emotional breakdowns (C.D. Spielberger and Yu.L. Khanin's method); 4) self-conception of a migrant student to find his attitude to himself: self-understanding, self-respect, self-interest and expectations of attitude to himself (V.V Stolin and S.R. Panteleyev's method). The analysis of results of the diagnostic research showed the following adaptedness level of migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments. 1) The emotional state of migrant students is not critical in general, practically all tested people understand the aim of staying in a foreign country and are upbeat on the future; 12 out of 15 respondents are not planning to return to their homeland. 2) A high development level of emotional intelligence, unlike intelligence in general, which is a sign of academic success, enables a person to achieve professional and life success in general. It is a combination of abilities of a person to effective communication by means of understanding emotions of other people, abilities to control oneself and to organize interaction competently. Nine migrant students demonstrated a low development level of emotional intelligence and six had an average level. Such results prove that migrant students have a low/average ability to feel, understand and accept feelings, emotions, and thoughts of other people; probably, their reactions depend on circumstances and are displayed according to an association reflex, which speaks about low self-control. 3) The students' questionnaires showed a high (8 students) and moderate (7 students) level of trait anxiety and practically the same results on state anxiety (9 and 6 students, respectively). Migrant students with a high trait anxiety have a stable inclination to perceive different real-life situations as threatening, although there are no objective prerequisites for that. Analyzing the research results of the anxiety level of migrant students, we can come to a conclusion that students who showed a high level of trait and state anxiety - so-called high anxiety students display a rather expressive condition of anxiety in situations when it comes to assessment of their competence and prestige. 4) The self-conception diagnosis demonstrated that of all signs of the self-conception structure, such as self-respect, auto-sympathy, self-interest, self-confidence, self-acceptance, self-management and self-accusation, the signs of auto-sympathy and self-understanding dominate with migrant students, which in meaningful respect combine such traits as approval of oneself in general and, in important circumstances, trust in oneself. However, they have a low self-esteem, especially among girls. In general, we can say that the majority of respondents demonstrated that they believe in their strength, energy, independence and self-understanding. As a result, the diagnostics showed the level of social, psychological and pedagogical adaptation of migrant students to conditions at higher educational establishments and potential which can be used as a basis for developing learning abilities and regulating one's living, as well as those weak points which curators and teacher can use preparing for work with migrant students trying to integrate them into the educational environment.

The second problem which authors of the system of social, psychological and pedagogical help to migrant student face, is to draw up a programme to optimize the process of adapting migrant students to the educational environment using the received data. The main goal of our programme is to provide social, psychological and pedagogical help. The idea of it is to help psychologically to achieve free and harmonious development of a person in new conditions, to prevent negative tendencies in a student's psychology (coping with difficulties, correction of deviating behavior), to form readiness for constructive settling of conflicts with group mates and teachers. A social teacher (Tursunova Mikhrangezi, a graduate of the university who studied social pedagogics and psychology), an education psychologist and curator were invited to implement the programme. To achieve the aim, we used such technologies as individual and group consultations, conversations, group training sessions, discussions, roleplaying games and exercises. Using them, we can develop useful adaptation skills, such as establishing of contacts, creation of positive motivation to attend classes, as well as meetings and classes that will follow (exercises "In what way we are similar" and "Trying of social roles"). A number of measures were used to make students understand their personal problems, reasonable self-esteem, to develop abilities to adapt in problematic situations, to master social behavior skills, self-regulation skills (analysis of situations which prompt unrest and tension, writing of an essay "How I feel myself living in a foreign country" ), to relax and ease anxiety and to create conditions for well thought behavior (relaxation exercises, "Overcoming of difficulties", role-playing games). Provision of help aimed at activating inner resources of migrant students, mastering effective ways of helping oneself in overcoming crisis situations and developing confidence was one of the main meaningful areas of the programme. To implement the projects, a number of measures to form confidence, to correct self-conception, to acquire positive experience of controlling situation, to understand one's own abilities to overcome difficulties effectively (an exercise "Rehearsal of confident behavior", "Map of my soul", planning of a working list "Behavior skills to overcome problems effectively", discussion on "How I cope with real-life problems") were developed. Friendly and benevolent relations with other people guarantee success for adaptation of migrant students. To develop sensitivity and respect to other people, conversational skills, skills to listen to people, communicate and keep up a conversation, readiness for disclosing personal feelings, compassion and participation with regard to an interlocutor, a set of measures was developed (such exercises as "In what way we are similar", "Listen silently", "Important people", "Conversational skills", "What I like in myself"). All classes ended in a discussion of a topic "Whether it became easier to understand your problems and find ways to resolve them". The task focuses on self-analysis skills and communicative culture. The forming of communicative culture was the most important task at each class, as this factor is one of the most essential for migrant students, who speak the Russian language not correctly and skillfully enough and do not know conversational and communicative standards of the Russian linguistic culture, for their adaptation to conditions at higher educational establishments.

Implementing the programme of social, psychological and pedagogical adaptation of migrant students, we can resolve the third problem: to determine the influence of the system of measures on the adaptedness level of migrant students to the new sociocultural environment at a higher educational establishment. The final diagnostics showed that the situation had changed for the better. Revealing, discussing and analyzing problems migrant students have studying at a higher educational establishment, finding ways and methods to resolve them, we achieved positive dynamics in all indices. Students became more thin-skinned and their ability to correctly perceive, assess and express emotions, ability to control their emotions also became more evident. The majority of students had their anxiety level reduced to the moderate level. They became more confident and feel themselves calm and stable among their groupmates. After the implementation of the programme, the self-conception diagnostics showed that the majority of tested students demonstrated a stable reasonable positive self-esteem.

## DISCUSSIONS

It is feasible to discuss problems relating to integration of ethnic minorities into society as part of a national policy programme in this or that region. In 2003 (the last amendments were introduced in 2013), the Sverdlovsk Region government approved the Concept of the Sverdlovsk Region migration policy (hereafter – Concept), which is a system of viewpoints on the content and the main sectors of activities of the Sverdlovsk Region government bodies related to management of migration processes. The main chapters of the Concept, reflecting activities on regulating migration processes in Sverdlovsk Region (Objectives, principles and tasks of the Sverdlovsk Region migration policy – Chapter 2, The main sectors of activities on regulating migration processes in Sverdlovsk Region – Chapter 3), do not provide information reflecting activities on creating conditions for integration of arriving migrant into the social environment, including the educational one. [10]. The main thing the Concept focuses on is the ability of migration to guarantee the effective satisfaction of the society's needs in human resources (labor and intellectual) and their effective distribution in the region. In this case, we can speak about such notion as "migration safety" in its narrow sense [11]. Such an approach to the national policy envisages security of national interests of the receiving society to a greater extent. However, if you speak about national interests of the both parties, then migration safety should be understood in a broad sense – with the help of institutes the authorities should provide the "stable functioning and reproduction of the receiving society, its individuals, including migrants, maintained

with the help of special institutional environment" [11]. Despite inefficiency of the current migration legislation, social policy relating to work with migrants in different sectors is being dynamically formed and implemented in Yekaterinburg, due to its status of the capital of Sverdlovsk Region. The work is also being done in the education sector: a system to develop migrants' legal culture is being formed (hotlines in the Kyrgyz, Tajik and Uzbek languages providing legal help were set up); free Russian language courses are available to migrants as of 2013 and Russian history and law courses as of 2015; regional educational establishments see an influx of migrant students; labour market for migrants is being dynamically formed in the city and as a results graduates of vocational education establishments have an opportunity to find jobs. The forming of the reasonable migration policy we can see in the Concept of the state migration policy of the Russian Federation until 2025 [12]. The most important and significant measures, scheduled in the document, are: 1) introduction of amendments on a compulsory exam in Russian, the Russian history and the Russian legislation for foreigners without citizenship to a Russian Federation law on education, federal law "On higher and postgraduate vocational education"; 2) introduction of amendments to some enactments of the Russian Federation, aimed at providing an opportunity to foreigners to work in Russia using a received profession after studying at the Russian educational establishments of higher or secondary vocational education. 3) introduction of amendments to Resolution of the Russian Government dated 25 August 2008 № 638 "On cooperation in education with foreign countries", aimed at increasing an annual quota to receive foreign citizens and compatriots, living abroad, to be taught in the Russian higher vocational education establishments [13]. The aim of the plan of measures on improving educational (training) migration and academic stability is to achieve national security of the country, social groups, person, which is "one of the main factors of the stable development of a state and society" [11]. Taking into account the lack of a clear migration legislation relating to education, the given problem is often discussed as a conflict confrontation of migrants and members of a receiving society. Using such an approach, state structures, researchers and experts prevent negative situations connected with migrants and migration flows rather than regulate them. A number of studies on the Russian national security; prevention of modern extremism among young people; escalation of nationalism, chauvinism, ethnic selfishness, egocentrism amid migration processes prove that.

Papers, raising a problem of renovating higher education in relation to work with foreign students, have started to appear in researches in the last years. There appeared a notion of "education migration", the aim of which is to receive education by "education migrants" - active young people who voluntarily and freely do localized in time migration with definite goals of professional development [9]. At the moment, we see a number of problems in resolving the issue of adapting migrant students to conditions at a higher educational establishment - to the educational process, its sociocultural environment. First of all, teachers are not prepared to participate in the adaptation process of migrant students, to use technologies to optimize the adaptation process. According to A.S. Ilyina, a conflict between an objectively existing need for renovating higher education in work with foreign students and a low activity level of teachers relating to introduction of innovative forms to work with such a category of students has not been resolved so far [8]. The second problem is based on the state of the educational environment at a higher educational establishment, which should be focused on mutual enrichment of cultures of representatives of different nationalities. In a poly-cultural educational environment one should take into account a cultural approach, viewing the implementation of education functions - person-forming, culture-forming and professional - through a prism of culture and is aimed at satisfying the needs of all members of a society, respect to representatives of different cultures and nationalities. This problem can be resolved with the help of a number of measures. First, educational programmes of social and humanitarian cycle, corresponding with social and cultural conditions, should be draw up. Second, special programmes for adapting migrant students should be implemented. Third, extracurricular events should be held at a higher educational establishment as part of education work. The aim of that work is to exchange information about cultural peculiarities of representatives of different nations, to satisfy their cultural needs. Fourth, active life of migrant students in the new educational environment to fulfill their creative and cultural potential. The researches of the aforementioned authors deal mainly with the pedagogical aspect of the problem and are aimed at acquiring knowledge and forming tolerant self-consciousness of migrant students and Russian students by means of humanitarian disciplines [1, 7]. Specialists also study pedagogical conditions of social and cultural adaptation of migrant students in a higher educational establishment, the forming of tolerance to foreign students and their inclusion into the social and cultural environment are also among them [2, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18]. Psychological researches studying ethnopsychological peculiarities of overcoming difficult real-life situations and explanations of problems of psychological health of a person of a traditional culture who moved from its environment to a poly-cultural environment are especially interesting [19]. The authors consider the problem from the point of view of methods of psychological prevention of depressive mood of the given category of people. Discovering ethnopsychological peculiarities, which are cultivated in the Udmurt and Russian ethnic group, Ya.P. Korobeynikova [20] believe that interethnic communication determines the potential capabilities of the given ethnic members in overcoming difficult situations. The revealed personal traits of Russian students help us understand the communicative activeness in interaction with representatives of the same ethnic group and expressiveness of social centricity and internality in relations with representatives of other ethnic groups in cross-cultural interaction [21, 22].

The novelty of our research boils down to a comprehensive approach to the solution of the problem of migration safety of education migrants. The system of a targeted social, psychological and pedagogical help to migrant students for their adaptation to the educational environment includes a psychological personal portrait of a migrant student, a comprehensive system to assess his adaptedness level, a programme for adapting an education migrant as a member of a student community and a member of an educational process.

## **CONCLUSION**

The conducted research proved the topicality of the problem of migration safety in a poly-cultural educational environment and the need for new approaches of government structures to the education policy and relevant educational strategies in the Russian pedagogical science. The authors of the article carried out a theoretical and methodological analysis of scientific literature on the research problem and suggested an author's programme of professional help to influence the personal fulfillment of a migrant student, his behaviour in society and to receive full education. The suggested system of social, psychological and pedagogical help to migrant students to adapt them to the educational environment is based on determined high-priority social, psychological and pedagogical personal traits of education migrants, quality indices of their adaptedness level, which could have demonstrated interrelation between the process and the results, and relevant diagnostic set of tools. The approbation of the programme of social, psychological and pedagogical help, implemented in the research, showed the positive dynamics in adapting migrant students in all results.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The research results described in the article may be helpful and used to draw up educational strategies in the vocational and pedagogical education system. Heads of subdivisions and administrations of higher educational establishments, teachers, curators and students may also use them to create social, psychological and pedagogical conditions for efficient interaction of all members of the educational process, as well as for full personal fulfillment amid the poly-cultural educational process.

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