



Research Article

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FEATURES OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF FORCED UKRAINIAN MIGRANTS IN THE NEW SOCIAL CONTEXT

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Abstract

Relevance. In the scientific project, carried out with the financial support of the Latvian government in August-September 2022 explicit and implicit competencies of forced migrants were investigated, and their markers were described.

Methodology. The research is based on the concept of self-determination, which is one of the methodological principles of informal socialization. The project aims to study the role of implicit competence in the self-determination of the life path of internally displaced persons. The research was based on qualitative methods. In particular, the principles and procedures of the so-called "grounded theory" were used. Data collected during free interviews with eight forced migrant women from Ukraine, who ended up in Latvia as a result of Russian aggression, were analyzed.

Results. It was found that forced migrants in their choice of the place of forced displacement are guided by both clearly expressed competence, in the formation of which social ties play a significant role and their own experience of experiencing the difficulties associated with forced relocation. The study showed that the indicators of implicit competence in the informants' narratives were significantly greater than indicators of explicit competence, and they were more diverse. In addition, the growing role of national identity in the informal socialization of forced migrants was revealed.

Conclusions. In the structure of self-determination of an individual, it is appropriate to divide implicit and explicit competence, while the first one is related to social relations, and the second one is related to manifestations of autonomy. Future research can obtain a larger sample to study the influence of social and autobiographical contexts on attitudes toward temporary resettlement in another country and the orientation and intensity of attitudes toward integration into the Latvian society of refugees from Ukraine.

Keywords: *displacement, forced migrant, implicit competence, self-determination, informal socialization.*

Relevance

The problem of internally displaced persons is closely connected with the problem of informal socialization. Forced migrants moving to another country significantly change the

social contexts of their lives. We were struck by two ideas. One of the opinions that forced migrants about "ordinary people" and "purposeful figures" immersed in certain life circumstances belongs to D. Turton (Turton, D., 2003). G. Welling, in turn, insists that "moving to another country is to some extent their attempt to build their world in new circumstances" (Uehling, G., 2017, p.12). In addition, Z. Bauman called modern society a society of "individual security" (Bauman, Z., 2000), which means that forced departure can be considered a condition for avoiding threats to one's health and property, and individual decisions on this matter are aimed precisely at ensuring it.

Forced migrants from the country under attack are primarily women with children and elderly parents due to travel restrictions for men. The gender aspect of this problem is relevant to the study of the temporary resettlement of residents of territories attacked by other states. First of all, we are talking about the self-determination of the resettlement practices of young women of working age, saving themselves, their children, and loved ones from the threat of destruction. However, migrants to different countries, including European ones, can be considered not only as an object of care but also as a population resource for the host country.

Our study was based on the concept of self-determination. In its most general form, self-determination refers to the ability of a person to determine his behavior. In other words, self-determination is the ability of a person to make decisions about how to behave and use these decisions as causal premises of his behavior. According to E. Deci and R. Ryan, the readiness to manage or self-determine one's behavior is ensured by competence, autonomy, and social connections (Deci, E., Ryan, R., 2000). The authors of the concept of informal socialization consider self-determination as one of the methodological principles for studying this phenomenon, that is, in the process of informal socialization, a person is considered "as an active subject in the transformation of material and spiritual values" (Vlasova O. (Ed.), 2019, p. 7).

Competence is one of the key elements of the theory of self-determination. If we understand competence in its most general form, then competence is the availability of knowledge, experience, and skills necessary for effective activity in a given subject area. Many researchers note the ambivalence of the concepts of competence. Since the end of the 20th century, the question "...competence is a personal property, action or result of action..." (Ashworth, P., Saxton, J., 1990, p. 3). We are interested in the opinion of Weinert, who notes that "many implicit (in word usage) and explicit (in the theoretical frame of reference) definitions of competence are so heterogeneous that only a small, vague conceptual core remains" (Weinert, F., 1999, p. 26).

We disagree with the view that the theory of self-determination is more determined by explicit competence (Van der Kaap-Deeder, J., De Houwer, J., Sean Hughes, S., Spruyt A., Vansteenkiste, M., 2018). In our pilot study, we tried to show that implicit competence is most pronounced concerning life risks and is strongly related to the need for autonomy. Implicit competence is understood by us as latent competence in effective problem-solving under conditions of uncertainty.

The implicit competence of internally displaced persons is determined, in our opinion,



firstly, by the variety of rapidly growing scientific knowledge, the assimilation of which occurs throughout a person's life, with the development of areas of their application, including through new types of life activities. Secondly, the system of human practices (educational or involuntary resettlement) requires transdisciplinary implicit competence, which ensures the formation of "personal knowledge" according to M. Polanyi (Polanyi, M., 1958), which captures essential connections in new contexts and allows finding adequate ways to solve emerging problems. Such competence can be considered the basis of the self-determination of the individual.

In this study, we are trying to study the experience of internally displaced persons from the eastern, southeastern, and central regions of Ukraine who ended up in Latvia due to threats of shelling and occupation. We suggested that unforeseen circumstances of a certain time and space may force a migrant to use explicit and implicit competencies that help him at different stages of deciding to move to another country. The scientific project was implemented with the financial support of scientists from Ukraine from the government of Latvia.

Methodology

The project aims to study the role of implicit competence in the self-determination of the life path of internally displaced persons.

The idea of the study was based on the fact that, on the one hand, the uniqueness of the life experience of migrants is difficult to formalize, but it is transmitted through the personal testimonies of the migrants themselves, and on the other hand, narratives and discourses. . become an important element of self-reflection of migrants, allowing them to develop their strategy and confirm its correctness by engaging in communication with different people and telling them about the experience and the difficulties of deciding to resettle.

The choice of methods is determined by the goals and objectives of the study. The methodology of the so-called qualitative research was chosen, which seems to be the most appropriate for the goals and objectives of the study. Modern psychology is increasingly turning to the study of hidden, non-public, intimate, subjective spheres of human life in rapidly changing conditions, including those associated with risk. With this in mind, the method of a free interview with a list of main topics for discussion was chosen.

The sample of the study. Eight women aged 30 to 60 took part in the hour-long interview. We emphasize that, according to V. Smal (Smal', V., 2016), middle-aged women also became internally displaced persons after the annexation of Crimea and the occupation of part of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. We also took into account the activity of hostilities in different regions of Ukraine. We paid attention to the life experiences of internally displaced persons, and not to the intensity of the fighting that forced them to migrate. Thus, among the informants were: 2 women from Mariupol and its suburbs, 2 from Kharkiv, 2 women each from the south of Mykolaiv and Odesa, and one woman each from Kyiv and the Dnieper.

In addition, when selecting informants, marital status, presence, age of children, and dates of departure from Ukraine were taken into account. The number of informants was determined according to the criterion of repeatability of key variants of positions. The results were processed in 2 stages - a general analysis of judgments on the research topic and an analysis of a free interview using the principles and techniques of the so-called "grounded theory" (Strauss, A., & Corbin, J., 1994).

Results

As a result, the structure of concepts describing the semantic features of the informal socialization of forced Ukrainian migrants has been clarified. The key, in our opinion, was the concept of security, and most often it was not only vital (housing, food), but also spiritual (culture, language, education, patriotism), psychological (dignity, self-realization), and financial. (employment, material support), medical (medical care, safe conditions for health, availability of medicines). That is, the very desire to ensure safety for oneself and loved ones contributes to the actualization of relevant knowledge and qualities.

The process of deciding to leave the country was associated with an attempt to focus on objective information, but in the end, the key decision was made spontaneously and simultaneously. That is, at a certain stage, there was an urgent need for independence, the need to show one's will, to take the situation under personal control, relying on one's strengths and weaknesses.

I.6. "Yes, that is, everyone made some decisions for himself. Nobody forced anyone. The situation is such that everyone is responsible for himself. Everyone made his own decisions because there were nuances. Everyone chose his path."

In other words, the war actualized for them the meaning of personal contextual knowledge or implicit competence and autonomy with particular acuteness. At the same time, the positive aspects of the manifestation of independence include such qualities of informants as pride, sociability, modesty, fortitude, and the weak ones - carelessness, slowness, apathy, emotionality, and anxiety.

As for implicit competence, four groups of its markers were identified: effectiveness markers, such as unformed, undocumented, indefinite, unpredictable, incomplete, ambiguous, spontaneous, inconclusive, possible, and intractable; temporal markers such as untimeliness, inevitability, volatility, futility, and spontaneity; multiplicity markers, such as non-variance or low-variance, real, different, mixed, non-mass, unusual; integrity markers - unordered, continuous, preliminary, simple, simplified. These results essentially correspond to the position of M. Bozgan and M. Norel (Bazgan M., Norel M., 2013).

Discussion

From our point of view, in wartime conditions, the role of implicit competence increases, helping to make indisputable decisions, the effectiveness of which is extremely difficult to assess. In situations of a military threat, generalized, typical, and standardized knowledge loses its power, and the ingenuity of the "street smart guy" provides better adaptation to the external environment, changing it or choosing the best strategy of



behavior.

Moving to another country raises the issue of ethnic and national identity even more acutely. Identification is one of the important mechanisms of personality socialization, in particular informal socialization. The question of the identity of forced migrants is one of the most frequently discussed issues. First of all, the issue of preserving or changing identity in the country of forced migration is discussed. In particular, it is claimed that in a modern multicultural society, rigidly deterministic algorithms for the formation of national identity and characteristics of previous historical eras, are replaced by the principle of variability, choice, and the construct of identity emerges.

The idea of context-dependent identity about the presence of many forces that influence identification processes is interesting. These fluctuations can be caused by opportunities, both psychological and material, such as gaining respect and dignity or finding a job or a better home. Regions of Ukraine inhabited by Ukrainians, Russians, Jews and representatives of other nationalities and with the fairly widespread use of the Russian language were subjected to aggression from Russia. According to the results of the 2001 population census of Ukraine, the national composition of the country was represented as follows: 77.8% of Ukrainians and 17.3% of Russians, most of whom lived in the southeastern regions of the country. In our study, we tried to determine the specifics of the ethnic attitudes of refugees and the role of national (political and ethnic) identity in the context of temporary resettlement in Latvia.

The following participant stories illustrate this situation:

I 5. "My dad is Russian, my mother is half-Ukrainian, and in Russian-speaking Kharkiv, I felt Russian, but not Russian, since February 24 we are all Ukrainians without embroidery, without demonstrations, in the depths of our souls".

I 7. "When we entered the territory of Ukraine and saw the Ukrainian flag and tired Ukrainian soldiers on the bus, everyone cried. They are just shooting at us, and now there is silence. We arrived and couldn't believe it. We believed we could get there. I always felt like a Ukrainian. For some reason, they talked about it more in Lviv than in Mariupol. But now I don't know where to go back. I have a mother and a daughter in the occupied territory, I worry about them."

I 4. "I always considered myself a person of the world. I am fluent in Ukrainian and Russian without an accent. But then I realized that I love Ukraine and I love to speak Ukrainian. It is one of the melodic languages after Italian. And now pride for Ukrainian soldiers has increased. The whole world marveled at their resilience. Now I am proud to say that I am Ukrainian."

I 3. "Yes, I am half Ukrainian, half Jewish, but at the same time, my mother is half Ukrainian, half Russian. I am probably mostly Ukrainian, but I know for sure that somewhere in me there is Jewish blood. Something like that, a Ukrainian woman with Jewish blood."

First of all, we note that half of the respondents, either both or one of their parents, were Russian by origin, and before the Russian aggression, they were inclined to identify

themselves with Russians. At the same time, regardless of ethnicity, after the aggression, all respondents clearly felt that they were citizens of Ukraine, i.e., their civic Ukrainian identity was sharply manifested. The personal experience of tragic experiences prompted all informants to use the Ukrainian language more often.

The study showed that although some people considered the knowledge of the Russian language to be a factor of adaptation in a new country, at the same time, a certain prevalence of pro-Russian ideas in the Russian-speaking environment contributes to a greater civic Ukrainian identity. Informants had to face the fact that lack of knowledge of the Latvian language in some cases made it difficult to solve some questions, but the line "Sorry, I'm from Ukraine" in the absolute majority of cases changed the situation to the orientation towards help or vice versa to accept help. Residents understand the problems of Ukrainians both at the level of ordinary people and at the level of the authorities.

1. 5. I understand that Latvians who come to the dentist want to be spoken to in Latvian. I ask my assistant to tell them that I am a Russian-speaking doctor from Ukraine and, unfortunately, do not know Latvian yet. The language barrier does not prevent them from thanking me after the reception."

Along with attempts to preserve one's own culture, there is an unequivocal tendency to study the Latvian language and Latvian culture. First of all, let's note the interest in Latvian culture. In the country, it became possible to get to know the country through the introduction of free trips around the country. Differences between cultures rather indicate the level of adaptation of migrant women, and commonality across cultures is perceived through the lens of gratitude for help and support.

13. "I think that after moving to another country, there was an opportunity to look, as it were, into someone else's "garden." And I think about why I'm here and what I'm doing here for my country, what I'll learn."

Thus, gratefully accepting help from Latvia, and understanding the complex problems, including those related to ethnic relations within the country, most of the informants feel like they are representatives of another country to which they want to return. That is, there are signs that the processes of informal socialization enter the consciousness of forced migrants and they are trying to make this process manageable.

Thus, in our opinion, security issues are a significant social context of forced migrants' lives. At the same time, competence in solving a large number of new problems was ensured both through official information and through social connections and relationships. But also personal experience and implicit competence, which are related to autonomy and personal responsibility, are the basis of the informal socialization of forced migrants.

That is, on the one hand, the dissemination of information, and social and volunteer support for refugees are important condition for their survival, but at the same time, the independence and responsibility of women who decide to go to a safer place at their own peril and risk will help them find the most appropriate ways to respond to military challenges and threats.



Conclusions

The obtained results make it possible to explain the rather active position of internally displaced persons from Ukraine. This means that strong-willed, professionally trained, highly organized women, who not only gratefully accept help, support, and sympathy, but also actively try to solve their problems independently in cooperation with others, temporarily flow into the society of the host country.

With a sufficiently high probability of their soon safe return to their homeland, both countries are faced with the problem of humanitarian support, spiritual development, and the national identity of forced Ukrainian migrants, especially their children. In the conditions of the initiated processes of Ukraine's integration into the EU, not only the integration of refugees into the European space as new residents of the EU countries but also ensuring the psychologically comfortable return of temporary migrants to Ukraine as people with personal experience of socialization by European standards is of particular importance. At the same time, migration processes can become productive for the host country from the point of view of forming loyalty to its culture in the present and the future.

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