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The Relationship Between Addiction and Emotional Intelligence in the Ukrainian Socio-Cultural Context: Challenges of Emigration

La Relación Entre Adicción e Inteligencia Emocional en el Contexto Sociocultural Ucraniano: Los Retos de la Emigración

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: the development of emotional intelligence has a positive impact on the process of adaptation of migrants from Ukraine in the European Union and prevents the spread of addictions. Aim: The aim of this research was to study the relationship between migrants' emotional intelligence and the development of addictions in the context of adaptation to new conditions due to the hostilities.

Method: the study used such methods as testing and questionnaires, respectively, ASI and Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT).

Results: it was found that individuals with a higher level of emotional intelligence have a lower tendency to form various types of addictions, while those with a lower level of EI are more vulnerable to these problems. This suggests that a high level of emotional intelligence contributes to better emotion management, the ability to adapt to stressful situations, and a better understanding of one's own needs and motivations.

Conclusion: a high level of emotional intelligence makes it possible to prevent the formation of dependencies in the process of cross-cultural adaptation of migrants from Ukraine to new conditions against the background of a hostilities in Ukraine.

Keywords: Emotional Condition; Cross-Cultural Adaptation; Psychological Barriers; Social Isolation.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el desarrollo de la inteligencia emocional repercute positivamente en el proceso de adaptación de los inmigrantes procedentes de Ucrania en la Unión Europea (UE) y previene la propagación de las adicciones.

Objetivo: el objetivo de esta investigación fue estudiar la relación entre la inteligencia emocional de los migrantes y el desarrollo de adicciones en el contexto de adaptación a nuevas condiciones debidas a las hostilidades.

Método: el estudio utilizó métodos como pruebas y cuestionarios, respectivamente, el ASI y el Test de Inteligencia Emocional Mayer-Salovey-Caruso (MSCEIT).

Resultados: se descubrió que los individuos con un mayor nivel de inteligencia emocional tienen una menor tendencia a formar diversos tipos de adicciones, mientras que los que tienen un menor nivel de IE son más vulnerables a estos problemas. Esto sugiere que un alto nivel de inteligencia emocional contribuye a

una mejor gestión de las emociones, a la capacidad de adaptarse a situaciones estresantes y a una mejor comprensión de las propias necesidades y motivaciones.

Conclusión: un alto nivel de inteligencia emocional permite prevenir la formación de dependencias en el proceso de adaptación transcultural de los inmigrantes ucranianos a nuevas condiciones en el contexto de las hostilidades en Ucrania.

Palabras clave: Condición Emocional; Adaptación Intercultural; Barreras Psicológicas; Aislamiento Social.

INTRODUCTION

In the first month hostilities in Ukraine, 10 % of the population left Ukraine, which, according to the UN, was the largest and fastest migration crisis since the Second World War. This, along with migration losses, is likely to lead to a large-scale demographic crisis in Ukraine and threaten the social and economic foundations of the country's preservation.⁽¹⁾

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of internally displaced persons as of the end of April 2022 was about 13 million, of whom 5,3 million were outside Ukraine. Most of them are women and children (90 %). However, when drawing conclusions about the scale and structural and resonant characteristics of migration of the Ukrainian population, in particular young people, it is important to understand that, firstly and undoubtedly, the main reason for it are the hostilities, but, secondly, it is also the migration aspirations that accumulated in the pre-hostilities stage of Ukraine's development.^(2,3)

In connection with the above, the issue of the peculiarities of migrants' adaptation and the factors that influence it becomes particularly relevant. In this study, we will focus on addictive behaviour and emotional intelligence in the context of the modern socio-cultural dimension.^(4,5)

One of the pioneers of emotional intelligence research, R. Bar-On, introduced the term "socio-emotional intelligence" into scientific use. He argued that this psychological category encompasses a variety of personal and interpersonal abilities, skills and abilities that, when combined, determine an individual's behaviour.⁽⁴⁾ R. Bar-On is the founder of the term emotional quotient (EQ), which is defined as the coefficient of human emotionality. His model of emotional intelligence offers a broad interpretation of this psychological phenomenon. Emotional intelligence is defined as a set of non-cognitive abilities, knowledge and competencies that help a person navigate different life situations.⁽⁶⁾ The following competences can be identified as components of emotional intelligence:

1. The intrapersonal domain covers the ability to understand and manage oneself, including self-reflection, self-esteem, self-actualisation, self-assertion and independence.
2. The interpersonal domain encompasses the ability to interact with society, including empathy, interpersonal relationships and social responsibility.
3. The area of adaptability covers the ability to adequately assess reality, demonstrate flexibility and use problem-solving skills.
5. The scope of stress management includes the ability to regulate one's own behaviour and solve problems.⁽⁷⁾

The terms "addiction" and "dependence" are not uncommon in psychology.⁽⁸⁾ Historically, they have been viewed in a negative light, with the understanding that they mean harmful and destructive habits. A comparison of these terms shows that addictive behaviour may not always indicate addiction.⁽⁹⁾ For example, a person suffering from an illness may be dependent on medication to cure the disease, while an alcoholic or drug addict is not only dependent on the substance they use, but also engages in addictive behaviour. "Addictive behaviour can be defined as a desire to escape from reality, which is achieved through changing one's mental state".^(10,11,12)

Addictive behaviour is a type of deviant behaviour characterised by the formation of a person's desire to escape from reality through the use of certain substances or constant focus on certain activities, in order to develop and maintain intense emotions. Addiction can be conceptualised as a self-sustaining form of activity that gives rise to a specific personal formation.^(13,14,15) All of this can apply to a person who finds himself in a difficult life situation and seeks to escape from the reality where he is having a hard time. As a rule, in the case of migration, a person finds himself or herself in an unfamiliar society without support and withdraws into himself or herself.⁽¹⁶⁾

The development of addictive behaviour often goes unnoticed. In the initial stages, its development is relatively harmless, accompanied by the typical satisfaction of basic needs. Over time, the behaviour becomes more and more uncontrollable, leading to the formation of addictive behaviour. The duration of its development can be influenced by a number of factors, including the substance used, age, gender, and personal characteristics of the person.^(13,17)

Unlike people with non-addictive personalities, people with addictive personalities tend to avoid problematic

situations rather than solve them. The ability to adapt is impaired at the psychophysical level. At the initial stage of adaptive capacities, a state of psychological discomfort occurs, which can be influenced by many factors.⁽¹⁸⁾ People react differently to mood swings. For some, it manifests itself as a natural resistance to difficult life circumstances, the ability to take responsibility for their actions, and the ability to solve problems. In other cases, a person may need to make a significant effort to withstand the situation, or may be unable to do so.⁽¹⁹⁾

Often people with substance use disorders have difficulty coping with problematic situations. Such people try to avoid the problem by artificially changing their consciousness and experiencing conditionally positive emotions. As a result, a person develops an illusory perception of a solution to the situation. This method can overcome other problem-solving methods. It is relatively easy to modify human behaviour in this way, and the method becomes a stable and reliable way of interacting with reality. This prevents the implementation of the natural way of solving problems. In addition, this method presents the least resistance to various solutions that an addicted person is drawn to.⁽²⁰⁾

The person experiences a sense of isolation from their problems, which can be alleviated by the simple act of focusing on any actions or objects. In addition, people with an addictive personality often experience difficulties in relationships with loved ones, and communication becomes superficial.⁽²¹⁾

The purpose of the study was to quantify the relationship between the level of emotional intelligence (EI) of migrants and the probability of developing addictions. Based on the goal, the following research objectives were formulated:

1. Study of the formation of dependent behaviour among migrants to the EU from Ukraine in the context of a hostilities in Ukraine.
2. Researching the level of respondents' emotional intelligence.

To establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and addictive behaviour.

METHOD

Study Design

To establish the relationship between the level of emotional intelligence and addiction in migrants. The study ran from 2022 to 2023. Research can be classified as applied research.

Search Strategy

The research was conducted in several stages. At the first stage, the goal and objectives of the study were defined, methods were selected and the theoretical basis was established. The sample was formed and two groups were created at the initial stage: Group 1 - people who identify themselves as addicted and Group 2 - people without addictions. At the second stage, testing was conducted. The structure of addictions was studied using the ASI test. The levels of EI formation were studied using the MSCEIT. The correlation between addiction and EI was established using correlation analysis. The third and final stage involved statistical analysis of the data and formulation of conclusions.

Sample Selection

An experimental sample was created to empirically study the peculiarities of the relationship between EI and addiction in migrants. The study involved 400 Ukrainian citizens aged 18 to 50 who left Ukraine due to the hostilities in Ukraine and are now in the EU. Among the respondents were 95 men and 305 women. 56 % of respondents migrated from the eastern regions of Ukraine, 24 % from the southern, 9 % from the central and 11 % from the western regions. 34 % of respondents have higher education, 38 % have secondary special education and 28 % of respondents have only school education. 11 % of respondents stated that they have chronic diseases, and 36 % have complaints about mental health. The survey participants were found through contextual advertising on Facebook and Instagram. The main criteria for inclusion were Ukrainian citizenship, temporary protection status in an EU country, and moving to an EU country after 24 February 2022.

The null statistical hypothesis H_0 is that there is no correlation between emotional intelligence and the risk of addiction. The alternative statistical hypothesis H_1 is that there is a correlation between emotional intelligence and the risk of addiction.

Research Methods and Statistical Data Processing

The following empirical research methods were used in the study:

1. Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). This standardised test was used to assess the respondents' EQ. It allowed to assess four areas of EQ: perception of emotions, use of emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding of emotions, and management of emotions.⁽²²⁾
2. ASI test. This comprehensive test assesses various aspects of addiction, including substance use, mental disorders, social and family problems. It has been used to assess respondents' addiction

tendencies.⁽²³⁾

3. After that, the Wilcoxon T-test is calculated using the formula:

$$T = \sum Rr \tag{1}$$

where R_r is the sum of the ranks corresponding to atypical shifts.⁽²⁴⁾

To compare mean values, the student's t-test is calculated using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{(M_1 - M_2)}{\sqrt{m_1^2 - m_2^2}} \tag{2}$$

where M_1 is the arithmetic mean of the first compared population (group),

M_2 is the arithmetic mean of the second compared population (group),

m_1 is the average error of the first arithmetic mean,

m_2 is the average error of the second arithmetic mean.

RESULTS

At the first stage, we studied addictive behaviour using the ASI test. Its results are presented in table 1.

Subscale	Group 1 (with dependence), points	Group 2 (no dependence), points	p-value (Wilcoxon signed-rank test)	p-value (Student's t-test)
Drug use	25,4 (12,8)	2,1 (1,2)	<0,001	<0,001
Alcohol	18,3 (9,2)	2,7 (1,5)	<0,001	<0,001
Mental disorders	12,4 (6,3)	4,2 (2,1)	<0,001	<0,001
Social issues	15,2 (7,6)	5,1 (2,4)	<0,001	<0,001
Family problems	13,8 (7,1)	4,9 (2,3)	<0,001	<0,001
Employment and education	12,3 (6,2)	15,4 (7,8)	<0,001	<0,001
Criminal activity	8,7 (4,3)	3,2 (1,6)	<0,001	<0,001

Table 1 presents the results of a comparison of two groups of individuals: one group with addiction (Group 1) and the other group without addiction (Group 2). The results of the analysis indicate significant differences between the groups on all subscales, as the p-value in all cases is less than 0,001, indicating statistical significance. This indicates that the differences between the groups are unlikely to be accidental. It can be concluded that people with addiction (group 1) have significantly higher scores on all subscales than people without addiction (group 2). This suggests that addiction may be associated with a number of social and mental health problems, as well as criminal activity.

Table 2 presents the results of the study of the level of emotional intelligence among migrants.

Subscale	Group 1 (with addiction)	Group 2 (without addiction)	p-value (Wilcoxon signed-rank test)	p-value (Student's t-test)
Perception of emotions	45,2 (12,7)	54,3 (14,1)	<0,001	<0,001
Using emotions	38,4 (10,8)	49,2 (13,5)	<0,001	<0,001
Understanding emotions	32,1 (9,3)	41,7 (11,8)	<0,001	<0,001
Managing emotions	29,8 (8,5)	38,1 (10,9)	<0,001	<0,001

The table shows the mean values and standard deviations for the different subscales of emotional intelligence: perception of emotions, use of emotions, understanding of emotions, and management of emotions. The results show statistically significant differences between the groups for all subscales of emotional intelligence, as the p-value is less than 0,001 in all cases. This indicates that the differences in emotional intelligence between the two groups are probably not accidental.

The general trend indicates that migrants with addictions (Group 1) have lower scores on all subscales of

emotional intelligence compared to migrants without addictions (Group 2). This may indicate that the presence of addiction can negatively affect the development and use of emotional skills. Table 3 shows the results of the correlation analysis between EI and addictions of the respondents.

Subscale	Group 1 (with addiction)	Group 2 (without addiction)	p-value
MSCEIT: Perception of emotions - ASI: Drug use	-0,42	0,15	<0,001
MSCEIT: Using emotions - ASI: Alcohol	-0,38	0,08	<0,001
MSCEIT: Understanding emotions - ASI: Mental disorders	-0,35	0,02	<0,001
MSCEIT: Emotion management - ASI: Social Issues	-0,32	0,05	<0,001

This table presents the correlations between different subscales of emotional intelligence measured by the MSCEIT (Myers-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test) and the level of addiction measured by the ASI (Addiction Severity Index) for two groups of individuals: those with addiction (group 1) and those without addiction (group 2). The results of the analysis indicate a significant negative correlation between the level of addiction and various aspects of emotional intelligence for both groups. All p-values are less than 0,001, which indicates the statistical significance of the relationship. In particular, there is a negative correlation between drug use and emotion perception, between alcohol use and emotion use, between mental disorders and emotion understanding, and between social problems and emotion management. The results of the study demonstrate that a high level of EI helps to form resistance to addictions. Thus, the obtained results confirm the null hypothesis H_0 .

DISCUSSION

One of the fundamental characteristics of the socio-cultural adaptation of migrants is the adequacy of their response to the impact of the new environment: first of all, to significant changes in the external conditions of their life and internal psychological state. As they overcome difficulties and enter a different culture, this adequacy is also manifested in the “internal reorganisation” of the migrants adapting and in their conscious choice of models of social activity that are consistent with the requirements and conditions of the host environment.^(24,25)

The diversity of adaptation processes is also facilitated by their specific historical conditionality, dependence on a number of situational factors, such as the political and socio-economic situation in the home country of migrants or in the host country, the nature of the immigration and ethno-national policy of the authorities, the level of corruption and crime, etc. Until recently, the ideology and policy of multiculturalism has proved to be the most favourable. Ideally, it provides for:

- promotion (by the state and other social actors) of equal development of different ethnic cultures in one country;
- adaptation of social institutions to the needs of different ethno-cultural groups;
- overcoming structural discrimination on ethnic (ethno-cultural) grounds in all spheres of public life;
- ensuring equal opportunities in education, employment, social mobility, etc.⁽²⁶⁾

In the end, every citizen, regardless of ethnic or religious identity, should be guaranteed the opportunity for free and full social and cultural development. At the same time, the true effectiveness of migrants' adaptation implies not only the achievement of peaceful coexistence of different ethnic and cultural groups in one country, but also the intensification of intercultural integration and consolidated interethnic communication and interaction. Undoubtedly, the vast majority of adaptation subjects are various categories of migrants who have found themselves in a different socio-cultural environment: - Some ethnic groups are “brought” a new culture to the territory of their permanent residence (representatives of aboriginal peoples, irredentist groups);

- Some adapters take this path relatively voluntarily (immigrants);
- Others are forced to adapt (refugees, “displaced persons”, representatives of small indigenous peoples.⁽²⁷⁾

Taking into account the above, it should be emphasised that in such conditions, more and more migrants fall into various addictions. This happens against the background of stress and is caused by the desire to escape from objective reality.^(12,13)

After all, the nature of adaptation differs significantly between migrants (immigrants) who have left their homeland forever, visitors (missionaries, diplomats, entrepreneurs, students, contract specialists, etc.) who live in a foreign culture for a long time, and tourists, participants in business and scientific conferences, etc. who find themselves in an unusual environment for a short period of time. In this regard, a number of researchers divide socio-cultural adaptation into:

- short-term (it is believed to last up to two years and involves preserving one's ethno-cultural identity and simultaneously mastering a new language, acquiring primary social ties in another culture);
- long-term (requiring significantly greater involvement and social activity of adaptation subjects after two years of residence).⁽¹⁷⁾

The dual nature of socio-psychological adaptation deserves special attention, as it manifests itself in various aspects. On the one hand, adaptation is a constant interaction of a person with the environment, the purpose of which is to meet the requirements of society. And it is in this context that it is important to pay attention to the importance of EI in the process of adaptation. On the other hand, adaptation is an independent system, the structure of which includes both personal characteristics and elements of the social environment. It should be noted that regardless of the authors' concept, adaptation is a characteristic feature of all living things and the reason why the body's adaptation to the factors of existence has long attracted people's attention. At the same time, young people face the need to use all three forms of adaptation identified in psychology: formal, social and didactic.

Thus, in today's world, the problem of social and psychological adaptation among young people is extremely relevant, due to the need to effectively meet the challenges of the surrounding reality in a constantly changing world,⁽²⁷⁾ which necessitates the development of reliable sources of social and psychological adaptation, in the development of the ability to establish interpersonal contacts, forecasting, the ability to predict the outcome of events, etc. Moreover, it should be noted that in this context, the development of emotional intelligence among students for practical purposes has already become an important competence, the formation of which is singled out as one of the priority tasks of education.⁽²⁸⁾

At the same time, the influence of emotions can be both positive and destructive. Therefore, a high level of emotional intelligence determines the ability to use it for the effectiveness of practical activities, the correct understanding of one's own desires, and allows one to build good relationships with a partner, achieve success in a career, and respond appropriately to negative situations. The overall level of emotional intelligence and its structural components may also determine the success of the learning process in general, despite the fact that the issue of an unambiguous positive impact is still debatable.^(29,30)

The study is of theoretical importance in the context of understanding the impact of emotional intelligence on the formation of addiction in forced migrants from Ukraine to the EU countries in the context of hostilities. The study allowed us to consider a number of mechanisms through which addictions and emotional intelligence are formed.⁽³¹⁾ The results obtained during the study are of great importance for further research. They are also of practical value in the field of social adaptation of migrants in EU countries.

The study demonstrated the practical value of the impact of emotional intelligence on the formation of addiction in forced migrants from Ukraine to the EU countries in the context of hostilities. It has provided a significant amount of data on the mechanisms of influence of various stress factors on the formation of addictions.⁽³²⁾ The data obtained can be useful for developing effective social adaptation programmes in times of hostilities. In addition, the results of the study can be used to develop appropriate strategies for social support and rehabilitation of victims of hostilities. The findings of the study may be of interest to researchers working in the field of social psychology, in particular in the context of migrant socialisation.

The study was subject to a number of limitations, including the following: the study was conducted within a specific timeframe, which limited the depth of the information analysis. In addition, there is a possibility that the answers provided by the respondents may not have been entirely accurate or biased. The identified limitations may affect the accuracy and reliability of the research results. In order to mitigate their impact, the study was conducted in accordance with all necessary scientific and ethical standards.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the relationship between emotional intelligence and addiction has been empirically confirmed. The relationship between EI and addiction is positive in the context of social adaptation, interpersonal communication, overcoming stress, and increasing resilience. The risks of a negative impact of addiction on social adaptation to new conditions during forced migration due to hostilities are shown.

The results obtained in the course of the review can be used to plan scientific research on emotional intelligence in the context of improving the adaptation of migrants to a new place of residence. The studied group of migrants is characterised by an average level of emotional intelligence and development of adaptive potential, which contributes to the formation of a satisfactory level of social and psychological adaptation to the new environment. It is important to note that developed intrapersonal emotional intelligence and its components directly affect the success of migrants' adaptation to new living conditions.

On the other hand, the level of development of interpersonal intelligence and its components does not have a significant impact on the process of adaptation, with the exception of communication skills, which play an important role in this process. However, it should also be noted that a high tendency to dependence against the background of a low level of emotional intelligence can complicate the process of adaptation to new conditions.

Prospects for the study are:

- 1) a clear conceptualisation of the phenomenon of “emotional intelligence”;
- 2) clarifying and explaining the nature of the relationship between emotional intelligence and addictions, taking into account the described methodological limitations;
- 3) focusing on the possibility of replicating already conducted research;
- 4) the legitimacy of disseminating the results obtained in society to develop psychological culture and improve the quality of life in times of hostilities

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