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**DEVELOPING CHILDREN OF MIGRANTS IN MOTIVATING  
ENVIRONMENTS OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS**

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*Abstract*

The relevance of the problem stated in the article stems from the fact that there is a substantial demand for preschool teachers capable of accommodating the needs of migrant children. The study of the organization of a motivating educational environment for the development of children's resilience which is aimed at solving the problem of providing a new format of the subject environment to the competence assigned by the Federal state educational standard (FSSES) has been carried out. The aim of the article is to present the results of the research project carried out in preschools in the Republic of Tatarstan focused on developing creating environment that develops resilience.

The main methods of studying this problem were observations and the application of ECERS rating scales. The main research question was: how a good educational environment of a preschool educational institution creates conditions for the development of resilience of migrant children. The research made it possible to identify the changes that should occur in kindergartens for developing resilience in migrant-children. To develop a migrant-child and create a motivating developing subject-spatial environment in a preschool educational institution, it is necessary to create a positive warm atmosphere. Educators should use the results of children's activities more in the educational environment and in the design children's works, as it promotes the formation of identity, adequate self-esteem, the mastering knowledge, and the development of resilience.

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**Keywords:** Development of children of preschool age, the development of migrant children, motivating educational subject-spatial environment, the ECERS rating scales.



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## **1. Introduction**

Over the past five years, the migration flow in the Republic of Tatarstan increased by 59%. According to the Department of the Federal migration service of Tatarstan, the Republic has a population of over 63 thousand foreigners. A large part of them – 71,4% – visitors from the CIS countries. According to the FMS, the citizens of Tajikistan – 45.4% – are in the first place. Then follows migrants from Uzbekistan – 27.7%. The people of Turkey are thirdly placed in the number of visitors to Tatarstan – 7.5%. 28,6% or 21 805 people are citizens of other foreign countries.

Children arrive to the Republic with adults. In the case of preschool children, the change of their usual environment – the mesosystem environment, leads to the inhibition of development. Migrant families experience anxiety associated with uncertain status, the change of culture, and the need to learn another language. These family problems affect the children: they become anxious, and feel a lack of understanding when spoken to in their non-native language. Thus, the degradation of cognitive mental processes is possible. In his article, Bushin writes: “In their discussions of migration processes within Europe, Bailey and Boyle (2002) and Kofman (2004) suggested that there is a need to examine the multiple intersections between ‘migration’ and ‘family’ (Bushin, 2009).

Kindergartens can reduce this problem by creating a motivating educational environment to develop resilience in migrant-children. Resilience means the child's ability to use their personal and social competence and resources successfully to resist difficult life circumstances and cope with critical events and risk factors. After the discovery of this phenomenon by the work of Werner and Smith in the 1980s, extensive research was conducted in the USA, the UK, New Zealand, Denmark, Sweden and Germany. Based on these studies, preventive health promotion programs (in a broad sense) have been developed and are being implemented in children (Bondareva et al., 2015).

Vanishstadal (2012) gave a definition of "resilience" as the ability of a person or a social system to build a normal, full life in difficult circumstances. This definition is given here in order to facilitate our work. It includes elements of various formulations proposed by scientists and practitioners. Prerequisites for the resilience development are laid in early childhood. Resilience is based on individual and social competences of the child and significantly depends on his social resources, especially from a stable emotional relationship with adults, from an open respectful style of parenting, from observed behaviors of adult role models, from the nature of the relationships with other children or experience gained in educational institutions. The development of resilience is aimed at enhancing the strengths of a child. The strength of resilience and its protective factors represents a new modern resource – a competence-based approach to child development. It gives a chance to overcome the old approaches and paves way for a successful transition to the Federal state educational standard for preschool educational institutions.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Migrant children attending preschool educational institutions of Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan, studying in a motivating developing subject-spatial environment, will develop resilience.

### **3. Research issues**

Finding out the conditions and educational environment of preschool educational institutions, and how it develops resilience, active and subjective position of the migrant child, mastering the cultural means in the process of educational activities, the manifestation of initiative, and the development of independence.

### **4. Purpose of the study**

To create subject-spatial environments that develop motivation and resilience of migrant-children, in preschool educational institutions in Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan.

### **5. Methods of research**

The ECERS rating scales ensure complexity of evaluation with 43 indicators and assess the availability of needed elements in the educational environment. This also helps us to know how these scales can be implemented by the child's initiative and their availability in the everyday activity of children. Each indicator is estimated on a seven-point scale. One point means an unsatisfactory assessment of the environment, fraught with danger to the health and development of children. Three points mean that the quality of this indicator corresponds to minimum requirements (for example, the availability of motivational elements in the environs - blocks, materials for art activity, equipment for large motor skills, etc.). Five points are set when the educational environment is saturated (that is, for example, blocks, equipment, toys are enough for every child in the group to be involved in a game of their choice), available. Accessibility means that most of the equipment are in open access that children have enough time to use it at their own choice and at their own initiative. Seven points mean that the educational environment is very saturated and accessible, and that is very much oriented towards supporting the child's individuality. The reliability of scales is achieved since the evaluation concepts "sufficient", "for a significant part of the day", "saturated" are clearly defined and described in each case through specific indicators. This extremely important circumstance makes the ECERS tool quite suitable for use in preschool education in Russia as this approach fully meets the requirements of the Federal state educational standard for preschool education, which places the development of the child at the center of the educational process in kindergartens. Such an evolving model of preschool education is oriented towards the self-realization of the child and is based on age, individual abilities and interests of children (Traiandafyllidou, 2016).

10 preschool educational institutions in Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan participated in the scientific research. The results of this research helped to reveal the changes that should occur in kindergartens to enhance the resilience of migrant-children.

The interaction of teachers with children is often directive, teachers always use methods of maintaining discipline that are not connected with the use of punishments, body contact is rarely used for developing a warm relationship. Problems associated with lack of warmth were shown during various kinds of situations: teachers were not always welcome and respected by children, calling them by name, the teachers rarely maintained a casual conversation during meals with the children and didn't carry out

quiet reading or tactile contact to relax children before going to bed. For migrant-children such manifestations of warmth and acceptance by the adult are necessary for the emotional well-being of the children.

Another problem is the use of language for the development of migrant children. Educators in their activities use reproductive forms of work based on repetition and memorization. Communication is more often used for management than for conversations. Teachers rarely join in the children's game, develop children's ideas, or ask open-ended questions. There were only few situations the adults were interested in the answers of the children and supported different versions of their answers. All of them did not stimulate the language development of migrant-children. In addition, the lack of a real dialogue in which the adult would be interested in the answers of children, affects the formation of self-esteem of children, reduces cognitive interest.

The scientific research discovered the problems in the environment of children's activity. For example, the lack of enough space for long periods of games (according to the demands of age) and for different game environments. It is a mistake for children to spend most of their time in the same playing ground. Thus, one cannot create a needed number of game zones to satisfy a proper development of children.

The developing subject-spatial environment is not sufficiently saturated for the organization of educational processes, considering the individual characteristics of migrant-children, and not able to provide support for independent initiatives and the opportunity to make choices. There are not enough building blocks for construction. Games with building blocks are the most important prerequisite for the development of spatial thinking and preparation for mathematics in the future. There is insufficient thematic variety of books in the kindergarten. You can rarely find books with stories about events, people, animals, nature, science, different cultures, especially the countries migrant children arrived from. There are not enough diverse materials for children's creativity (different kinds of paper, different colors, plasticine) as well as materials for relaxation (tables for playing with water and sand) which prevents children from choosing activities of interest and retiring to bully migrant-children if they become sad.

The developing subject-spatial environment is not sufficiently accessible for children. Pieces of furniture are not transformable and mobile, there is practically no furniture on wheels that allows to transform the environment in accordance to the interests of migrant-children. Materials and equipment (including materials for experimentation, measurement, calculations, and music lessons) are rarely available in children's open access, but are given out by teachers for the duration of their classes which prevents them from forming their ability to choose activities, and prevents the formation of arbitrariness and resilience.

The educational environment is not sufficiently focused on the individualization of education. Frontal forms of work with the whole group predominate over work in small groups. In part, this is due to the low saturation of the educational environment, the lack of stuffed game areas. There are not enough places in groups to create a warm cozy atmosphere – places equipped with pleasant soft furniture where you could lie down; places where a migrant child can stay alone for at least a short time, or cozy corners for reading. In the design of space, the works and photographs of children are not sufficiently represented, which is fundamentally important for the formation of cognitive activity and positive self-esteem for

migrant-children. In groups, work is predominantly modeled according to the teacher's, which negatively affects the formation of resilience, initiative, creativity and cognitive motivation.

During the day, children do not have enough conditions for the development of motor skills: to keep their balance, climb, play ball, or drive wheel toys with rudders and pedals. Sports halls are available for children several times a week, sports grounds are not always equipped on playgrounds. Each group walks only on its own territory. Pre-school educational institutions do not use bicycles and scooters on their walks. Migrant-children spend all day in kindergartens, and this restriction has a negative impact on the development of resilience.

The groups do not include toys, books and other materials that would open a social world for children in the diversity of different nationalities and cultural traditions, which is very important for migrant children who have come from other countries.

## **6. Conclusion**

The results of the study made it possible to formulate the following conclusions.

For the development of a migrant child and the creation of a motivating developing subject-spatial environment in the preschool educational institution, it is necessary to create a positive warm atmosphere, not only during learning but also in recess: eating, sleeping, farewells and meetings. We need a large representation of the results of children's activity in the educational environment. In the design of classrooms, children's works should be used more often as it promotes the formation of identity, adequate self-esteem, mastering knowledge, and the development of resilience. Children's works made according to their own design should prevail over other art works or creative works. It is important to make sure that children use the cultivated methods of action to implement their plan. Template handicrafts fetter the creative abilities of children, destroy cognitive motivation and do not contribute to the formation of adequate self-esteem, and the development of resilience. Spaces should be organized in such a way that the place of quiet games is separated from the area of mobile games can be carried out in longer times and in small groups; swapping places after an adequate amount of time. The amount of building blocks should be able to ensure the possibility of long and extended play for children. The places for rest and comfort and retiring corners (lodges, screens) should be created in each group. Migrant-children should have the opportunity to retire, get a rest in a soft corner, at least for a while if desired to relax from interaction in the group. There should be enough diverse materials that allow migrant-children to choose based on what interests them. During the day, there should be a sufficient amount of time when migrant-children can choose activities and partners at their own discretion. In the design of the space, individual works and photos of children and current significant events should be widely presented in the children's class room. It contributes to the development of autonomy in children. Rules of behavior in the group should be introduced with the participation of children, and not just a teacher authoritatively. In the group, there should be enough teaching aids and toys in free access for cognitive development, experimentation, mathematical assignments, art activity and modeling (sand, clay and water) and time for their proactive use. In communication, the educator should support the development of speech, asking open-ended questions, listening to migrant-children. The space should be equipped in such a way that stimulates the development of the play for children. It is important to effectively use the available space for it. There

should be game zones where the game can unfold for a long time – several days, weeks. The motivating developing subject-spatial environment must be sufficiently mobile and transformable so that there can be configurations and changes in accordance with the topic of relevance for children. There must be enough equipment and space for the development of a variety of motor skills, not only for walking and running. During the day, children should have enough opportunities to move: to skip, jump, etc.

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