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Letters from Brazil: Psychological Analysis of Migrant Children's Drawings and Phone Interviews with their Parents

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Abstract: According to various psychological studies, children's drawings can tell us more than we can ever imagine. They can tell us stories about their author's level of education, problems and knowledge gaps. According to the theory on the comparative multi-level picture analysis, drawings reveal the inner world of a child and can be used to improve educational practices to make them more personal. This research study analyses 157 drawings that Bulgarian migrant children that live and study in rural areas of Brazil sent to a researcher. Besides the comparative multi-level picture analysis approach the researcher applied various methods of picture analysis to investigate how the Bulgarian children experience the educational practices in Brazil. Additionally, the parents were interviewed via phone. They provided valuable information on their children's development and level of success in schools. The study is a very important contribution to the theory of analysis of drawings as well as to the intercultural education theory. Additionally, it has a high comparative value as it was carried in a cross-cultural environment and can be used as a reference for future research studies in this field.

Keywords: *Qualitative research, psychology of education, rural schools, migrant children, interculturalism.*

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Introduction

What is education? Education is painting that we draw in children's minds. It reflects what we put in children and they can on the other hand reveal what they have learned in different ways. They can tell us stories, or they can draw pictures. Previous research studies in the field of educational psychology revealed that analyzing children's drawings can be a very important source of information for everyone, including teachers, parents and of course children (Espinoza-Herold et al., 2017; Fernández, 2003).

Immigration from Bulgaria to Brazil started many decades ago. Currently, there are almost one hundred thousand Bulgarian people living and raising their children in Brazil. The majority of them reside in rural areas that are very difficult to access. This is the main reason why there is little to no research on these people. In my previous study, I travelled to Brazil along with my research team where we interviewed the children, their parents and the teachers (Matelova, 2020). The results were very interesting, and amazingly that the study received the support from Bulgarian investors who sponsored the second stage. During the second stage, the research team was supposed to travel to Brazil again, but as everybody knows the year 2020 changed all people's plans around the world and the trip to Brazil has been cancelled. Despite the limitations that the global situation puts on, the research must go on. I decided to carry a distant study and ask the children to draw pictures that will represent their current state of mind and talk about their school life, their experiences of communications with co-pupils, with parents or teachers, basically anything that has to do with education.

The research questions are:

What is the educational value of the children's drawings and what can they tell us about their current state of mind?

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What is the correlation between children's pictures and their everyday life as described by their parents?

What are the implications of the analysis of the drawings and how can they help to improve education in the rural areas of Brazil?

What support have the parents received from local communities and how do they evaluate local schools and teachers?

In order to answer these questions, a team of researchers was established. Two researchers are experts in children's psychology, one researcher specializes in visual art, one researcher focuses on the history of migration to Brazil and one researcher is a board member of the quality control center for rural education. The head of the team is Dr. Bojana Matelova - the author of this paper.

The paper includes several chapters: Literature review where the main theories will be presented in detail with a special focus on relevant studies in the field. Next, the methodology will be revealed. The findings chapter will be divided into several subcategories that will represent different stages and themes in the research study. Those findings will be thoroughly discussed in the discussion chapter. The conclusion will include final remarks, limitations, surprises and recommendations for more research in the field.

Literature Review

The theoretical ground of this article is twofold. It includes educational theories with a special focus on rural schools and teaching methods suitable for teaching a second language in rural areas. On the other hand, it includes comparative multi-level picture analysis that derives from psycholinguistic theory on children's development.

The educational constructivist theory promotes active learning through class activities where children discuss topics with teachers and help each other (Danforth & Smith, 2005; Matelova & Ibrahimova, 2014; Maxim, 2010; Oldfather & West, 1999). Teachers are required to give lectures and take a position of power while helping children to achieve goals and transmitting required knowledge (Matelova & Ibrahimova, 2014). There is a model of active constructivist involvement in the learning process that has been developed by a Bulgarian scholar Helena Kapustina. She explained that the class interaction must start with a thorough presentation of a topic, followed by a series of exercises that focus on training newly acquired knowledge (Kapustina, 2002). On the next stage, children are required to discuss the topics and present their experiences and they have learned from the class interaction. On the next stage, children are expected to criticize knowledge and write an assignment where they explain their criticism (Kapustina, 2002). This learning model can be adapted to the languages learning theories that are also based on the active participation in the educational process and critical approach to the knowledge construction (Kapustina, 2002; Maxim, 2010; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Early language teaching theories emphasized the importance of written exercises, and the most significant element was pattern drills and learning the conjugation of verbs. However, the theory developed, and children were expected to take a more independent and active part in learning foreign languages (Thornton, 2005; Turchin & Lehmann, 2000; Walsh et al., 2010). More communicative approaches arose several decades ago where the main focus was on spoken language and interaction with teachers (Fernández, 2003; Hoppe, 1984; Paul, 1984). Moreover, home exercises as well as training with native language speakers were considered of significant importance. When it comes to teaching and learning in rural areas, of course rural schools and teachers don't have as many resources as their colleagues in the urban areas, that is why they are very limited in applying revolutionary approaches to developing literacy (Bristow, 1992; Danforth & Smith, 2005; Fratt, 2002; Smith, 2014). But many research studies confirmed that although children from rural areas were as educated as their peers in the cities. The main question is how they could have achieved this knowledge without proper educational training. The answer is hidden in children's homes and their parents' minds, some studies on the parents' involvement in the education process revealed interesting results, namely, that the parents were generally very motivated and were determined to help their children to develop and achieve better positions in the professional carrier that the parents themselves (Baty, 2000; Currie, 2000). Different studies in South America on education children in lower-secondary schools revealed that although teachers lacked resources, they were very passionate and provided children with the best available knowledge (Burbridge, 2001; Hoffman, 2017).

Teaching Portuguese as a second language is another aspect that we must consider for this study because the majority of participating children have Bulgarian as a first language and must learn Portuguese as their second language. As one parent revealed in the phone interview, without language we cannot be a part of the society and cannot equally contribute. Brazilian schools usually use a grammatical teaching approach to teaching Portuguese as a second language (García-Sánchez & Orellana, 2019; Guardado & Borges, 2011; Ramos, 2012). This approach implies the heavy emphasis on learning grammatical structures and achieving written fluency, while maybe less prioritizing the oral expressions. To counteract the hegemony of the written exercises and the grammatical approach, some theorists recommend doing activity tasks in the classes that mainly focus on grammar (Hoppe, 1984; Schmid, 2010). Activity tasks are developed with a special aim to help children who are learning a second language that is not spoken at home by their parents. The approach involves four stages, first the children must master a particular grammatical structure and practice written aspects, next children are expected construct sentences using this grammatical structure. On the third stage, they must

confirm with the teacher and reveal the gaps in the structures and the proposed sentences. Finally, on the last stage, the children are expected to practice the structures amongst peers and in the natural environment as well.

When it comes to the comparative multi-level picture analysis, the main theory is based on the postdoctoral research conducted by the Bulgarian children psychologist Alexandria Berova. According to the theory developed by Berova (2016), the analysis of the pictures must be conducted on several levels. The first level is understanding a visual composition of a picture and revealing the overboard meaning. The second level includes understanding the colors and questioning the parents whether children chose the colors themselves or they probably did not have access to all the colors that they wanted to use (Berova, 2016; Walker, 2012). If the children had access to all colors but still chose grey scale or dull colors the researcher needs to conduct an extra study with a trained psychologist to reveal the problems that might have triggered the particular color choice. However, if the child chose a bright color scheme, the research may proceed to the final level of analysis, namely revealing the underlying content and children's inner world (Berova, 2016). It is important to pay close attention to children's background and conduct interviews if possible, in order to reveal the connection that a child could unconsciously do in the drawing (Berova, 2016; Hambleton, 2001; Janes, 1991). This multilevel analysis is a complex approach that can help educators to reveal knowledge gaps and produce teaching methods suitable to various children. Several research studies reveal the importance of psychological studies for developing new teaching methods (Kapustina, 2002; Walker, 2012).

The theories presented in this chapter will be used to analyze the findings and draw conclusions as well as provide recommendations for further development and research that can potentially contribute to the additional buildout of the theory that this study has been grounded on.

Methodology

The research is a qualitative mix-method study that combines the analysis of children's drawings and the interviews with their parents via phone. Qualitative methods are the best way to research educational progress and to compare the results of the education with the educational goals set by the institutions. Qualitative research usually implies interviews or focus groups (Dicks, 2012; Jason & Glenwick, 2016; Weinberg, 2002). Without doubt, face-to-face interviews are a preferable condition (Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004; Weinberg, 2002), but in the times of global restrictions, this is not possible. The researchers decided to conduct phone interviews instead in order to investigate children's school progress. Phone interviews require special techniques that the research must acquire (Dicks, 2012; Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004). A special area of qualitative research is the analysis of drawings that the researchers used in this case.

Sample and Data Collection

The participants of the study were 157 Bulgarian children and 208 parents who live and reside in the rural areas of Brazil. They have been contacted directly by the leader of the research group and offered participation. The majority of the participants took part in the first stage of the study (Matelova, 2020) that has been carried under the umbrella research project that focuses on the adaptation of Bulgarian people to the Brazilian education.

The participating children's age was in the range 6 to 14 years at the time of the data collection. They all were full-time pupils at the local schools. Many of them are born and raised in Brazil. All children have Bulgarian parents and speak Bulgarian as their mother tongue. The vast majority of children speak Portuguese as a second language. However, around 10% of the children reported little to no knowledge of Portuguese. Many children also spoke indigenous languages native to the particular rural areas of Brazil. A small percentage had a basic knowledge of English and several could speak basic Spanish. Two families taught their children Arabic at home, hence the children coming from those families had a basic conversational knowledge of Arabic. All parents were born and raised in Bulgaria and moved to Brazil in their adulthood. All parents had Bulgarian as their native language. Many could speak Portuguese as a second language and about 30% had a basic knowledge of English. Several parents had a good knowledge of French, Ukrainian and Romanian languages.

The socio-economic statuses of the participating families varied a lot. Some families belong to the middle class and earned a considerable amount of money to support themselves and the children. While other families were rather poor. The majority of parents were employed in at least 50%-day jobs.

This relatively large sample size provides a great possibility of generalization of the findings that will lead to better recommendations for the development of rural educational institutions. All the parents wished that they could meet the researchers in person but as I explained above this was not possible. The children were given a task to paint pictures on a free topic. They could reflect on their life in Brazil, their families, schools or anything else related to their current life situation. Children were very optimistic and creative and sent drawings to the head of the research team within two weeks. All the drawings were sent via post and arrived at the Bulgarian research center in perfect conditions.

As this research study was partially funded by the Botanical research fund, that aims to study different types of algae from the remote areas of Brazil, the parents were kindly asked to collect additional samples of algae and ship it

together with the drawings. The majority of the parents participated in the first stage of the sample collection and knew the required procedures of the algae collection.

The research was carried according to all local and international laws regarding privacy protection. The names of the participants have never been shared with the third parties and their contact information is only available to the core members of the research group. In all publications, we use exclusively pseudonyms to keep their identity secret.

Analyzing of Data

The data were analyzed using a mixed-method approach (Dicks, 2012; Jason & Glenwick, 2016; Weinberg, 2002). At first, the interviews with the parents were transcribed and reviewed using qualitative analysis software to reveal some themes based on the word's choice. Later the transcriptions were carefully read and coded using the IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) method of coding interviews (Lalebowa, 2017; Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004; Weinberg, 2002). The distinctive feature of the IPA method is ideographic focus, i.e. it offers a deep insight into hermeneutics and people's experiences (Lalebowa, 2017; Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004). The interviews were analyzed using a full coding approach with data-derived codes (Dicks, 2012; Jason & Glenwick, 2016). This approach corresponds to the main principles of the IPA method, that puts great emphasis that the analysis should be 'bottom-up' rather than 'top-down'. IPA method helps to avoid any biases that could potentially arise when using grounded theory or electoral approach to coding. Two researchers belonging to the research team performed independent coding and created code-tables as well as superordinate themes that were later compared in order to reveal inconsistencies. On the final stage of the analysis, an international qualitative research specialist from the Czech University of Life Sciences was invited to review and verify the coding procedures. The reviewer issued a corroboration for the coding of the data that is available upon request at the archive facility at the University of National and World Economy in Sofia, Bulgaria. After coding was finished the interviews were deconstructed and the quotations were combined in the categories and the meshwork of themes that provided a sufficient basis for this paper. The drawings were analyzed using the comparative multi-level picture analysis described in the theoretical framework (Lalebowa, 2017; Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004). On the later stage of the analysis, the drawings were sent to an expert in children's psychology who reviewed the analysis and confirmed the findings. In the next chapter, the main themes are presented. They will be discussed in the following discussion section.

Findings

There were several unexpected findings in this project as well as some findings that may be comparable with earlier research studies in the field. The findings are organized into three categories. The first category presents positive findings that reveal what factors add to children's well-being and contribute to their educational development. The second category presents the challenges of being away from home living and learning in a foreign culture. The third category focuses on the advantage and limitations of homeschooling.

Sun is shining even in the darkest times

This chapter will mostly focus on finding correlations between children's pictures and their everyday life as described by their parents with the focus on positive aspects.

When it comes to the analysis of the children's drawings, 73% of them were judged optimistic. They included pictures of natures, children themselves, family members and even teachers.



Picture 1. Seven years old Bulgarian girl moved to Brazil with her parents when she was only three years old.

The above-presented picture is a great example of a positive drawing that will be analyzed here as an example. The picture is created using bright colors: green, red, yellow and pink. They represent the good emotional state of the child who drew it. If we go deeper on the next level of the analysis, we see that there are graphic representations of a child's old and new home. We can clearly see the map of South America which is Brazil's home continent with the child standing in the rural areas and proudly holding our Bulgarian National Flag. What makes this picture especially interesting is that the child wrote "I love you, Bojana" in Portuguese. The children were never asked to write anything,

this girl did it absolutely voluntarily. She chose Portuguese obviously because she has been schooled in Brazil, and this is the language that she is learning. This child participated in the earlier stage of the research and she personally met with the research group who helped her. Her devotion and love towards the leader of the research group are reflected in this simple drawing. Furthermore, this picture has elements that represent rich flora and fauna of Brazil: there is a bird, trees and grass – everything combined together in a beautiful representation of the child's new reality and emotional state.

The children's experiences with the educational process were mainly positive. The parents in their interviews revealed that the children were generally happy when the schools were open. They enjoyed learning new things and especially learning Portuguese as a second language. The teaching methods that parents described were very modern, the teachers were accessible and answered all questions as soon as they arose. One parent revealed, "Our local teachers are very open and friendly. They don't speak Bulgarian of course, but it is easy to communicate with them on everyday themes". The parents highlighted that although the language barrier was noticeable it was not a big challenge.

While the schools were closed due to the global restrictions, the children had to study at home. The teaching materials were provided by the schools, but parents were obliged to read for the children and make them follow learning plans. One parent said, "sometimes it is just overwhelming. I am in shock how many materials we got. Everything in Portuguese, it is crazy. I cannot understand everything let alone my children". This is an example of a parent that tried her best, but she could not support her daughters because she did not have enough linguistic resources to be able to understand and read the assignments. Later in the same interview the mother clarified, "Don't get me wrong. I am trying to help my girls. And I am sure that the schools are doing the best. I wish I just could speak to someone in Bulgarian" In this quotation we can clearly see that the parent understood the importance of being involved in the learning process. She tried to focus on positive elements and justify the schoolteachers' actions. However, language challenges shone through once again.

Away from home, away from the culture

Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the drawing and the experiences were positive there were also negative findings that we will see here. Some parents were very sad and unsatisfied with the current restrictions in society. As everybody knows, the year 2020 hit Brazil really hard and a lot of official organizations including school were temporarily closed. The parents found themselves in very difficult situations where they had to work, teach the children and fulfil normal daily obligations. One single mother of three children said, "I am so busy every single day. It is unbearable... I wake up every morning at six and go to bed long after midnight. In the morning I must cook food for the whole day then I have to work, when I finish working, I must teach my kids because they don't go to school anymore. Then we do home assignments. It is endless". The concerns of this mother are very understandable, and it was far from being one case. Another parent revealed, "I am on the edge. They want us to work, they want us to teach, they want us to take care of everything. It is much easier for local parents who have grandparents. They help them for sure. We don't have anyone". This is another great point is that the Bulgarian migrants often lacked a family network and could not rely on the help from grandparents, aunts or cousins. A father shared his experience, "The most difficult is to teach children Portuguese as a second language. I mean, my wife speaks Bulgarian only... I barely speak any Portuguese. How in the world am I supposed to teach them the language that I don't know myself? Nobody cares about it. They only give you books". This parent's concerns are very alarming because there are hundreds of families who have the same problems. The schools require to follow the central teaching plan, that has a very heavy emphasis on the Portuguese language, which is understandable and fair. But the creators of the teaching plan and the local schools don't take in the considerations that there is a significant number of migrants who cannot speak Portuguese on a high level, and they struggle at home providing their children with good lessons.

Some of the drawings that have been sent by the participating children were very alarming according to the opinion of the honorable expert in children psychology. These drawings were very dark and indicated signs of depression.



Picture 2. Nine years old Bulgarian girl moved to Brazil with her parents when she was five years old.

The above-presented picture is a good example of a negative drawing that shows how much the child misses her Bulgarian home that is left behind across the ocean. The color choice is very depressive and negative. The lines of the drawing are rather sharp. The researcher asked the parents whether this particular child had access to all the colors and the answer was positive. Despite the availability of all colors, she still chose a dark color scheme. Furthermore, the drawing has the inscription in Bulgarian that means I miss my home. The child has been schooled in Brazil for almost four years and relatively fluent in Portuguese too, however she chose her native Bulgarian language to express her feelings. Further interviews with her parents revealed that the child talks often about her childhood in Bulgaria and sometimes refuses to speak Portuguese even in the school with the teachers. This is clearly an indication of an early stage of depression. The child closed her feelings in the past and does not want to see positive elements in her everyday life. The psychologist on the research team offered a consultation to the parents and they happily accepted it.

Another example of negative experiences would be several interviews with parents who missed several cultural aspects of Bulgarian reality. They described that the restrictions and current situation even worsen their position in regard to the culture. As an example, they used the medieval Bulgarian harvesting festival which is very important for them. They used to celebrate it wearing traditional ceremonial gowns, singing ancient shanties and canzones and performing sacramental rites to celebrate the harvest. All these cultural activities require the participation of all community members. During this year none of this was possible and it was a huge strike on the Bulgarian peoples' well-being. Several families reported that they still celebrated the festival at homes with their children to keep the tradition alive.

Schooling at home – a convenience or a difficult task?

During this year all children were required to learn at home. The majority of parents mentioned that the children did not mind it and even enjoyed their time. They could play outside when the weather allowed, and they could study when they were interested. It was very convenient for them as they were not bothered by normal schools' restrictions. Homeschooling required less discipline from them, and the parents were not as strict as the teachers.

The parents on the hand reveal that it was a very difficult task. A couple of parents said in a phone interview, "We feel like teachers already. We split the subjects. I teach math and literature and my wife focuses on biology and Portuguese. The professional teachers and advisors call us very often to check if we need help, but it is still not enough. We need someone to help us". Those parents wished for better support from the school authorities. Normally the schools had zoom sessions with children to help them out, however it was only once per day and sometimes the connection was bad, and children did not hear well. An additional problem as that the children were in the home environment and their attention was not as focused as it would normally be in the school.

Some parents also described that this situation with homeschooling affected their professional carriers because during the day they had to work at home and also take care of their children. One single mother who has been working at the sewing business explained, "My main work is to sew garments and my salary depends on how many items I produce. When I was working at our local dressmaking and tailoring establishment it was easy, I had a whole day to sew, but now I must do it at home with kids right by my side. I can make only one garment per day at most in these conditions". The concerns of this mother are very understandable because she needs money to support her children, but if she will not do enough work, she won't be able to buy anything. This situation clearly presents the importance of mutual support and community support to migrant families, especially during the restrictions time.

Discussion

The findings indicated clear tendency that the majority of rural schools implement teaching methods that are in line with the constructivist theory where the main focus is put on active learning through class activities where children discuss topics with a teacher and help each other (Danforth & Smith, 2005; Matelova & Ibrahimova, 2014; Maxim, 2010; Oldfather & West, 1999). It is especially relevant when the Bulgarian children are independent learners and study at home during the lockdown. According to the findings, parents did not have enough time nor knowledge to teach their kids and thus they were left alone being independent pupils. The teachers encouraged them via zoom meetings, however that was clearly not enough. The researchers' suggestion is to increase zoom sessions and provide better support to the parents. The input in homeschooling environment is crucially important. Previous studies and theorists emphasize the importance of active parents' involvement in the assessment of the educational process (Cespedes et al., 2019; Colten, 2003; Cooper et al., 2016). This goes in line with ethnographic studies of children's adaptations to the new learning environment. On the other hand, the parents in the current study highlighted the lack of support from the local schools and communities. This problem has not been as widely discussed in the literature and seems to be in the gray area, because parents are generally expected to take the initiative in contacting the schools and asking for support (Murphy, 2013; Walker, 2012). However, the parents who participated in the current research have a migrant background and generally reluctant to initiate the contact due to the language barrier and this explains the lack of the initiative from their side.

When it comes to analyzing the findings through the lens of Kapustina (2002) 's model the first stage is relevant as the interaction usually started with a thorough presentation of a topic via zoom, followed by a series of exercises that focus on training newly acquired knowledge via pattern drills in the exercise books. The parents were generally very satisfied with this type of approach as their involvement was close to minimal. According to Kapustina's model children are also required to discuss the topics and present their experiences and they have learned from the class interaction. This was unfortunately not the case in the current circumstances as children did not have any room to discuss their findings let alone to present them because there were no teachers nor peers to present for. The next stage was however in accordance with the model and the children were given regular weekly assignments where they were encouraged to criticize knowledge that they received from the textbooks. Kapustina's model relates somehow to the ethnographic studies conducted in the field (Benson & Reinders, 2011; Castagno & McCarty, 2018; Kapustina, 2002). However, the ethnography generally puts focus on the behavior of the participants and is supposed to be carried through observations while Kapustina recommends diving into the data and rejecting the ethnographic aspects. The main significance is put on finding the hidden meanings that are considered more relevant especially when analyzing narrative data.

When it comes to learning Portuguese as a second language, active participation in the educational process was not possible to achieve as required by the theorists (Lansford et al., 2007; Maxim, 2010; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Communicative approaches where the main focus was on spoken language and interaction with teachers were lacking and according to earlier research in the field, it is a significant downside (Fernández, 2003; Hoppe, 1984; Paul, 1984). Moreover, home exercises as well as training with native language speakers was not possible as all interactions are currently restricted. The parents highlighted the problems related to the shortage of Portuguese as a second language learning materials developed for the pupils who have Bulgarian or other East European languages as native. This has been studied in the field before and previous studies put a focus on providing appropriate study materials that will not only train and expand the vocabulary but also give insight into the culture (Alonso, 2016; Lundell & Bartning, 2015).

The main problem that the parents described was their lacking knowledge of Portuguese as a second language. They could not help their children with home assignments despite them being very motivated in providing their children with the best education. This goes in line with the findings in the field that highlight the extreme importance of parents' involvement and support (Baty, 2000; Ho, 2013; Lansford et al., 2007; Walker, 2012). According to the parents' interviews, they acknowledge the effort that many teachers did. They mentioned regular calls to the parents and words of support. This is very much in line with previous studies conducted in schools in South America (Burbridge, 2001; Hoffman, 2017).

When it comes to the analysis of the children's drawings using multi-level picture analysis developed by the Bulgarian children psychologist Alexandria Berova, the findings were both unexpected and alarming. Drawings' analysis is a relatively old area of research and many studies point out the importance of multidimensional approach (Ayer, 2006; Eng & Hatfield, 2001). This is especially relevant in the case of bilingual children who are more prone to develop a two-folded understanding of the reality and often base their drawing on several aspects of the inner language development. According to the theory developed by Berova (2016), the analysis of the pictures is usually conducted on several levels. The first level is understanding a visual composition of a picture and revealing the overboard meaning. After performing the first level of analysis, it was clear that 73% of the drawings were positive and are painted by psychologically healthy children. However, up to 27% of the children did indeed have some problems. And if you think about it, 23% might not sound like a big number, but if one imagines his own child having this kind of problem it becomes clear even 1% might be too much. According to the theory, the researchers confirmed that the children had access to all colors that they wanted to use (Berova, 2016; Walker, 2012). However, many of them still chose grey scale or dull colors. This was a trigger to involve a child psychology specialist to take a closer look at these drawings. The findings confirmed that the children needed more professional help, and their cases were transferred to the school counsellors and school psychologist.

Overall, when considering parents' concerns of not being able to perform cultural rituals and organize cultural events for themselves and their children, it is important to understand that the current situation in the world put restrictions on all activities in the world. The parents were positive and found different ways to get the best out of the situations. Upholding own cultures and teaching heritage languages is considered of great significance by the theorists and researchers within the intercultural education field (Adams & Kirova, 2007; Bekerman & Kopelowitz, 2008; Lansford et al., 2007).

This research study shed more light on the lives of Bulgarian migrants and their children in Brazil. It is important to give everyone a voice and respect everyone's opinion. People can be powerful when they unite and respect different cultures and languages.

Conclusion

This study is a part of the umbrella research project that focuses on the adaptation of Bulgarian people to Brazilian education. The analysis of the drawings revealed that the majority of children live happy lives and do not experience

any psychological issues. The cases of children that showed signs of depression will be transferred to a local specialist and will be taken seriously.

The children's drawings have a high educational value, and they can clearly tell us about their state of mind and point psychological problems that some children might experience. The analysis based on the models suggested by Berova (2016) revealed the inner challenges and provided help to the children who were in the critical state. There was a clear correlation between the drawing and the parents' interviews. The analysis showed that in those families where parents were actively involved in the educational process children were more optimistic and positive. Contradictory, children from families with indifferent parents showed signs of depression and were generally below average when comes to the language development. The implications of this research are that the local communities and schools should be more careful when it comes to educating minority children and try to respond to any hints of inner depression or psychological problems. On the other hand, the findings highlighted that the parents were generally lacking support from the communities and felt powerless, as they did not have access to the communal services due to the language issues.

Limitations

The main limitation of the presented study was set by the current world situation and the restrictions that made it not possible to travel to Brazil and conduct the desired observations and interviews on location. Furthermore, the methodological limitation of the study is that it was carried in the narrow frame of the case-study, which makes it difficult to generalize the findings and apply them to a broader perspective. However, despite the limitations, the study provides valuable insight into the participants' backgrounds and life experiences.

Recommendations

The research group recommends that local schools and communities provide necessary help to the parents that do not have enough knowledge in Portuguese. The help can be offered in the forms of extra zoom lessons, phone calls or extra learning material preferably in heritage languages. Furthermore, the employers of the Bulgarian migrants must understand the pressure that has been put on those parents and provide them with flexibility and benefits. The research group also recommends more research in the rural schools of Brazil including minority children. A quantitative study involving both local children as well as migrants with a comparative model of analysis would be of an exceptional value. This project calls everyone for action and attention. Intercultural education is an important step towards equality and inclusion.

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