

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EMOTIONAL POTENTIAL IN THE CHILDREN'S TEAM

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ABSTRACT

The aim: To investigate the group psychological work influence on the children emotional intelligence development and the processes of psychological stability and cohesion in a sport team.

Materials and methods: We used the comprehensive diagnosis of the child's personality and status in the group (n=622). The main accent was made on the level of emotional intelligence (EQ) and sociometric status of the child. The main hypothesis: the higher the child's EQ level, the higher its sociometric status. The standard PASW Statistics method was used to process the statistics.

Results: Sociometric tests: 223 children had a low sociometric status (36%); 242 – satisfactory and within the norm limits (39%), 75 – above the average (12%), and only 81 had a high sociometric status (13%). The EQ level indicators (integrative level): 317 respondents had a low EQ level (51%); 218 – the average level (35%) and only 87 respondents had a high EI level (14%).

Conclusions: The hypothesis is confirmed. After the implementation of the author's program for adaptation and the child emotional intelligence development, we have results: Sociometric test: only 56 children have lower sociometric status (9%); 144 – satisfactory and average (23%); 223 – above average (36%) and 199 – high sociometric status (32%). EQ level (integrative level), we also have positive changes: only 111 respondents remained with a low level of emotional intelligence (18%); 386 developed the level of emotional intelligence to the average (62%) and 125 had a high level of emotional intelligence (20%).

KEY WORDS: emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationships, cohesion, mental health

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INTRODUCTION

Increased interest in the study various groups that perform joint activities in social, organizational, economic, sports psychology and work psychology nowadays. The urgency is [1- 8]:

- the fast changing forms of work organization based on the high economic interest and responsibility all members of the group;
- relative production-economic and organizational-managerial independence of labor collectives, which contributes to the self-organization development and self-government forms improvement;
- the team fitness issue is becoming more and more relevant.

The sport team is a small group united by the purpose, traditions, meanings and system of individuals' behavior. This is manifested especially brilliantly in the sports team because of the psychological characteristics of a team member, his status, the volitional component, etc. Interpersonal relationships may form a different psychological climate depending the formed group. We understand the more or less stable prevailing team mood under this notion. Each member takes part in shaping the psychological climate. Positive or negative team mood is induced from one person to another, determining the emotional mood, behavior, and efficiency.

The problem of optimizing the athletes' interactions in the team has a special place among the socio-psychological problems working with the group. The development of stable and adequate interpersonal relationships is one of the sports psychologist tasks. The intra-group relations development and the individual group members' emotional intelligence development helps to increase the effectiveness and coherence in the sports team. It is best to develop this in junior and children's teams.

Daniel Goleman believes that there are five compulsory components of emotional intelligence [1]:

Self-awareness. The ability to recognize and understand your own emotions is an important part of emotional intelligence.

Self-regulation or Self-management. Self-regulation implies the emotions expression in an adequate manner. Self-management skills relate to the emotions you feel at any given time or in any given circumstance and how well you manage them. Self-control is a fundamental part, but other aspects relate to what you do then: whether you behave in a way which is recognized as 'good' or 'virtuous' or not.

Communication skills or social skills. The ability to interact positively with other people. Here are some important social skills: active listening, verbal communication skills, non-verbal communication skills, leadership and ability to persuade.

Empathy. Empathy helps us to develop a stronger understanding of other people's situations.

Self-motivation. Self-motivation includes our personal drive to improve and achieve, commitment to our goals, initiative, or readiness to act on opportunities, and optimism and resilience. Self-motivation and personal time management are key skills in this area.

THE AIM

The aim is to highlight the problem of development and correction the child emotional intelligence by involving in temporary children's environment (the recreation program "Children's Camp "Zefir"). The work organization is based on the competent approach, taking into account the individual and socio-psychological peculiarities of the child development in accordance with age and carried out under the psychologist supervision. This approach deserves special attention due to the unique combination of socio-pedagogical and individual-psychological approach and 17-year experience working with children the heads of the program: the Ph.D. (psychological sciences) Tatiana I. Svatenkova and Ph.D. (social-pedagogical sciences) Alexander V.Svatenkov.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The special approach to the work organization with children is implemented within three years (2016-2019) on the base of the recreation program "Children's Camp" Zefir ". It is based on the harmonious combination of physical, psychological, creative, intellectual, emotional, social, individual methods influencing the child's personality development. During these years 622 children took part in the research, including 263 junior school age (6-10 years). Pre-trained psychologists and social workers who are selected during the year and receive special training in mentor courses worked with children. The diagnostic toolkit consists of the following techniques:

1. Sociometric survey [2].
2. Diagnosis of "emotional intelligence" (N. Hall) [3].
3. Methodology for diagnosing the aggressiveness level [4].
4. The child's self-esteem diagnostic method "Stages" [4].
5. The child emotional state diagnostic "Cactus" [4].
6. An integrated method for diagnosing the child's psychological characteristics "Constructive drawing of men from geometric shapes" [4].

The study was conducted with the parents written consent. An agreement on non-disclosure of children's personal data has been signed. We show only the general results of the study and the children age. Other data is encrypted.

STAGE FIRST

Psychological diagnostics. Psychological peculiarities research. It was the second day the children's stay in the team. We used the above tests.

STAGE TWO

Analytical. We selected each team appropriate psychological exercises and tasks corresponding to age for the psychological characteristics development. We compiled psychological and pedagogical recommendations for tutors how to work individually with each child and in group interaction.

STAGE THIRD

Forming. The tutors, together with the psychologist, organized special planed work throughout the stay period. We used training in teams, individual counseling, exercises on creativity development, cohesiveness, increasing communicative and emotional competence, mutual support – all important competences of the child.

STAGE FOUR

Control. Child's psychological characteristics diagnosis using the methods described above. We conduct it in the last day staying children in a temporary team. The results give us an opportunity to evaluate the quality of the work performed.

STAGE FIFTH

Analytical and correctional. Analyze the tests results and the work done. We adjust the further program working with children.

The basic method of diagnostics was sociometric testing. It gives an opportunity to show the sociometric status of each child in the team, the preferences and antipathies in group, identify leaders and outsiders. It is known that the level of emotional intelligence [1, 89] has a decisive influence on the level of human adaptability in a team and the quality of its social contacts [1, 90]. We used the PASW Statistics method to process and compare the results.

EXPERIENCE REPORT

The diagnosis results of the emotional intelligence level are the basis for individual approach to organize work with the child. Other methods provide information about the child's emotional state, the self-esteem level, abilities, orientation and overall child's personality development level. We gathered results working with different ages children for three years – 27 periods in the camp.

It is appropriate to reveal the results using sociometry and emotional intelligence (EQ) level diagnosis. The testing procedure took place at the beginning of work (on the 2nd day of arrival) and on the last day a child staying on rest (11 or 12 day). The first testing procedure results for three years (n=622):

1. Sociometric tests: 223 children had a low sociometric status (36%); 242 – satisfactory and within the norm limits (39%), 75 – above the average (12%), and only 81 had a high sociometric status (13%).

2. The EQ level indicators (integrative level): 317 respondents had a low EQ level (51%); 218 – the average level (35%) and only 87 respondents had a high EI level (14%).

The adaptation training program included the 5 EQ components development based on the model D. Holman. Self-awareness developed in the individual work with the child and through the children`s participation in forum theaters and psychodrama presentations. Develop and correct the child`s emotions self-control, self-motivation, empathy and expand the communication skills range easier in-group settings.

We provided specially created socio-psychological games for children (based on the game “Mafia”), which motivate children to control emotions, identify the emotional state of another. Children develop emotional intelligence, communicative competence, general intelligence and empathy using co-operations and interactions, observation, verbal and non-verbal means in communication.

The “Candle” is the children`s daily group dialogs – the day results. They have held in a comfortable, trusting form, which gives the opportunity to have heard and not convicted to anyone. The tutor manages the conversation process and motivates the emotion manifestation, teaches to recognize and identify their own emotions and express them in right way to be able to reveal abilities and talents in the group.

RESULTS

The optimal adaptation training program developing the children`s EQ level was formed on the basis diagnostic data. This program consists of 3 lessons – 9 hours in general (3 hours each) – spent in the first three days the child`s staying in a new team. Individual consultations with the psychologist and the optimal group work were based on the general group EQ level and the test results [5]. We have significant changes after the competence approach program implementation. The second testing procedure results for the three years:

1. Sociometric test: only 56 children have lower sociometric status (9%); 144 – satisfactory and average (23%); 223 – above average (36%) and 199 – high sociometric status (32%).
2. EQ level (integrative level), we also have positive changes: only 111 respondents remained with a low level of emotional intelligence (18%); 386 developed the level of emotional intelligence to the average (62%) and 125 had a high level of emotional intelligence (20%).

Imagine the results graphically.

The positive dynamics, confirmed by the three years results, helped to develop a training program for working with children during the year, the purpose is to harmonize the all child`s competences development. The “Alternative” training program consists of four main blocks, which have aimed at both self-knowledge and the acquisition the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities. In particular:

1. Self-knowledge and professional self-determination

This block gives knowledge about human – the nervous system, temperamental features, psychological qualities and character, memory, thinking, etc. This enable each participant not only to understand who he is, but also to clearly imagine who he wants to be in the future and how to do it.

2. Communication and self-presentation

The participants master the knowledge, skills and abilities in establishing interpersonal contact, finding mutual understanding, overcoming communication barriers, conflicts and ways their solution, etc. Participants learn self-presentation techniques in various social communities and groups, public speaking skills etc.

3. Leadership and organizational abilities

Knowledge about the leader`s functions, his personality traits, the group dynamics, the basis for the interaction in the group establishment, the group decisions development; analyze fears and obstacles on the way to leadership. They determine the current level of organizational skills, design and implement a program for their own self development.

4. Time and transpersonal life path perspectives [6]

This block devotes to the personal safe behavior development, familiarity with the gender roles peculiarities and the family relationships harmony. They learn to take responsibility for their own actions and words, think positively, structure their free time, plan their lives and engage in self-development.

DISCUSSION

Scientists recognized the role of emotional intelligence in our life and society by the long psychological research and experiments since the end of the twentieth century [7]. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, use, understand and manage emotions in a positive way to reduce stress, communicate effectively, identify empathy with others, and be able to respond to life challenges and conflict resolution.

The EQ developing group method for children – training – combines the group influence practice, the group relationships and imitation development, etc. The most effective is the child`s observation and attention development, the use art therapeutic methods, non-violent communication as a personal interaction direction and the effective form of correction the emotional and behavioral features, verbal therapy, respiratory practices and the empathy development through the creation a special communication atmosphere in group.

Helen Langer the professor of psychology at Harvard University, said that attentiveness is an active process of marking new things for the child [6, 398]. It helps to be in present and makes you to be more sensitive to contexts and perspectives. High EQ and attentiveness leads to the life fullness in its external and internal manifestations.

The emotional intelligence control assisted by the fact that the emotional intelligence itself becomes an intellectual ability to understand their own and others`

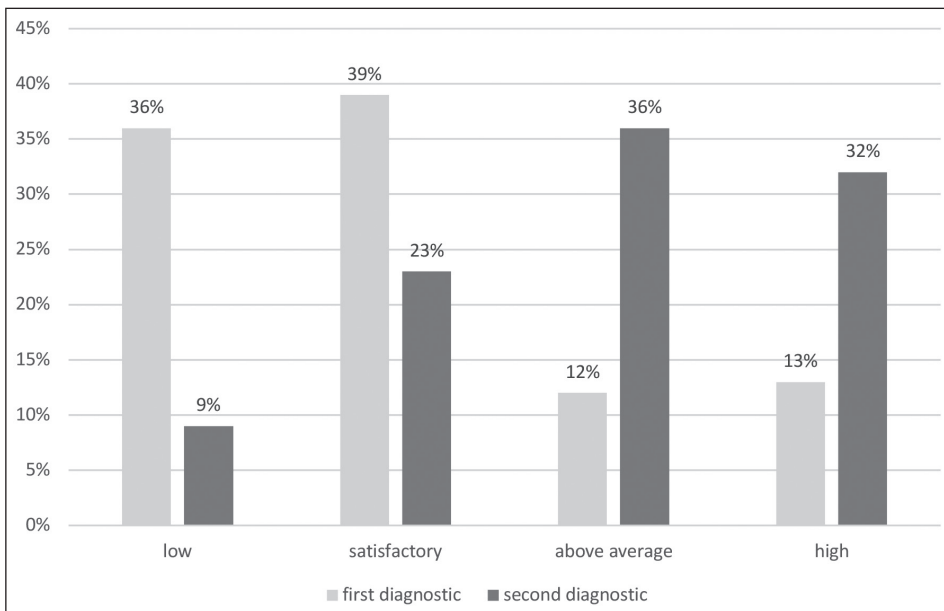


Fig. 1. Diagnosis of the child's social status

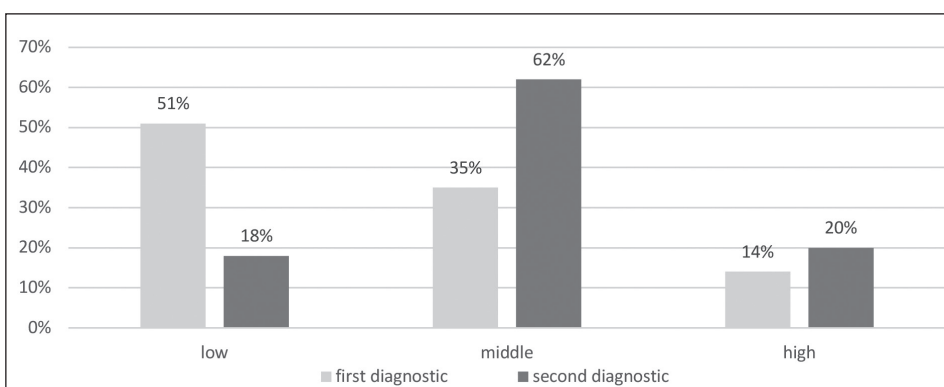


Fig. 2. Diagnosis of the level of emotional intelligence

feelings, to rely on others and build relationships with them on the basis of trust and empathy. Abilities and skills can develop through learning. The EQ can also be the ability to combine rational and emotional to move forward effectively.

The child's EQ plays an important role in the sports team unification and successful team is a consequence of the emotional development all group. The post-traumatic stress management issues, the sports team development dynamics, individual work with the players and the motivation for success formation remain open.

The EQ helps to regulate conflict situations in team, yet the practical psychologist work in the sport field is not limited only to the issue of group rallying [8].

The children's emotional intelligence development, along with the physical potential development through sports, helps to harmonize the right and left hemispheres activities of the brain [9]. This enables the child to be not only physically active, but also to develop as a person, improving the quality of mental health and the level of adaptation in society. A high mental health level, developed emotional intelligence, a high level of adaptation and motivation for personal development are the key to the child's potential successful realization.

LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTH OF THE STUDY

Our research was conducted within the strict timeframe and the summer period of children's rest. That is why it is important to say that the regular sports' psychologist work with a children team remains unexplored.

CONCLUSIONS

The several factors combination in working with children's junior sport teams are actual.

First: the preliminary systematic mentors' training according to the aim – harmonious combination of child's physical and psychological development – is very important.

Second: the socio-pedagogical and individual psychological approaches combination in working with a person and a team.

Third: the successful combination of different methods influencing the personality (group and individual) and the use of different forms and methods working with children; competent approach and use diagnostic methods in work.

Fourth: teaching through playing, using nature skills and desire to be the first, with nonviolent communication and according the psychological age period of a child – all

this help to be the very important trainer influencing the personality and group development.

All this allows us to record the results of our work, to respond promptly to the person's individual needs, his development peculiarities in the sport team, to develop dynamically and adjust the program in accordance with the time and features of the group requirements. This helps to keep in focus the individual harmonious development and to help each child on the path to self-realization.

It is important to take into account optimism in the practical psychologist work, his ability to feel emotions foremost well, desire to maintain a positive Self-image. Also important to be objective, responsible and demanding of themselves. Care should be taken on the harmony between what children want, what they claim (assessment, attitude, etc.), and their real actions, that is the meaning and way of life activity manifestation. The desire to change, to imitate, to learn is most clearly and emotionally only in child age. It is necessary to construct the practical psychologist's work so that this age requirement becomes a reality and became the basis for further transformation of it into a stable personality quality.

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Conflict of interest:

The Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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