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GENDER ASPECTS OF SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ADAPTATION STRATEGIES AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

Внаслідок військової агресії сусідньої ворожої держави багато українців були змушені залишити свої постійні місця проживання та переїхати у більш безпечні регіони України та за кордон, отримавши статус внутрішньо переміщених осіб (ВПО). Соціально-психологічна адаптація ВПО в нових умовах є однією з нагальних соціальних проблем України. Вимушене переміщення до нових, незвичних соціальних середовищ значно впливає на фізичний та психологічний стан осіб, їхні адаптивні можливості, соціалізацію та якість життя.

В статті стверджується, що одним з найважливіших аспектів соціально-психологічної адаптації є гендерна поведінка. Гендерні особливості адаптації відрізняються в залежності від домінування вираженості маскулітних або фемінінних рис характеру. Психологічна маскулітність значною мірою пов'язана з індивідуалізацією особистості, поступовим розвитком її незалежності від оточуючого середовища до автономності, від конформізму до вільного самовизначення. Психологічна фемінітність пов'язана з децентрацією особистості, тобто зміщенням мотиваційно-ціннісної домінанти з егоцентричних і групо-центричних прагнень на універсально-милосердні та альтруїстичні. Причому така децентрація базується на неусвідомлюваних процесах, виявляється безпосередньо в почуттях та бажаннях і не підлягає прямій вольовій регуляції.

Гендерні установки та стереотипи відіграють важливу роль у формуванні соціальних дій та поведінкових стратегій, що впливають на адаптивні здібності. У статті представлено дослідження гендерних аспектів соціально-психологічної адаптації ВПО з Херсонської області, які переїхали до Вінниці. Результати показують, що гендерні відмінності в адаптації суттєво впливають на психологічну та соціальну адаптацію до нових умов життя. Дослідження виявило дві основні стратегії адаптації серед ВПО: «прийняття відповідальності» та «позитивна переоцінка», вибір яких обумовлений гендерно-стереотипними відмінностями серед чоловіків і жінок ВПО.

Ключові слова: внутрішньо переміщені особи, гендерні відмінності, соціально-психологічна адаптація, маскулітність, фемінітність, стратегії адаптації.

Due to the military aggression by a neighboring hostile state, many Ukrainians have been forced to leave their permanent residences and relocate to safer regions of Ukraine and abroad, receiving the status of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The social and psychological adaptation of IDPs in their new environments is one of Ukraine's pressing social issues. Forced relocation to a new and unfamiliar social environment significantly impacts their physical and psychological well-being, affecting their adaptive capacities, socialization, and quality of life.

The article argues that one of the most important aspects of socio-psychological adaptation is gender behavior. Gender characteristics of adaptation differ depending on the dominance of the expression of masculine or feminine character traits. Psychological masculinity is largely associated with the individualization of the personality, the gradual development of its independence from the environment to autonomy, from conformism to free self-determination. Psychological femininity is associated with the decentration of the personality, that is, the shift of the motivational and value dominant from egocentric and group-centric aspirations to universally compassionate and altruistic ones. Moreover, such decentration is based on unconscious processes, is manifested directly in feelings and desires and is not subject to direct volitional regulation.

Gender-based attitudes and stereotypes play a crucial role in forming social actions and behavioral strategies that affect individuals' adaptive abilities. This article presents a study of gender aspects in the social and psychological adaptation of IDPs from the Kherson region who have relocated to Vinnytsia. The findings indicate that gender differences in adaptation significantly influence psychological and social adaptation to new living conditions. The study identifies two key adaptation strategies among IDPs: "acceptance of responsibility" and "positive reappraisal," with selection influenced by gender-based stereotypes among male and female IDPs.

Keywords: internally displaced persons, gender differences, social and psychological adaptation, masculinity, femininity, adaptation strategies.

Introduction

The situation of IDPs in Ukraine has created a pressing need to address various social issues to stabilize the situation and integrate these individuals into their new environments. Social and psychological adaptation is crucial for IDPs and requires urgent attention. The forced migration process imposes challenges on psychological resilience and adaptation to new social settings.

Literature Review

Active research in Ukraine has addressed the social and psychological support of IDPs during wartime. T. Tytarenko [1], from the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, focused on preventive psychological measures for IDPs, while Y. Pylypas from the "Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health" [2] studied social and psychological adaptation among families with children. I. Tsyrvovnykova explored the social and psychological transformations that displaced individuals undergo [3]. Various aspects of psychological strategies for social and psychological adaptation in the context of military conflict are explored in the research of Ukrainian scientists L. Korobka, V. Vasutynskyi, V. Vinkov, and others. [4]. Further work by Ukrainian sociologists Y. Mosaiev and A. Yurenko analyzed gender-specific adaptation among IDPs [5].

Methods

Adaptation of migrants to a new social environment is a complex process that requires the mobilization of all personal resources to find ways to live under new conditions. Social and psychological adaptation involves self-modification (attitudes, traits, character, behavioral stereotypes, etc.) in accordance with new activity requirements, social conditions, and a new environment. One aspect of social and psychological adaptation is gender behavior, which is shaped by the surrounding environment and reflects society's behavioral expectations for each gender.

Objective

The purpose of this article is to highlight the most critical gender differences in the social and psychological adaptation of IDPs.

To understand the gender-specific aspects of social and psychological adaptation among internally displaced persons (IDPs), a study was conducted at the "Bilozerkha Regional Development Center" (Bilozerkha, Kherson region) and the "Union of Displaced Persons 'Joint Case'" (Vinnytsia). The study was carried out from June to September 2024 with 80 participants (40 women and 40 men) aged 35 to 65. We aimed for an equal number of male and female respondents, all of whom held at least vocational education, were married, had been displaced for less than a year, were fluent in Ukrainian, were of working age, and belonged to the middle class.

The results showed that, for the majority of forced migrants, relocation to another region involved separation from family members, loss of friends, status, and employment, changes in quality of life, a crisis of values, social identity, and nostalgic feelings due to longing for familiar surroundings and life before the war.

Using Sandra Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) [6], we obtained data on gender-stereotyped differences among male and female IDPs. Masculine traits predominated in 39 respondents (48.8%),

including 13 women (33.3%) and 26 men (66.7%). Feminine traits were dominant in 29 respondents (36.5%), including 19 women (62.4%) and 10 men (37.6%). Furthermore, 12 respondents (14.7%) exhibited a balance of masculine and feminine traits, including 7 women (58.3%) and 5 men (41.7%).

Thus, masculine traits were predominant in most of the respondents in our sample.

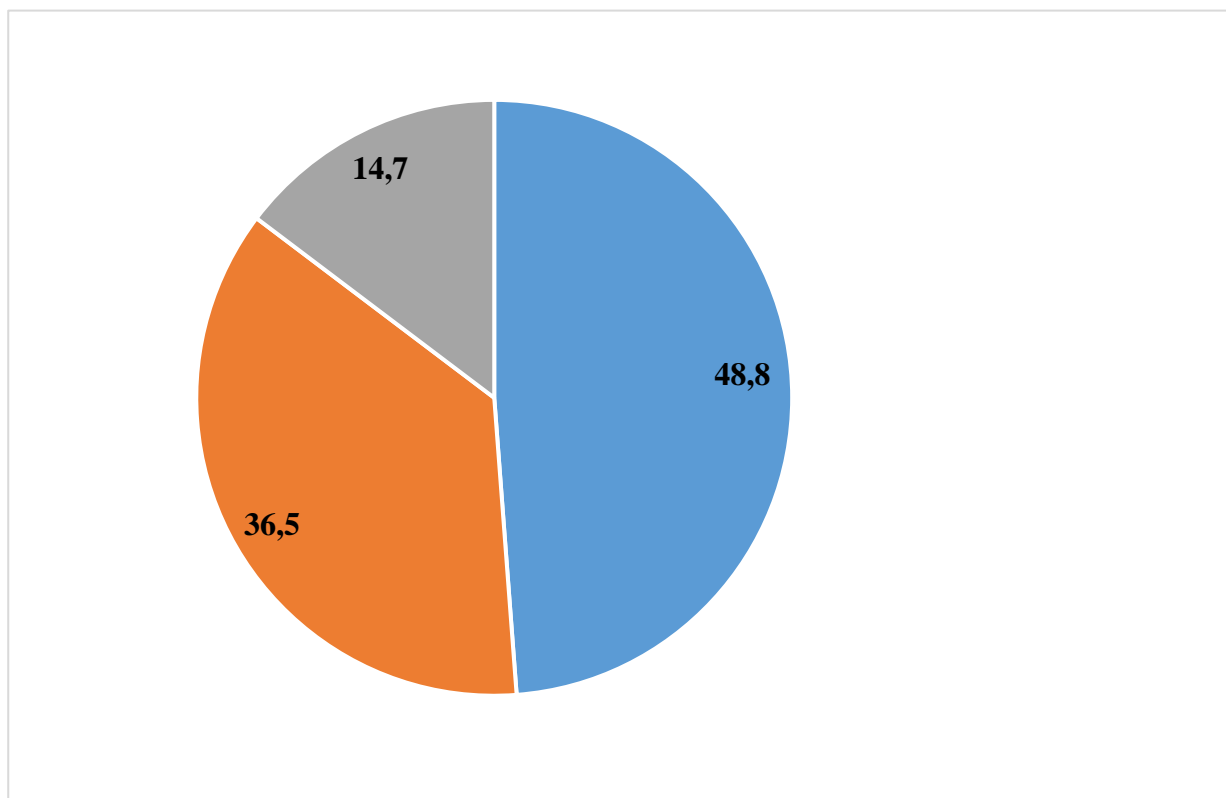


Figure 1. Gender-Stereotyped Differences in Social Adaptation Traits Among Male and Female IDPs

Masculinity: 48.8%

Femininity: 36.5%

Androgyny: 14.7%

Since the main assumption of the study is that gender affects adaptation, first of all we conducted a correlation analysis between masculine-feminine, masculine and feminine qualities and adaptation, since any gender is characterized by both feminine and masculine, but in different proportions. For this purpose, not only the integral indicator of adaptation was taken, but also its components: adaptability and maladaptability, in order to see in more detail the presence of interaction between these factors. This allowed us to determine the level of influence of gender on adaptation, and to find out a significant relationship between them. After calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient, low correlation coefficients of femininity with adaptability attract attention - from -0.03 to 0.05, which indicates that it does not affect the level of adaptation. On the other hand, we see high rates of positive correlation of masculinity with adaptability (0.42 and 0.59), that is, the more pronounced masculinity, the higher the level of adaptability. There is also a less significant negative correlation between maladaptability and masculinity: the lower the masculinity, the more pronounced maladaptability.

The average rates of androgyny in comparison with femininity are related, from our point of view, to the fact that masculinity is included in its composition. Therefore, the only factor, from a gender point of view, that really affects adaptability is masculinity.

In addition, the positive relationship between masculinity and self-perception (0.46) attracts attention. The more an internally displaced person accepts himself, the higher his masculinity (and, as a result, the better adaptation). On the other hand, we see the absence of a correlation with acceptance of others, which proves the irrelevance of this feminine trait for adaptation to a new place of residence. Carriers of feminine gender roles of the female sex are more dependent on the opinions of others, seek approval

from others, are more emotional and, at the same time, more vulnerable, that is, they are prone to anxious experiences. In contrast, female individuals with pronounced masculinity are distinguished by rationality of thinking and behavior, take responsibility, and often strive to occupy leading positions in various social groups.

The next trait that affects adaptation to a new place of residence is the desire for dominance, which is a masculine trait. The correlation coefficient is 0.48, which is quite high and positive. An internally displaced person who shows a desire for leadership and guidance in solving problems often solves personally important tasks at the expense of others, which accelerates the process of adaptation to the new social environment.

To analyze the correlations of gender characteristics with adaptation in internally displaced persons of male and female sex, we used the Pearson coefficient. The critical values of the correlation coefficients for different probabilities of permissible errors for a sample of a total number of 40 people are: 0.396 for $p \leq 0.05$; 0.505 for $p \leq 0.01$; 0.618 for $p \leq 0.001$. Having carried out the correlation analysis, we obtained positive significant correlations and we can conclude that adaptation is most influenced by such a gender stereotype as masculinity. (Table 1).

Table 1. Analysis of correlations of gender characteristics with adaptation in internally displaced persons of male and female sex

Gender stereotypes	Correlation indicator	Gender
Маскулінність.	0, 596*	Effect on male adaptation
Маскулінність.	0, 421**	Effect on female adaptation

Note: * $r = 0.596$, at $p \leq 0.05$; ** $r = 0.421$, at $p \leq 0.01$

Analysis of the results according to the "Five-factor questionnaire ("Big Five") P. Costa-R. McCray" is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of personal characteristics of male and female respondents according to the Five-factor questionnaire by P. Costa-R. McCray

№	Factors	Female respondents	Male respondents
1.	Neuroticism	45,4%	42,4%
2.	Extraversion	37,5%	55,8%
3.	Openness to experience	45,1%	40,2%
4.	Agreeableness	41,4%	46,8%
5.	Conscientiousness	47,8%	41,5%

As we can see, emotional stability is more pronounced in male respondents, which is an indicator of emotional restraint in situations of uncertainty. Also, high indicators in this group are for such a factor as the tendency to agree. People who are inclined to agree are more tolerant, tolerant of the interests and requests of others, they value group unity, peace and harmony between people. The most pronounced indicator in this group is extraversion, which characterizes male respondents as more sociable and open. Female respondents have higher indicators, compared to male respondents, for such factors as openness to new experience and are more friendly and conscientious in performing duties, compared to male respondents. The results obtained make it possible to apply the Student's t-test to establish differences by gender of respondents. The differences between the groups of subjects are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Analysis of the results of correlation analysis using the Five-Factor Questionnaire by P. Costa-R. McCray

№	Factor	masculinity	androgyny	femininity
1.	Emotional stability	0,57	0,45	-0,43
2.	Extraversion	0,61	0,36	0,03
3.	Agreeableness	0,53	0,36	0,02
4.	Conscientiousness	0,32	0,31	0,37

Note:** results with significance at $p \leq 0.01$: * results with significance at $p \leq 0.05$

Respondents with androgynous traits have an average positive correlation coefficient with emotional stability (0.33), which is not much more pronounced in respondents with masculine traits (0.47). Respondents with feminine traits, on the contrary, have an indirect relationship with emotional stability (-0.43). That is, the higher the emotional instability, the lower the ability to adapt to the new environment: an internally displaced person cannot control his emotions and impulsive drives, which manifests itself as a lack of sense of responsibility, escape from reality, capriciousness. The indicator 0.33 says the same thing, but emphasizes the direct connection: the more emotionally stable a person is, the more he exhibits masculine traits and adapts better.

The positive correlation of masculinity with the integral indicator of extraversion (0.61) is also high. According to scientific research, extraversion contributes to the experience of subjective well-being due to the ease of establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, and receiving pleasure from communication. A similar trend is confirmed by the high indicators of the positive correlation of masculinity with the tendency to agree (0.53). Thus, such a personal characteristic as a tendency to agree directly proportionally affects adaptation, through better relations with others, tolerance, tolerance for the interests and requests of others. Such individuals value group unity, peace and harmony between people. Thus, the belief of an internally displaced person that the possibility of adapting to a new place of residence depends on him, that he determines and builds his future life, establishing friendly relations with his environment, has a positive effect on the success of socio-psychological adaptation to a new place of residence. On the other hand, the indicator of conscientiousness has only an average bordering on low (0.32) direct relationship with masculinity, a greater one with femininity (0.33) and is most closely related to androgyny (0.41). Thus, the more a person is conscientious, responsible, obligatory and accurate in his affairs, the more successful the process of his adaptation is.

The impact of gender identification on adaptive capabilities and the choice of coping strategies suggests the future implementation of psychoprophylactic and psychocorrective measures aimed at expanding the repertoire of adaptive coping strategies, which will contribute to improving the socio-psychological adaptation of internally displaced persons of both sexes.

Discussion

The study identified two primary adaptation strategies: “acceptance of responsibility” and “positive reappraisal.” Androgynous respondents displayed a unique orientation toward responsibility compared to those with strictly masculine or feminine traits, suggesting that this strategy serves as a psychological defense mechanism in uncertain situations. In contrast, masculine and feminine individuals were more likely to avoid responsibility and use mechanisms like rationalization and humor to mitigate emotional engagement. The study suggests that IDPs with masculine or androgynous traits cope more effectively through cognitive reframing and diminished emotional involvement, while feminine traits appeared to hinder the use of these strategies.

Conclusion

In the formation of social actions and action strategies of a person, which affect the development of his adaptive capabilities, an important role is played by his subjective settings and numerous gender stereotypes. In our opinion, it is necessary to take into account the importance of gender-specific adaptation features, since gender determines the characteristics of behavior and reactions to circumstances.

Analysis of the main problems that IDPs face during adaptation to a new place of residence helped to select a set of psychodiagnostic methods, which was determined by the tasks of our master's thesis. The following methods were used in the experimental study: questionnaires, testing, correlation analysis and one-factor analysis of variance, mathematical methods of data processing.

Using the Sandra Behm Gender Role Questionnaire (BSRI), we obtained results on gender-stereotypical differences in male and female internally displaced persons. Next, we conducted a correlation analysis between masculine-feminine, masculine and feminine qualities and adaptation, since any gender is characterized by both feminine and masculine, but in different proportions. For this purpose, not only the integral indicator of adaptation was taken, but also its components: adaptability and maladaptability, which allowed us to determine the level of gender influence on adaptation and to find out a significant relationship between them. After calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient, we obtained low correlation coefficients of femininity, which indicates that it does not affect the level of adaptation and high indicators of positive correlation of masculinity with adaptability.

The high positive correlation of masculinity with integral indicators of “extraversion” and “agreeableness” is confirmed by the results of the analysis using the “Five-factor Questionnaire (“Big Five”) P. Costa-R. McCray” method. Such a personal characteristic as “propensity to agree” has a direct

proportional effect on adaptation, through better relationships with others, tolerance, tolerance for the interests and requests of others.

We obtained the results of the analysis of stabilizing factors that help maintain psychosocial adaptation in situations of uncertainty or stress using the “Coping Behavior Methods” method by R. Lazarus, S. Folkman. In order to identify the frequency of choosing coping strategies in difficult life situations, a comparative analysis was carried out in groups of respondents using the Kruskal-Wallis rank H-criterion, which compares the average indicators in three or more samples.

The “self-control” strategy, which has significant differences in terms of severity in respondents with masculine traits, is more adaptive than the “acceptance of responsibility” strategy, which has a significant difference in terms of severity in respondents with androgynous traits. The strategy of "positive reappraisal" is expressed in the group of respondents with androgynous properties and has a high level of expression in the group of respondents with masculine properties. Respondents with masculine and androgynous properties choose the strategy of overcoming negative experiences by subjectively reducing the significance of the problem situation, the degree of emotional involvement, by using intellectual methods of rationalization, switching attention, detachment, humor, devaluation, etc. The femininity of women and men, on the contrary, reduces their use of this strategy.

Thus, we found out. that the more pronounced masculinity, the more successful the adaptation to a new place of residence. Based on this, and taking into account the fact that androgyny has masculinity in its composition, we predict that the socio-psychological adaptation of some respondents in our sample will be influenced by such a gender property as femininity, which has low correlations with adaptation.

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