

TEACHER'S WORK UNDER CONSTANT STRESS IS A CURRENT TREND

Garmash Sergii Volodymyrovych

*Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages
National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute"
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-5471-379X*

The purpose of the article is to highlight problematic issues in the country's higher education system, namely, to analyze the situation that has developed in the higher education system in recent years, to trace the trends that have emerged in their dynamics, to identify the root causes and possible consequences of these trends. We are talking about the work of teachers in a constant state of stress, which is a negative trend today. The consequence of teachers working in such conditions is the emergence of a professional burnout syndrome, which may be a planned process of artificial reduction of the teaching staff. The assumption presented in the article is supported by examples of constant changes in the requirements for teachers in accordance with the Licensing Conditions for Educational Activities, which complicate their implementation. Several factors contributing to professional burnout of teachers were analyzed, namely: 1) lack of time to perform professional functions against the background of increasing volumes of work with documentation; 2) work overload, exceeding the norm of working hours; 3) low level of material motivation with significant volumes of work performed.

In an environment where the concept of "higher education standards" is being replaced by the concept of "standardization of higher education", attention should be paid to the widespread use of digital technologies in the field of education. It is announced that digital educational technologies are understood as the use of various electronic tools and software to improve the quality of learning and ensure access to knowledge for students and teachers. The article also attempted to draw attention to a new current trend – digitalization, which has both its advantages and disadvantages in education. This trend confidently entered the educational space with the COVID-19 pandemic and the spread of hostilities in the country. It is noted that the comprehensive digitalization of the educational process is gaining momentum, which can lead to unpredictable negative consequences for both the individual and society as a whole. While working on the article, the methods of observation and comparison, the method of expert assessments, the method of unity of analysis and synthesis, and the modeling method were used.

Key words: stressful state, burnout syndrome, lack of time, work overload, lack of motivation, interconnected processes, negative selection, digitalization of the educational process, negative consequences.

Гармаш С. В. РОБОТА ВИКЛАДАЧА В ПОСТІЙНОМУ СТРЕСІ ЯК ТРЕНД СЬОГОДЕННЯ

Метою статті є висвітлення проблемних моментів у системі вищої освіти країни, а саме – аналіз ситуації, яка склалася в системі вищої освіти за останні роки, простеження тенденцій, що намітилися в їхній динаміці, виявлення першопричин та можливих наслідків цих тенденцій. Ідеться про роботу викладачів у постійному стресовому стані, що є негативним трендом сьогодення. Наслідком роботи педагогів у таких умовах є виникнення синдрому професійного вигорання, що може бути спланованим процесом штучного скорочення викладацького складу. Наведене припущення в статті підкріплюється прикладами постійних змін у вимогах до викладачів відповідно до Ліцензійних умов провадження освітньої діяльності в сторону ускладнення їх виконання. Проаналізовано декілька чинників, які сприяють професійному вигоранню педагогів, а саме: 1) дефіцит часу для виконання професійних функцій на тлі збільшення обсягів роботи з документацією; 2) робочі перевантаження, перевищення норми тривалості робочого часу; 3) низький рівень матеріальної мотивації за значних обсягів виконуваної роботи.

В умовах, коли поняття «стандарт вищої освіти» підмінюється поняттям «стандартизація вищої освіти», варто звернути увагу на широке застосування цифрових технологій у сфері освіти. Анонсується, що під цифровими освітніми технологіями розуміють використання різноманітних електронних засобів та програмного забезпечення з метою покращення якості навчання й забезпечення доступу до знань здобувачам освіти та викладачам. У статті здійснено спробу привернути увагу до нового тренду сьогодення – до цифровізації, яка в освіті має як свої переваги, так і недоліки. Цей тренд впевнено увійшов в навчальний простір з пандемією COVID-19 та з поширенням бойових дій на території країни. Відмічається, що комплексна цифровізація навчального процесу набирає обертів, що може призвести до непередбачуваних негативних наслідків як для особистості, так і для суспільства загалом. Під час роботи над статтею використано методи спостереження та порівняння, метод експертних оцінок, метод єдності аналізу та синтезу, метод моделювання.

Ключові слова: стресовий стан, синдром професійного вигорання, дефіцит часу, робочі перевантаження, відсутність мотивації, взаємопов'язані процеси, негативна селекція, цифровізація навчального процесу, негативні наслідки.

Introduction. As a result of declaring that modern educational institutions provide educational services, there is a radical reorientation from educating a creative personality to a consumer with clip thinking, whose main achievement will be the ability to adapt only to guessing answers to tests. In the educational process itself, in educational institutions of the country at all levels, the first place goes to the official who redistributes financial flows in his own preferential interests.

"Today, new negative interrelated trends in the education system are being highlighted. There is a derationalization of knowledge against the backdrop of the decline of the education system at various levels" [1, p. 1244].

The process of primitivization of the masses is a consequence of those degradation processes that are artificially cultivated in the education system. "The concept of "higher school standard" has begun to be blurred by the concept of "higher school standardization". Bureaucracy from science is gaining momentum: artificial ratings are coming to the fore. The economic crisis has also begun to affect human relations. As for teachers, they are forced to spend most of their time on bureaucratic reporting, being under constant pressure from staff reductions" [1, p. 1244]. There is professional burnout among teachers. Could this be a planned process of artificially reducing the teaching staff? Let's try to analyze the situation to answer this question.

Materials and methods. During the work on the article, observation and comparison methods, the method of expert assessments, the method of unity of analysis and synthesis, and the modeling method were used.

The purpose of the study is to analyze the situation that has developed in the higher education system in recent years, trace the trends that have emerged in their dynamics, and identify the root causes and possible consequences of these trends.

It should be noted that the License Conditions for Educational Activities (resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 30.12.2015) were developed in accordance with the Laws of Ukraine "On Education", "On Higher Education", "On Professional Pre-Higher Education", "On Professional (Vocational and Technical) Education", "On Professional Development of Employees", "On Complete General Secondary Education", "On Preschool Education", "On Extracurricular Education" and "On Licensing of Types of Economic Activities" [2]. Constant changes that occur almost every year (tables of the qualitative composition of department's teachers) in accordance with licensing conditions obviously don't make the teacher's work easier, since the main emphasis in the educational process has long been placed not on the student and the teacher, as the main participants of the educational process, but on the official who regulates this very process.

"Today, there is a dangerous trend in higher education, when the concept of "higher education standard" is replaced by the concept of "standardization of higher education" [3, p. 17].

"The unification of the higher education system with the standards of Western countries in recent years has led to the appearance of a whole pile of unnecessary paperwork, which is increasingly filling the living space of a teacher. But this is unlikely to bother education officials, who focus their attention on artificial ratings and the redistribution of financial flows in this area" [4, p. 1457].

The work of teachers in a stressful state is becoming a negative trend today. The result of teachers working in a constant state of stress is the emergence of professional burnout syndrome.

Factors that contribute to professional burnout of teachers include:

- "lack of time to perform professional functions (work with students) against the background of an increase in the volume of work with documentation;
- work overload (a large number of students in groups, the need to quickly master new learning technologies), exceeding the norm of working hours;
- low level of material motivation (salaries, bonuses, allowances) with significant volumes of work performed;
- destabilizing organization of activities: unclear organization and planning of work, lack of equipment, poorly structured information;
- lack of prospects, limited opportunities for professional development and career advancement;
- "unhealthy" psychological microclimate in the team (blaming, gaslighting, mobbing, harassment, etc.), conflict vertically, in the "manager – subordinate" system, and horizontally, in the "colleague – colleague" system;
- lack of informal communication with colleagues outside of working hours (participation in joint trainings, excursions, active recreation in nature, etc.);
- lack of balance between work and personal life" [5].

These factors currently increase the degree of dissatisfaction of employees with working conditions and contribute to staff turnover.

Let's consider several of the above factors in real examples and their changes in the dynamics of interrelated processes.

Regarding the shortage of time to perform professional functions (work with students) against the background of an increase in the volume of work with documentation, let us pay attention to how

the requirements for a teacher (tables of qualitative composition of departments) have changed over time in accordance with the licensing conditions. According to these conditions, a teacher at a higher educational institution must have at least four points of compliance with the licensing conditions. Let's pay attention to the changes to clause 38 of these terms and conditions – Achievements in professional activity that are credited over the last five years (current license terms and draft license terms):

1. The presence of at least five publications in periodical scientific publications included in the list of professional publications of Ukraine, in scientometric databases, in particular Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection. The new draft License Terms propose to consider scientific articles by points, giving preference to periodical scientific publications indexed by scientometric databases Scopus and/or Web of Science Core Collection by quartiles, and propose to provide only one point for each publication in periodical scientific publications included in the list of professional publications of Ukraine of category B (total number of points – 5).

It should be reminded to education and science officials that the cost of publication in periodical scientific publications included in the list of professional publications of Ukraine of category B starts at UAH 1,300, and in periodical scientific publications included in scientometric databases, in particular Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection, varies widely. For example, the cost can be between 500 and 1500 euros per article in publications included in Scopus but not open access, and for open access publications the cost can be higher.

2. The presence of one patent for an invention or five declaratory patents for an invention or utility model, including secret ones, or the presence of at least five certificates of registration of copyright for a work. The new draft License Terms proposes the following option: the presence of a patent for an invention, including an international patent, or two or more patents for a utility model, or three or more copyright certificates for computer programs.

Registration of copyright for a work has been replaced by copyright for computer programs, which significantly narrows the ability to fulfill this condition, especially for teachers of general departments.

Clause 19 – Activities in the specialty in the form of participation in professional and/or public associations in the new project are proposed to be removed altogether, which, of course, increases the expenditure of time and other limited resources of the teacher to fulfill other clauses of the license conditions.

However, it should be noted that fulfilling the licensing conditions is a long-term and costly process that requires significant resource costs, including financial ones. This can be attributed to the second and third of the above-mentioned factors that contribute to professional burnout of teachers, namely:

- work overloads, exceeding the norm of working hours;
- low level of material motivation with significant amounts of work performed.

On this subject, we quote Golda Meir: "...If you want to build a country where its sons and daughters will return, if you want to build a country where they will only leave during the holiday season, if you want to build a country in which there will be no fear for the future, then take just two steps: 1. Equate corruption with treason, and corrupt people with traitors up to the seventh generation... 2. Make the three professions the most highly paid and respected. These are the military, teachers, and doctors..." [6].

It is obvious that the work of a teacher in our country is valued on a residual basis. For example, after paying all taxes, a university teacher without a degree receives UAH 10,500 per month (\$252 at the NBU rate), during the vacation period – UAH 8,000 (\$192 at the NBU rate) per month, which is equal to the minimum wage in Ukraine in 2025. At the same time, monthly utility costs for a one-room apartment plus services to an Internet provider and a mobile operator average UAH 2,500 during the heating season. It is known that food prices in Ukraine have reached the prices of eurozone countries, and for some products they even exceed them (for example, butter in Ukraine costs 25 % more than in Poland). This is only the minimum satisfaction of primary needs.

Regarding the accreditation of technical specialties, it seems that due to negative selection at all levels, the stupidity of officials has become limitless. There is an intensive process of degradation of managerial and intellectual thought in the conditions of a socio-economic catastrophe in the country. A new mandatory condition for a teacher of a general department who belongs to the category of staffing of a specialty is the presence of five scientific articles in this specialty. For example, in the spring semester, the author of the article taught the discipline "Foreign Language" to students of three institutes in more than 10 specialties; next year, the specialties may be different (specificities of the schedule at general departments). That is, a teacher must be the author of 50 articles in these specialties in order to satisfy the next "whims" of experts. Experts from the Ministry of Education and Science insist on scientific articles not according to the profile of the discipline being taught, but rather according to the profile of the specialties to whose students the general discipline is being taught, that is, articles not on pedagogy and psychology or the specifics of teaching a foreign language, but scientific articles on chemistry, energy, computer science, etc.

But, for example, according to the requirements of publications included in Scopus, authors of scientific articles must have higher specialized education in this specialty. This contradicts the requirements for staffing general departments of specialties that undergo accreditation, officials of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

Regarding the workload of the second half of the working day, changes are also taking place in this area – a general reduction in hours in calculations for evaluating various types of teacher work. For example, the total number of working hours for a teacher of the University should be 1,548 hours per year, of which 600 hours are classroom hours. In the Regulations on planning and accounting for the main types of work of scientific and pedagogical employees of NTU “KhPI”, 2019, the publication of a scientific article in a periodical scientific publication included in the list of professional publications of Ukraine (category B) was credited from 15 to 75 hours (depending on the number of pages). For publication in a foreign language, the workload norms are indicated with a coefficient of 1.5. In the 2024 Regulation, only 40 hours without any coefficients were taken into account for a similar type of work if the publication was made in a foreign language.

Another innovation is of particular concern to the teaching staff – the division of teachers into scientific and pedagogical workers and pedagogical workers. Currently, teachers of a higher educational institution belong to the category of scientific and pedagogical workers who combine educational, methodological, scientific and organizational activities. At the same time, it is planned to increase the classroom workload of pedagogical workers by 50 % without increasing their salaries.

Results. It should be noted that “...one of the techniques used by science and education functionaries to justify their rapid inaction in order to redistribute financial flows in their own favor is constant pressure on teachers. The goal of such pressure is to force direct participants of the educational process to adapt to radical, destructive changes in the system or simply leave this system. Constant changes in the requirements for compliance with the Licensing Conditions for Educational Activities, making it more difficult for teachers to fulfill these conditions, only confirm this trend, which will certainly negatively affect the development of the country in the future” [1, p. 1244].

It is also necessary to draw attention to a new trend – digitalization, which will certainly have consequences for the teaching staff. Digitalization in education has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it provides access to more educational resources, individualization of learning and development of digital skills. On the other hand, digitalization can deepen social inequality, require significant costs for equipment and training, and can lead to a decrease in the quality of education due to information overload and reduced motivation. It is obvious that digitalization will not bypass educational institutions, when the teaching profession will become redundant. It seems that this process is designed for the future against the background of the derationalization of knowledge in the decline of the education system. The purpose of this process is skillfully manipulating of young people who have clip thinking in the manipulator's own interests.

Conclusions. Summing up the research, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Teachers are constantly under artificial pressure, which is obviously aimed at bringing the teacher to professional burnout and forcing him/her to leave this system.
2. The concept of “higher education standard” is replaced by the concept of “standardization of higher education”, which contributes to the spread of such a phenomenon among students as procrastination and the spread of information stress.
3. The comprehensive digitalization of the educational process is gaining momentum, which can lead to unpredictable negative consequences for both the individual and the society as a whole.

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