

RESEARCH MOTIVATION OF PHD STUDENTS UNDER MARTIAL LAW: CHALLENGES AND WAYS OF IMPROVEMENT

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The article presents research results on exploring the impact of martial law on research motivation of PhD students of Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko majoring in specialty 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences. The study was conducted among the first-fourth year PhD students of the 2018-2021 years of admission and involved 22 participants. The results of conducted surveys, observations and interviews proved significant decrease in PhD students' motivation for research caused by war in Ukraine. These findings were confirmed by the annual report of postgraduate students at the meeting of the Chair of Pedagogy, which demonstrated a significant decrease in their research activity for the second half of the 2021-2022 academic year. The problems affecting research motivation were identified: emotional state deterioration; slow Internet connection; difficulties with research organization (lack of a computer, laptop; impossibility to engage in research work due to lack of necessary living conditions; lack of scientific events in which it would be possible to present the results of one's research; impossibility of conducting the experiment; destruction of archives; loss of collected material). The ways to improve PhD students' motivation for research are proposed: strengthening consulting, informational, psychological support for PhD students; involving psychological service in providing PhD students with psychological support; organization of scientific events for approbation of postgraduate students' research results and providing them with opportunities for creative self-realization; continuing the practice of holding scientific schools for PhD students; changing research topics and research supervisors and so on.

Key words: research motivation, PhD students, martial law, PhD training, 011 Educational, pedagogical sciences.

У статті наведено результати дослідження щодо вивчення впливу воєнного стану на мотивацію до дослідницької діяльності аспірантів Сумського державного педагогічного університету імені А.С. Макаренка за спеціальністю 011 Освітні, педагогічні науки. Дослідження охоплювало 22 аспірантів I–IV курсів 2018–2021 років вступу. Результати проведених опитувань, спостережень та інтерв'ю засвідчили суттєве зниження мотивації аспірантів до дослідницької діяльності, спричинене війною в країні. Ці висновки підтвердив річний звіт здобувачів освіти на засіданні кафедри педагогіки, який засвідчив значне зниження їх наукової активності за II півріччя 2021-2022 н.р. Виявлено проблеми, що впливають на мотивацію до дослідницької діяльності: погіршення емоційного стану; нестабільний Інтернет-зв'язок; труднощі з організацією наукового дослідження (відсутність комп'ютера, ноутбука; неможливість займатися дослідницькою роботою через відсутність необхідних побутових умов; відсутність наукових заходів, на яких можна було би представити результати свого дослідження; неможливість проведення експерименту; знищення архівів; втрата напрацьованого матеріалу). Запропоновано шляхи підвищення мотивації аспірантів до дослідницької діяльності: посилення консультаційної, інформаційної, психологічної підтримки аспірантів; залучення психологічної служби до надання їм психологічної підтримки; організація наукових заходів для апробації результатів наукових досліджень аспірантів та надання їм можливостей для творчої самореалізації, продовження практики проведення наукових шкіл для аспірантів, зміна тем досліджень та наукових керівників тощо.

Ключові слова: мотивація до дослідницької діяльності, аспіранти, воєнний стан, підготовка аспірантів, освітні, педагогічні науки.

Introduction. Military invasion of the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, in addition to the direct dramatic consequences – death of military and civilian citizens, destruction of houses and critical infrastructure, exacerbated problems in other areas of social life as well. One of such areas is professional training at higher education institutions at the first, second and third levels of higher education.

In the presented study we'd like to focus on the challenges of martial law for PhD training, in particular, its impact on the research motivation of PhD students of Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko, majoring in specialty 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences.

Note, that motivation for research activity involves stable interests (cognitive, professional, personal, social), positive attitude of a specialist to conducting research, and also reflects general orientation of an individual, his search-creative, research position, which leads to conviction in the professional and social significance of research activity and awareness of the need to take an active part in it. We distinguish three main aspects of motivation for research: professional (raising the general level of knowledge, forming a qualified specialist, enhancing training in the field of research); moral (participation in scientific events as a means of feeling the need and possibility of self-expression and self-realization); material (development of profit-making projects).

The issue of motivation is often addressed by Ukrainian and foreign researchers. At the same time, most studies are devoted to achievement motivation (Brunstein & Heckhausen 2008; Burmas, Boyko, Bekus, Kyryliv, 2016; Conley, 2012; Elliot, 2006; Kovalenko, Bobrova, Hancho, Zachepylo, 2020; Kozyr, 2020; Muenks, Yang, & Wigfield, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2000 et al.). Thus, Ryan & Deci (2000) offer innovative views on classic definitions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation through the prism of contemporary psychological theory. According to authors, "intrinsic motivation ... reflects the natural human propensity to learn and assimilate", while extrinsic motivation "varies considerably in its relative autonomy and thus can either reflect external control or true self-regulation" (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Muenks, Yang, & Wigfield (2018) considered an interrelation of the consistency of interests and perseverance of effort with future-oriented motivation in high school students, which includes such motivational variables as self-efficacy, task values, and goal orientations. In its turn, research motivation is less studied. Motivation for research and publication activity became the object of study of a group of researchers headed by Shahrom Md Zain (2011). Ebrahim et al. (2022) investigated the issue of researchers' motivation and its correlates during COVID-19 Pandemic in Arab Region. At the same time, the impact of martial law on research motivation of postgraduate students hasn't been considered yet, which determined the relevance of our work.

Method

Context

The study was conducted among the first-fourth year PhD students at Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko. The University trains PhD students in 12 specialties (011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences; 014 Secondary Education (Musical Art); 015 Professional Education; 016 Special Education; 017 Physical Culture and Sports; 025 Musical art; 032 History and Archeology; 051 Economics; 075 Marketing; 091 Biology; 281 Public management and administration) according to the educational-

scientific programs. At the beginning of the war (February 24, 2022), 111 PhD students studied at the university at all specialties. Consequently, the study involved PhD students of the 2018-2021 years of admission. The presented study of the PhD students' motivation for research is part of the larger study of the quality of PhD training at Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko in conditions of martial law and involves postgraduate students majoring in specialty 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences.

Participants

All PhD students were informed about the study before the survey. The study involved 22 full- and part-time postgraduate students of the first (7 persons), second (5 persons), third (7 persons) and fourth (3 persons) years of study. Gender and age distributions of survey participants are shown in tables 1,2.

Table 1

Gender distribution of survey participants

Year of study	First		Second		Third		Fourth	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Distribution	2	5	1	4	2	5	1	2

Table 2

Age distribution of survey participants

Year of study	First	Second	Third	Fourth
20-29 years	1	2	1	1
30-39 years	4	1	4	-
40-49 years	2	1	1	2
50-59 years		1	1	-

Between March 2022 and September 2022, we conducted observations, surveys and interviews. This study included 16 female (72.73 %) and 6 male (27.27 %) students, which is representative for the male/female distribution in the whole cohort. By age PhD students were distributed as follows: 20 to 29 years (22.72 %), 30 to 39 years (40.9 %), 40 to 49 years (27.27 %), 50 to 59 years (9.09 %).

Data collection

We developed a series of anonymous questionnaires using Google Forms, which included 10-15 questions each. We carried out observations and conducted interviews during lectures and seminars, individual consultations with supervisors, meetings with postgraduate students. The participation was voluntary. All participants gave their permission to processing the results.

Results. Before the start of the war, in January 2022, all postgraduate students majoring in specialty 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences were surveyed on the quality of educational services in this educational program. Detailed answers were given to the questions related to their motivation, in which postgraduate students shared their plans for a career of a researcher, teacher at a higher education institution. Most frequent answers were: writing a dissertation, articles, participating in scientific events. Many graduate students emphasized the aspect of personal growth and self-realization.

After February 24, 2022 everything has changed, because from the first day of the war, hostilities began in the city and region. Although the educational process was suspended, the guarantor of the program, the academic supervisors and the head of the

postgraduate and doctoral studies department maintained constant, almost daily contact with PhD students.

During the first months of the war, it was difficult to concentrate on research not only for postgraduate students, but also for teaching and research staff. Voluntary activities, provision of psychological support to those nearby, search for products and medicines came to the fore.

After the opening of the green corridors, some PhD students left the city, but most stayed at home. The survey conducted by postgraduate and doctoral studies department showed that graduate students moved to other communities of Sumy region, to other regions of Ukraine and abroad.

From April 4, the educational process at Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko was resumed in a distance format. Despite slow Internet connection, blackouts and constant danger, postgraduate students were happy to return to classes and actively began to complete assignments.

However, observation of postgraduate students during classes and individual consultations revealed a significant decrease in their desire to engage in research, which required more complex intellectual and creative efforts than simply completing educational tasks.

According to the results of the surveys, postgraduate students face such main problems during their studies:

- deterioration of the emotional state (86.36 %),
- slow Internet connection (77.27 %),
- difficulties with the organization of research (95.45 %).

Furthermore, difficulties with organization of research were associated with:

- lack of a computer, laptop (40.9 %),
- impossibility to engage in research work due to lack of necessary living conditions (59.09 %),
- lack of scientific events in which it would be possible to present the results of one's research (36.36 %),
- impossibility of conducting the experiment ("the experimental base is destroyed", "it is impossible to introduce and experimentally check research methodology", "it is impossible to create pedagogical conditions" and so on) (31.81 %),
- destruction of archives (22.72 %),
- loss of collected material (40.9 %).

Most graduate students who left Sumy reported that they had left their gadgets at home along with all their materials, which made their research activities much more difficult.

Accordingly, the results of surveys of postgraduate students during martial law, conducted in May-June 2022, showed a significant decrease in the respondents' motivation for research.

It should be emphasized that in the context of our study it goes mostly about intrinsic motivation of PhD students, whose needs changed during the martial law and moved to a lower level.

In addition to changes in needs and objective difficulties with organization of research, we can also note such factors that decrease motivation, as:

- fear of the future;
- loss of job (which is especially relevant for part-time PhD students, who combine work and postgraduate study);

- uncertain prospects for further employment;
 - loss of relevance of the topic of scientific research (both subjective and objective),
- etc.

Discussion. As survey results show, there was a decrease in motivation in all the aspects listed above – professional, moral and material. In addition, the results of the annual report of postgraduate students majoring in 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences at the meeting of the Chair of Pedagogy (June 2022) demonstrated a significant decrease in the research activity of PhD students for the second half of the 2021-2022 academic year, and confirmed survey results showing decrease in motivation for this activity.

Therefore, the guarantors and research supervisors faced a new challenge – the need to restore/increase motivation for scientific activity.

For this purpose, a number of measures have been already taken:

- strengthening of consulting, informational, psychological support for postgraduate students;

- involvement of psychological service specialists in providing higher education applicants with psychological support;

- organization of scientific events for approbation of postgraduate students' research results and providing them with opportunities for creative self-realization. In this context, it should be noted that all scientific events planned for the second semester of the 2021-2022 academic year were postponed to the next semester. Therefore, in the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year the Chair of Pedagogy of Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko held three scientific events: the Ukrainian scientific seminar "Pedagogy of Vasyl Sukhomlynskyi: dialogue with modernity", the International scientific-practical conference "Education for the 21st century: challenges, problems, prospects", the International scientific-practical conference for students and young scientists "European University: Image, Mobility and Social Perspectives", in which postgraduate students took an active part. At the end of December, the fourth event is planned – the International scientific-practical conference "Innovative development of higher education: global, European and national dimensions of change" (December 20-21, 2022). A change in the conference format, which provided for greater interactivity and the opportunity to express oneself during discussion platforms, contributed to the activation of PhD students' participation;

- the practice of holding scientific schools (winter, spring, summer and autumn schools) for postgraduate students was continued, while the choice of topics was made given the urgent needs of PhD applicants;

- the topics of research that had lost relevance were changed.

Analysis of an impact of undertaken measures on research activity of postgraduate students allows stating some intensification of their publication activity and increased participation in scientific events not only at Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko, but also in other institutions of Ukraine and abroad, and increase in the frequency of scientific consultations at the initiative of the student.

Conclusion. The results of the experimental study on the impact of martial law on research motivation of PhD students of Sumy State Pedagogical University named after A.S. Makarenko majoring in specialty 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences proved significant decrease in their motivation for research. The findings of surveys and observations were confirmed by the annual report of postgraduate students majoring in 011 Educational, Pedagogical Sciences at the meeting of the Chair of Pedagogy (June

2022), which demonstrated a significant decrease in the research activity of PhD students for the second half of the 2021-2022 academic year. The identified problems were discussed at the methodological seminars of the Chair of Pedagogy which resulted in determining the ways to overcome them in present conditions (martial law): strengthening consulting, informational, psychological support for PhD students; involving psychological service in providing PhD students with psychological support; organization of scientific events for approbation of postgraduate students' research results and providing them with opportunities for creative self-realization; continuing the practice of holding scientific schools for PhD students; changing research topics and research supervisors and so on.

Given the fact that war brings new and new challenges, which affect PhD training, our task is timely detection of problems and adequate response to them, which can become the subject of further scientific investigations.

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