

# **Contemporary Technologies and Society: Innovations, Artificial Intelligence, and Challenges**

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**CONTEMPORARY TECHNOLOGIES AND SOCIETY:  
INNOVATIONS, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE,  
AND CHALLENGES**

*Collective Scientific Monograph*

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### 3.5. PROFESSIONAL DEFORMATIONS AND FRUSTRATION OF TEACHERS AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM

The activity of specialists in the current conditions of socio-economic changes is characterized by high dynamism. First of all, this applies to specialists with a high mental load, which include socio-economic professions, because the object of their work is people. Society puts forward a long list of requirements for such professionals: a high level of professional training, endurance, ability to make quick decisions, empathy, etc. Such requirements make professional activity intense and exhausting. The result of long-term professional activity is fatigue, psychological burnout, and decreased performance. Negative changes in personality that occur under the influence of labor activity are called professional deformation. It is marked by modifications of individual psychological characteristics of a person (stereotypes of perception, value orientations, ways of communication and behavior, peculiarities of reaction and defense mechanisms) that occur under the influence of specific factors of professional activity. Professional deformation has a negative impact on both labor productivity and personal relationships in the professional sphere and personal life. It is most often manifested in "person-to-person" professions, which include the professional activity of a teacher.

A number of studies have been devoted to the issues of professional deformations of educators by domestic scientists. Thus, the determinants of professional deformations of the personality are highlighted in the article by I. Astremska (Astremska I.; 2018). The psychological characteristics of the teacher's personality are revealed in the studies of L. Dyachenko, A. Kiyan, O. Solodukhova, V. Chernobrovkin. The properties of pedagogical activity are presented in the scientific works of O. Sipchenko, I. Ostopolets. N. Afanasieva, N. Svitlychna, I. Ostopolets, I. Tabachnyk pay attention to the motives for choosing a teaching career (Afanasieva N., Svitlychna N., Ostopolets I., Tabachnyk I.; 2019) and others. The peculiarities of professional deformations of higher education teachers are discussed in the articles by O. Dubchak. O. Kosygina, research by N. Chepeleva, A. Khyzhnyak and others.

The phrase "professional deformation" was first used by H. Landerock in his work "Professionalism: A Study of Professional Deformation" (1915), which was published in the American Journal of Sociology. The author suggests that "prolonged performance of a certain profession creates in an individual a deformation of thinking processes and a deformation of a healthy assessment of the importance of one's activity in the overall work of the group to which this person belongs."

The term "professional deformation" was introduced into scientific circulation by P. Sorokin<sup>10</sup> (1921), denoting the negative impact of professional activity on a person. He foresaw the great deformative role of professional activity, so he organized the first sociological program to study occupational deformations. The careful development of the program and methods of studying professional groups contributed to the development of sociology's research on professional deformation of the individual and the search for ways to overcome it.

In a person's life, professional activity is one of the most important forms of life. Therefore, it is actively embodied in the specifics of a person's life strategy. It is not only an important component of a person's life, but also a means of shaping his or her personality and development. A special role in the effective performance of professional activities is played by job satisfaction and emotional well-being of a specialist. Any professional activity leaves an imprint on the personality. The current socio-economic conditions of professional activity are capable of forming socially significant traits in a person, promoting its harmonization and social adaptation. However, a number of scientific studies

show that there is also a negative impact of professional activity on a person. Changes in personality are caused by the organization, the conditions of the activity, develop over time, turn into stable psychological characteristics of the personality, and acquire the properties of professional deformation.

Let us consider the theoretical and methodological concepts of professional deformation of the personality in the modern scientific discourse. Traditionally, most researchers consider the problem of professional deformation in two aspects: activity and personality, focusing on personality deformation and deformation of activity or work behavior. In this case, deformation of behavior and activity are external manifestations of personality deformation. Modern Ukrainian scholars study professional deformation in the following ways: – inflexible professional adaptation of the individual to the needs of the professional environment in one way that does not contribute to the development of the subject of activity and the activity itself (Berezka S.; 2017); – as a result of disappointment in the profession, career crisis, loss of authority (Kyrylyshyn V. ; 2018), which are manifested in the simplification of views, template, stenciling, transfer of professional habits to the non-professional sphere (Kyrylyshyn V.; 2018); – as cognitive distortions, disorientation of the personality, which appears as a result of the pressure of internal and external factors of professional activity, contributes to the formation of a specific professional type of personality (Lichman S.; 2023).

There are various classifications of professional deformities. Here are some of them. V. Kyrylyshyn proposes to consider professional deformation at the following levels (Kyrylyshyn V.; 2018):

- cognitive – characterized by a change in a person's perceptions of the world around them, other people, and the ability to evaluate them on the basis of features related to professional activity;
- emotional level is characterized by changes in emotional reactions to standard professional situations (professional burnout syndrome, "compassionate fatigue");
- behavioral level is characterized by changes in forms and methods of interaction with others, transfer of professional communication techniques to situations unrelated to professional situations.

S. Berezka, based on the understanding of deformation in physics (elastic, plastic) and psychology, identifies the following types of personality deviations: reversible and irreversible, natural and artificial, partial and total deformation (Berezka S.; 2017. The most stable in this list are reversible and irreversible deformities. According to the psychologist, reversible deformities include all forms of deviations that disappear on their own over time or can be corrected if all deformed components of a person are restored. Irreversible deformities include all personality changes that do not disappear after the deforming factor and have irreversible consequences for the person. Natural deformities are characterized by changes in personality traits that are caused by the natural course of life and are inevitable.

Professional deformation is a dynamic process that has stages of formation and development, characterized by certain symptoms. At the first stage – the initial level of deformation – when an employee masters its professional activity, there are minor, externally unnoticeable, mostly quantitative changes in the personality. Professional deformity does not have a negative impact on the effectiveness of a person's professional activity. The second stage – the medium level of deformation – is characterized by significant quantitative and qualitative changes, accentuated features are hypertrophied, others are left to develop, the formation of sufficient professional experience is completed, professional interests take a significant place, self-esteem increases. The third stage – the deep level of deformation – is characterized by deformational changes in the whole personality, which depends on the professional sphere. Professional traits and official communication are transferred to extra-professional life. The employee assesses himself or herself as an unsurpassed professional, but with general well-being, failures occur that are associated with weakening internal control, overconfidence, loss of creativity in solving new problems and an appropriate attitude to his or her own

professional experience. The extreme degree of professional deformation is called professional degradation. In this case, there is a change in the value orientations of the individual. The stereotypes of professional activity change, the specialist begins to treat his or her duties formally, and is not interested in the effectiveness of his or her work. Professional deformation has the greatest impact on the personal characteristics of representatives of socio-economic professions.

Summarizing the work of researchers on the issue of professional deformations, A. Khyzhnyak in her study proposes the following structure of the specifics of occupational deformation of representatives of socio-economic professions (Khyzhnyak A.; 2018):

- professional deformation begins to manifest itself from the first days of professional activity. Thus, the behavior of the subject of activity gradually changes. Unlike other types of professions, occupational deformation begins much faster in representatives of the "person-to-person" type, lasts more dynamically, and has forms of manifestation specific to this group;
- what the professional activity of representatives of this type of professions is aimed at gradually becomes their personal manifestation;
- professional deformation of a person is manifested when he/she transfers professional role behavior to his/her personal life;
- professional deformation is manifested in the rudeness of the employee (aggressive attitude of the teacher to students).

As we can see, modern scientists interpret professional deformation of the personality in the psychological aspect as a change in individual psychological characteristics of the personality (stereotypes of perception, value orientations, ways of communication and behavior, peculiarities of reaction and defense mechanisms), which occurs under the influence of specific factors of professional activity.

Researchers define the phenomenon of professional deformation as "a complex process of gradual development of a specialist within the framework of professional activity, which is due to the general laws of formation and development of personality, peculiarities of pedagogical activity, individualization of the process of performing professional functions." (Chemodurova Y.; 2019) It is noted that the cause of professional deformation is the peculiarities, content, structure of professional activity, personal determinants, social factors, etc. It is determined that professional deformations are the most common phenomenon in the field of social professions, among which the pedagogical profession is characterized by greater psycho-emotional stress than others.

The study was conducted in April-June 2023 on the basis of the school №10 in the city of Sloviansk, Donetsk region, Ukraine. The study involved 40 teachers with different duration of service at the school. The testing was conducted online.

To obtain empirical information, the following psychodiagnostic methods were used: the methodology for diagnosing professional burnout by K. Maslach, S. Jackson, adapted by N. Vodopianova; V. Stolin's self-attitude test questionnaire; K. Zamfir's "Motivation of Professional Activity" methodology in the modification of A. Rean's work; S. Rosenweig's method of drawing frustration. Rosenzweig (modification of the SFTC "Situations of Frustration in Teacher Communication"), R. Cattell's 16PF questionnaire (the symptom complex of factors C – emotional stability/instability, H – timidity/bravery, O – self-confidence/anxiety, Q3 – low self-control/high self-control, Q4 – relaxation/frustration and tension was taken into account).

To determine the level of professional burnout, we used the Methodology for Diagnosing Professional Burnout by K. Maslach and S. Jackson. The results of the study indicate that 40.0% (8 people) who have been working for 15-20 years in a general education institution have a high level of "emotional exhaustion". For respondents who have been working for less than 5 years, this percentage is much lower – 10.0% (2 people). A high score on this scale is associated with depression,

apathy, high fatigue, and emotional devastation. Average levels of "emotional exhaustion" were diagnosed in 30.0% (6 people) of respondents who had been working for 15-20 years and 65.0% (13 people) who had been working for less than 5 years. They expressed feelings associated with emotional emptiness and fatigue that occurs when there is excessive stress, when a person's emotional resources are disturbed. Low scores were found in 25.0% (5 people) of the subjects with 15-20 years of work experience and 30.0% (6 people) of the respondents with less than 5 years of work experience. Such respondents have a lower emotional background, increased indifference, negativism, dissatisfaction with professional activities, and emotional stress. Emotional exhaustion is manifested in a lowered emotional tone, increased mental exhaustion, affective lability, indifference, inability to feel strong emotions, loss of interest in the environment, a feeling of overwork, and dissatisfaction with life.

An empirical study of teachers' self-attitude indicators based on the methodology of V. Stolin and S. Pantelev demonstrates the levels of expression of some of its indicators. In our sample, all scales are dominated by average scores that range from 10% to 65% for respondents with up to 5 years of work experience and 15-20 years of work experience. For our study, the scores on the "openness" and "internal conflict" scales are important, as they reflect the respondents' reflection. Let us consider these indicators in more detail. Openness. The percentages were distributed as follows: respondents with up to five years of work experience showed 65.0% of the average level of openness, 20.0% – a high level. Respondents with 15-20 years of work experience showed 30.0% of high level, 30.0% of medium level, and 40.0% of low level. This indicates that most respondents have an average level of reflexivity and self-awareness. On the other hand, respondents with 15-20 years of experience have a decreasing desire to be open and objectively realize their "I". A high level of indicators on this scale indicates the respondents' closeness and unwillingness to provide information about themselves. Among respondents with less than 5 years of teaching experience, a smaller number of respondents showed a low level of openness compared to their colleagues with 15-20 years of experience. The low level of indicators reflects the objective reflection and criticality of teachers. Respondents with less than 5 years of experience do not hide information from themselves and others, despite its importance. Given the results of the self-assessment survey, we can assume that not all respondents with 15-20 years of experience showed a tendency to answer the questions. Similar indicators were found on the "internal conflict" scale. The highest is the average level – 60.0% and 45.0% for teachers with up to 5 years of experience and 15-20 years of experience, respectively. High rates (35.0%) are found in respondents with 15-20 years of experience, which indicates the presence of internal conflicts, doubts, anxiety, and feelings of guilt in connection with the acquisition of greater professional and life experience. The average level indicators on these scales are within the normal range, which means that reflection and self-attitude of teachers with different work experience is at the average level and compares with the results of the previous methodology by K. Maslach, S. Jackson.

The empirical study of indicators of teachers' professional activity motivation by K. Zamfir's methodology (modified by A. Rean) demonstrates the levels of expression of some indicators. Among the seven scales of the methodology, the most important for us were the satisfaction from the process and the result of work, the possibility of full self-realization in this activity. As a result of testing, it was found that the following components of professional activity motivation are important for teachers: the need to achieve social prestige and respect from others (rank 1); the desire to avoid possible punishment or trouble (rank 2); satisfaction from the process and the result of work (rank 3). Such motives as monetary earnings and the need to achieve prestige and respect from colleagues are also important for teachers. This is quite fair, because in addition to realizing one's own ambitions, professional activity is a source of material security, social status and prestige, etc.

The results of the interviews with teachers showed that most teachers often experience frustration in situations of teaching (see Table 1).

*Table 1. Frequency of experiencing frustration by general education school teachers in the process of educational activity*

| Frequency of teachers' experiences of frustration (quantity) | Number of respondents | % share of respondents |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Every day                                                    | 20                    | 50                     |
| 2-4 times a week                                             | 18                    | 45                     |
| 2-4 times a month                                            | 2                     | 5                      |

Teacher's behavior is a set of actions, external manifestations of his/her mental states that directly affect the effectiveness of professional activity, and is an important factor in the success of the educational process. To study the peculiarities of teachers' behavior in frustrating situations of pedagogical activity, we used a modified version of the methodology of frustration reactions by S. Rosenzweig SFTC ("Situations of Frustration in Teacher Communication") modified by V.A. Chernobrovkina and V.M. Chernobrovkin.

As a result of the analysis of the actual data, we identified three groups of teachers depending on the leading strategy of solving complicated frustrating situations of pedagogical activity.

The first group includes teachers with the dominant type of response "fixation on the obstacle" according to the criteria described above. Such subjects make up 10% of the total number of respondents. Moreover, this group includes exclusively male teachers (according to the test results).

The second group consists of teachers with the dominant type of response "fixation on self-defense". There are 45% of such subjects, and this group includes both male and female teachers.

The third group includes teachers with a type of response that focuses on meeting the need. These subjects also account for 45% of the total number of respondents.

To summarize the study of teachers' responses to situations of frustration, we can draw the following conclusion. Since the most effective teachers are those with reactions of the "fixation on satisfying the need" type, the percentage of ineffective teachers according to our data is 55.0%. This is a rather high figure, and therefore we believe that the problem of frustration is relevant for teachers and requires detailed study both at the theoretical level and by practical psychology. After all, frustration can be fixed as a permanent personality trait and cause the emergence and development of teachers' professional frustrations. A correlation analysis of empirical research data has been conducted. It showed the absence of a significant correlation between non-accusatory reactions and self-defensive reactions, which indicates an insignificant frequency of this type of combination. Most often in the professional activity of teachers there are integrated complexes of external accusatory and self-accusatory reactions, responses of obstacle-dominant type, intra- and impunitive direction (I/OD and M/OD), as well as self-accusatory and resolving variants (I/NP) of compound reactions.

The correlation analysis also revealed the links between the direction and modality of teachers' frustration reactions and some personal characteristics and questionnaire data (age, length of service at school). It has been reliably established that with an increase in the pedagogical experience and passport age of teachers, the frequency of adequate reactions in situations of frustration increases, respectively, 0.29 and 0.32, but in young teachers (up to 5 years of experience in school) and those with a long work experience (more than 15-20 years), reactions with the modality of self-defense prevail (0.34 and 0.36). Extrapunitive reactions are more common among teachers with a tendency to leadership (0.32). Impunitive reactions occur more often when fixating on an obstacle (0.38), less often

when fixating on the satisfaction of a need (-0.34). Intrapunitive reactions occur significantly more often in connection with the satisfaction of needs (0.62).

Thus, we can conclude that among the wide range of personality traits studied, the age of the subjects, length of service at school, and dominance influence the direction and modality of behavioral reactions in situations of frustration.

**Conclusions.** The professional activity of teachers is characterized by special conditions, means of work, and focus on the subject of activity – students. At the same time, society places high professional, psychological, and personal demands on teachers, because the success of education, and ultimately the future of Ukraine, depends on their professionalism and competence, position and experience, and pedagogical skills. This requires a lot of internal and external effort from teachers, and constant improvement of their professional level. In such conditions, teaching becomes stressful and exhausting, which contributes to professional deformations. Our empirical research has shown that professional deformations are common among teachers with different lengths of service. This requires optimizing teacher work, developing psychoprophylactic measures, and implementing programs to overcome teacher frustration, which is one of the causes of the emergence and development of professional deformations.

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