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УСЛОВИЯ РАЗВИТИЯ ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКИ БЕЗОПАСНОЙ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЙ СРЕДЫ В НОВОЙ РЕАЛЬНОСТИ, ОБУСЛОВЛЕННОЙ COVID-19

***Аннотация:** в статье представлен анализ некоторых условий формирования безопасной образовательной среды в новой реальности, обусловленной COVID-19. Описаны современные подходы к организации образовательного процесса в европейских странах. Выявлены некоторые пути решения проблемы в изменившихся условиях в университетах Болгарии. Выведены факторы и условия, от которых зависит безопасная образовательная среда в будущем.*

***Ключевые слова:** здоровые условия труда, безопасные условия труда, безопасная психологическая среда, COVID-19.*

In recent years, the good environment, well-being and prosperity of the organization have been among the main factors in the selection of work. The stress that surrounds us, caused by the dynamics of modern life, is one of the serious factors that affect people's health and mental well-being. A person spends more time at work than in communicating with children, relatives. That is why well-being in the workplace is becoming increasingly important for life in an organization. The consequences of professional stress are associated with a deterioration in

the mental well-being of employees, respectively with an increase in morbidity and frequent mental problems, and with a decrease in individual efficiency and effectiveness in the workplace, frequent absences from work due to sick leave and ultimately billions of monetary losses to the economy.

According to research by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA) in the European Union, about 50–60% of lost working days are directly or indirectly related to stress.

In 2009, the European Public Opinion Survey on Health and Safety at Work was conducted using a comprehensive EU-wide survey. Interviews were conducted in the 27 EU Member States. 27,106 interviews were conducted (approximately 1,000 interviews per country. EU-OSHA (<https://osha.europa.eu/bg/facts-and-figures/european-opinion-polls-safety-and-health-work/european-opinion-poll-occupational-safety-and-health-2009>)) What do Europeans think about their working conditions? The poll provides current and reliable data on people's perception of their working environment, such as:

1. Deciding factors when looking for a new job.

In the first place the respondents from Bulgaria indicate the salary, and in the second place they indicate the safe working conditions. In Bulgaria, safe working conditions are important for 21% of respondents.

2. Work as cause for ill health.

In Bulgaria, people believe that the deteriorating health of people is due to work – 29%.

3. Development of safety and health at work.

Conditions for healthy and safe work have improved, 29% of respondents in Bulgaria think. And – 47% of respondents in Bulgaria think, that conditions safe work has worsened.

4. Impact of the economic crisis on working conditions.

The economic crisis may affect the deterioration of working conditions, believe – 15% of respondents from Bulgaria.

Simmson and Nelsson in «Savoring eustress while coping with distress: The holistic model of stress» (2019) assert that the proper way to advance the study of eustress is to avoid an exclusive focus on the positive and develop inclusive theoretical models that incorporate and extend our vast knowledge of negative causes, consequences, and outcomes: «To focus exclusively on the positive would send us down the same path that we now take such strong exception to with respect to the psychology of disease and dysfunction» [7].

At the beginning of 2020, all the inhabitants of the planet were subjected to the stress of the unknown caused by the COVID 19 pandemic, to work in an environment defined as the «new normal». The new reality paints a picture of the new landscape – an environment rich in opportunities for those who are pre-pared for them and stress for the unprepared. Globally, the landscape has changed in last years – new smart cities, smart homes, e-learning, we live in the era of e-services and the Internet. However, in order to be able to use these ser-vices effectively, people need to develop other, new skills – digital skills, work and communication in the Internet environment, the opportunity for better presentation, distance work and training, etc. Professionally, the «new normal» includes the disappearance of certain professions, but also the emergence of new ones or update.

Seligman is the Zellerbach Family Professor of Psychology in the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Psychology. Seligman worked with Christopher Peterson to create what they describe as a «positive» counterpart to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). While the DSM focuses on what can go wrong, Character Strengths and Virtues (2004) is designed to look at what can go right. In their research they looked across cultures and across millennia to attempt to distill a manageable list of virtues that have been highly valued from ancient China and India, through Greece and Rome, to contemporary Western cultures. Their list includes six character strengths: wisdom/knowledge, courage, humanity, justice, temperance, and transcendence. Each of these has three to five sub-entries; for instance, temperance includes forgiveness, humility, prudence, and

self-regulation [6]. The authors do not believe that there is a hierarchy for the six virtues; no one is more fundamental than or a precursor to the others.

We compare well-being, according to the definition of the World Health Organization, and stress according to the definition proposed by Lazarus and Folkman [5], the picture is as follows:

Table 1

Comparative analysis of the concepts of well-being and stress

WHO – definition of «well-being»	Martin Seligman [1]	Lazarus and Folkman – definition of «stress»
Well-being as a "state of well-being" in which the individual: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – realizes its own potential; – can cope with normal stress in life; – can work productively; – and contribute to the effective functioning of the community 	Human well-being consists of 5 elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – positive emotions – commitment – positive interactions – meaning – achievement 	Psychological stress arises in the individual's relationship with the environment, assessed as threatening his well-being and in which the requirements for him cause prevention or exceed the available resources to cope

During the social isolation caused by COVID-19 in Bulgaria, teachers in kindergartens, schools and universities responded quickly and adequately to the situation. In addition, they had to the technical challenges – to find appropriate equipment for distance learning, introduction and implementation of new soft-ware, maintaining the quality of education, maintaining the teacher-student relationship in online and distance learning. Teaching staff had to overcome their own stress, but also was responsible to minimize the stress in students and parents caused by the new learning conditions.

A sociological survey by Market Links presented by sociologist Dobromir Zhivkov (<https://news.bg/education/68-ot-uchitelite-sa-se-spravili-s-distantion-noto-obuchenie.html>) shows that:

- 68% of teachers did well in teaching material remotely during the crisis caused by COVID 19;
- 21% of the respondents indicated that the teachers did not do well with the teaching material, and 11% answered with «I don't know»;
- 55% of the respondents stated that they did not want more elements of

distance learning in Bulgaria, 31% agreed to have this type of training and 14% answered I do not know;

– 75% of the surveyed parents declare that distance learning is improving, 10% state that it is not improving, and 15% do not know;

– 91% of the respondents stated that they managed to provide their children with the necessary device and internet for distance learning, 5% did not succeed, and 4% of the respondents answered with: «I don't know».

– According to the survey, 63% of respondents say that they must to be more involved, 23% say they do not need to and 14% do not know.

The overall picture shows that Bulgarian teachers have successfully gone through a difficult period in which the education system switched to distance learning in an electronic environment in a few days in March. For their efforts they were awarded the «Worthy Bulgarians» award. «We as a society can rely on the Bulgarian teacher, but he must continue to rely on us. All professions are important, but teachers make sure that there are good specialists in all fields, that there are more worthy Bulgarians», said the Minister of Education and Science (<https://www.mon.bg/bg/news/4015>).

Following the two definitions and the condition of pedagogical staff in situation of world pandemic, caused by COVID-19, we can draw the following conclusions:

1. The connection on pedagogical staff with the traditional educational environment is broken. We can assess it as threatening his well-being because it requires prevention and exceeding the available resources to deal with stress and work.

2. The pedagogical staff must develop and realize their own potential for work in a new learning environment.

3. The pedagogical staff finds it difficult to cope with the normal stress in life – on the one hand they are worried about their own health and the health of their loved ones, on the other hand they are worried about the atypical work environment.

4. The pedagogical staff cannot work productively because they are in non-traditional conditions and are not prepared for them – lack of equipment, lack of training materials adapted for distance and online training, lack of preliminary training and test period for work in a new educational environment, lack of learning content suitable for distance learning.

5. The resilience of the teaching staff has contributed to the effective functioning of the community and created an opportunity for the learning process not to be interrupted.

In 2019, associated professor, doctor Yuri Yanakiev conducted a study on the diagnosis of Burnout syndrome in pedagogical specialists in Bulgaria. As the main reason for professional burnout of teachers Assoc. Prof. Yanakiev evaluates 15 potential sources: poor working conditions, insufficient resources, poor discipline of students, problems in communication with parents, lack of support and understanding from management and colleagues, dissatisfaction with remuneration, lack of autonomy and others. Associated professor Yanakiev identified that the two most significant sources of stress are changes in curricula and lack of support from colleagues [2].

In this context, it is good to pay attention to some of the factors that would affect the psychological safety of the educational environment. Teachers and students know the freedom and opportunities of the global world, realize their role in the cultural and civilizational chain-teacher-student. The teacher-student relationship is two-way and continuous. The teacher gives the roots and wings to his students, and the student motivates the teacher to develop, receive and transmit new knowledge. The learner of the new age realizes the need for identification – to be able to identify through their skills, through the art or science that he studies and that attracts him, through the ability to make choices, through the ability to make decisions. The learner must realize his belonging, together with his teacher, to the same academic environment, which knows freedom and works together for the development of human potential. The learner and the teacher are involved in

promoting human potential, supporting the gift and cultivating the talent. The learner must take responsibility for independently managing the process of their education.

Basic reequipment of teachers and students is needed in order to be able to carry out a new type of training. The re-equipment does not include clearing the «blackboards» from the universities and replacing them with computers, but means participation in a completely renewed scientific infrastructure, specialized equipment, high-tech machines, high-speed connection.

To follow the established standards for quality assurance of the European Higher Education Area (ESG) – research-based knowledge, innovative teaching methods, new curricula, measurable expected results, student-centered learning. Curricula must develop new models of research-based learning in which students will be at the center of the educational process. Curricula of the new type must include new content and not be electronically presented teaching materials from the last century. To include interdisciplinary knowledge and disciplines, to be presented to students in a new form – electronic, distance, to learn through videos, training courses, face-to-face and virtual work, practical tasks and courses, preparation of creative tasks and projects, teamwork and games.

Universities must teach in buildings and virtual spaces. Depending on the training courses, various new forms of education can be offered – combined form – real and virtual. For example, for bachelors – virtual, distance, online training for master's and doctoral students.

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**CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPING A PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE
EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE NEW REALITY,
CAUSED BY COVID-19**

***Abstract:** the article introduces an analysis of some conditions for development safe educational environment in the new reality, in relation with COVID-19. The modern approaches to the educational process in European countries are described. Some ways of solving the problem in the changed conditions in the universities of Bulgaria are revealed. Factors and conditions on which the safe educational environment in the future depends are derived.*

***Keywords:** healthy working conditions, safe working conditions, safe psychological environment, COVID-19.*