



EXPLORATION OF PEDAGOGICAL STAFF READINESS FOR PROFESSIONAL TRANSFORMATION: ANALYSIS OF SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE FOCUS GROUP (SOFG) STUDY RESULTS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In the face of contemporary challenges within the socio-social spheres globally, particularly within educational systems, the professional transformation of pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) staff is paramount. Therefore, this research explores this professional category's readiness for change, a significant relevance and impact topic.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The research design included a focus group survey to explore the views and experiences of educators on critical aspects of professional transformation. Focus group participants discussed motivation, skills, resources, and barriers in the context of implementing the New Ukrainian School (NUS) reform. The sample size was 718 people. The selection procedure involved forming groups comprised of individuals from diverse segments of the educational system, including primary and secondary school teachers. The focus group participants were selected based on the principle of strategic selection to ensure a diversity of opinions and experiences among educators at different levels. The focus group discussions were structured around open-ended inquiries and key themes, facilitating comprehensive responses and enriching the analysis with valuable insights. The results were analysed through thematic coding and grouping participants' responses by key aspects of professional transformation. Considering the focus group discussions, different views and experiences of educators were compared and analysed.



Findings: The study's results underscore a significant aspect of the research, indicating a high level of educators' motivation for change, readiness for self-improvement, and openness to embracing updated educational values. These findings hold the potential to impact the field of pedagogy significantly.

Research Limitation/Implications: It was noted that focus groups, as an effective method of scientific research, require clear objectives, identification of participants and moderators, development of guides and scenarios, testing of questions and scenarios, consideration of threats, and provision of accurate instructions.

Social Implication: This improves teachers' professional competence and mastery of modern pedagogical methods and technologies. The level of readiness of teaching staff for transformation can also have a positive impact on the development of the educational system, stimulating innovation and the improvement of curricula.

Practical Implication: This facilitates the development of professional development programmes that consider teachers' specific needs and provide them with the necessary skills and resources to implement innovations in the classroom successfully.

Originality/ Value: This study's novelty is that it confirms the assumptions about teachers' readiness for professional transformation, which have been clarified and supplemented by the central concept.

Keywords: *Pedagogic. readiness. stages. teacher. transformation*

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary educational reforms and dynamic societal changes necessitate continuous self-improvement and professional transformation among pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) staff. This involves updating knowledge and skills, profound personal and ideological changes, readiness for innovation, and non-standard approaches to work.

Previous research has emphasised the importance of professional transformation, especially in conditions of uncertainty and crisis caused by military events in Ukraine since 2014. Researcher Prosina (2023) first defined the concept of “professional transformation” in the article “Education reform: educators` professional transformation in the context of war and the post-war period”, but in subsequent scientific investigations, the scholar refined the interpretation and currently formulated it as follows: professional transformation is a dynamic process (or a state achieved as a result of this process) in which significant changes or transformations occur in the professional life of specialists or workers, leading to the acquisition of new skills, knowledge, approaches, and understanding the value of their professional mission. These changes integrate both personal changes of pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) staff and their achievements in professional activities, shaping the meaningful structure of the process of professional transformation of pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) staff (Prosina, 2023b). A conceptual framework (Prosina, 2023b) was developed based on analytical conclusions from the survey Prosina (2023a).



To investigate the problem further, particularly the experimental implementation of the author's synergistic technology of professional transformation (developed by Prosina), it was essential to discuss the survey results with an expert focus group. Methodologists and scientific-pedagogical staff from postgraduate pedagogical education (PPE) institutions participated in the focus group study. Why did we choose this particular category? Representatives of this institution conduct their observations, studying how pedagogical staff react to changes, from challenges faced by the postgraduate education system due to the COVID-19 pandemic to those related to military losses. Also, PPE institutions concentrate information on the progress of educational reforms in the New Ukrainian School (Klyasen et al., 2023a; 2023b). The study explores the readiness of professional-pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) staff transformation for professional transformation in crisis conditions and uncertainty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Amanda Williams and Larry Katz (2001), after examining various definitions of the concept of "focus group" by researchers, conclude that a focus group is a small gathering of individuals who share common interests or characteristics, assembled by a moderator who utilises the group and its interaction to gather information about a specific issue.

According to Morgan and Kreuger (1993), the primary purpose of conducting focus group research is to explore respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences, and responses in a way that would be difficult to obtain using other methods, such as observations, individual interviews, or surveys.

From the results of scientists' studies, we also understand that one of the main advantages of focus groups is their ability to demonstrate a variety of views and emotional reactions within the context of group dynamics, which provides a deeper understanding of the selected problem or issue. Compared to other research methods, such as individual interviews or observations, focus groups ensure greater efficiency in gathering information in a shorter period.

We share Morgan and Kreuger's opinion that despite the requirements for control and organization often associated with conducting focus groups, this method remains an important tool for researchers, especially in situations where it is necessary to study different points of view, group interaction dynamics, and the degree of consensus on a certain topic (Morgan & Kreuger, 1993).

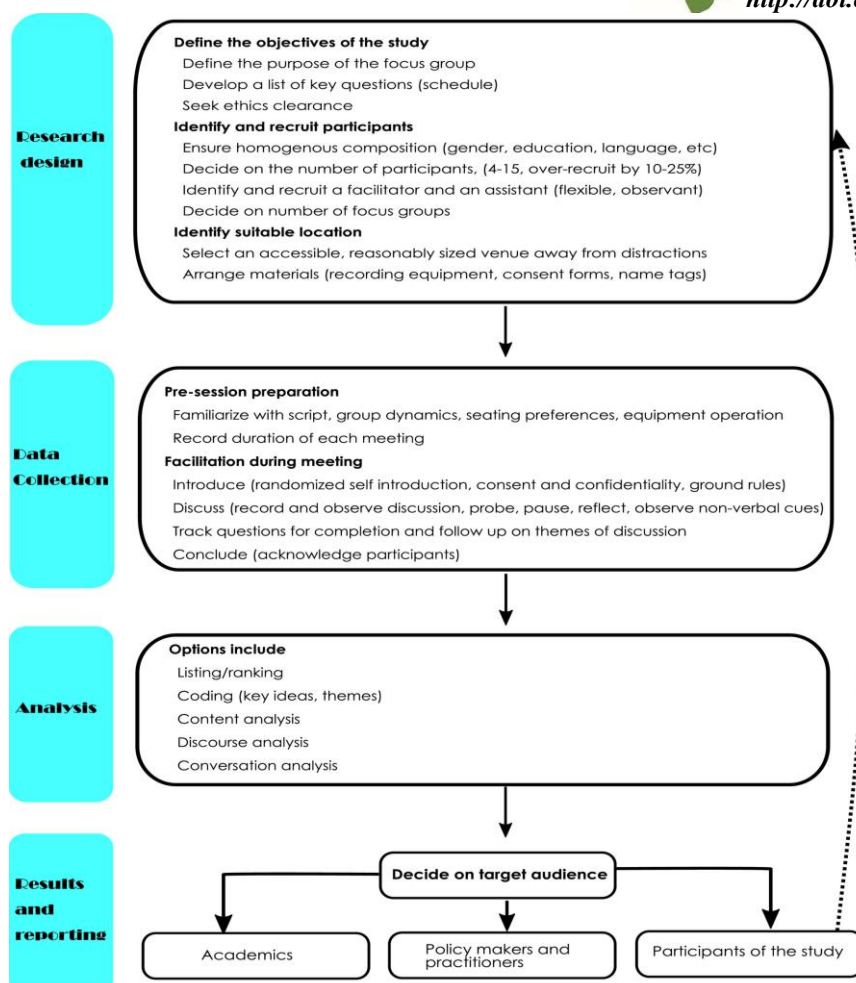


Figure 1: Flow chart of the focus group discussion technique steps
Source: Nyumba et al. (2018).

Steps in the focus group discussion.

The focus group discussion involves four main steps, as illustrated in Figure 1. Researcher Morgan (1998) outlined four main stages of the study: (1) research design, (2) data collection, (3) analysis, and (4) reporting of results.

The first stage – research design: *defining the research objectives* (identifying the purpose of the focus group; developing a list of critical questions; identifying specific participants); *the research* (identifying and engaging participants, ensuring homogeneous composition – gender, education, language, etc.); *design* (participants number determining – 4-15 or over-sampling by 10-25%, identifying and engaging a facilitator and assistant (flexible, observant); focus groups number determining; identifying suitable locations); *logistics* (selecting an available



venue of adequate size, away from distracting factors; preparing materials – recording equipment, consent forms, badges) (Sergeieva, 2023).

The second stage is preparation for the focus group: familiarise yourself with the group dynamics, assess differences, and prepare equipment. *Data collection*: Record the duration of each meeting. *Facilitation during the meeting*: introduction (random self-introduction, consent and confidentiality, ground rules); *discussion* (recording and observing the discussion, probing, pausing, reflection, observing non-verbal signals). *Tracking and execution*: Track questions to conclude the discussion topic. *Conclusion*: Summarize the findings (thank the participants).

The third stage is transcription (converting audio recordings into text, paying attention to non-verbal signals). Coding involves identifying key themes and concepts, developing a coding system for data categorisation, and using data analysis methods such as thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and quantitative analysis.

The fourth stage is *results and reporting*—After analyzing all the data, the researcher needs to consolidate the results into a coherent report for dissemination. Key decisions should be made to tailor the report according to the needs of the target audience. The report should include information about the participants' gender, age, and level of education.

The use of focus groups in the field of education.

In recent times, focus group interviews have become widely used, especially in education. Although they are typically associated with market research, they also prove to be beneficial for expanding opportunities in education. Considering the recent approaches to focus group methodology and examples of their successful application in scientific research and pedagogical practice, several scholars provide practical advice on making focus groups an effective tool in the educational process.

For instance, Ceylan and Bavli (2023) conducted a study to gather reflections on online education by examining perceptions of the effectiveness of learning through online meeting platforms. A focus group interview was conducted with 12 students, and content analysis was used to analyze the data.

According to McChesney and Cross (2023), the intention to improve teacher practice to enhance student and system outcomes is a critical component of almost all efforts to improve education. With this objective in mind, various strategies are employed to facilitate teacher professional learning and development, necessitating time, finances, and human resources expenditures. Teachers' learning environment and the impact on teacher uptake of new learning remain under-researched. Given the influence of the psychosocial learning environment on the teacher development process, there is an opportunity to enhance the impact of professional development. The researchers examined the impact of various aspects of the school climate and culture, specifically the learning environment experienced by teachers), on their



professional growth in the classroom. We must learn that McChesney and Cross used focus groups to collect qualitative data from 36 teachers in New Zealand, which were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis and a latent inductive approach. Teachers have identified five spheres of school climate and culture that impact the implementation of novel professional learning.

These spheres are engagement/leadership actions, environmental change, relationships, beliefs, and attitudes related to TPLD. Identifying the function played by these five domains enabled researchers to comprehend how school leaders and policymakers can influence the learning environment surrounding teachers' daily classroom practices, thereby facilitating learning and enhancement for all. (McChesney & Cross, 2023).

It should be noted that recent economic hardships, the COVID-19 pandemic, and widespread dissatisfaction with the quality of education worldwide have underscored the necessity for extensive transformations in national education systems. Implementing such reforms requires professionalism and competence from experts. For example, in Latvia, reforms have been introduced in various aspects of the educational process, such as the philosophy of education, curriculum content, pedagogical approach, and school management (Stoychik et al., 2021). One of the fundamental approaches is the School as a Learning Organization (SLO) model, which actively engages all participants in the educational process in continuous personal and collective development. Research by Siliņa-Jasjukeviča et al. (2023) Using semi-structured focus group discussions and deductive/inductive content analysis, scholars found that focus group participants consider 'supporting teamwork and collaboration among all staff and modelling and enhancing leadership in learning' as critical aspects of SLO. However, 'embedding systems for knowledge and learning collection and exchange' (Siliņa-Jasjukeviča et al., 2023) proved less clear to participants in the focus group study.

Researchers delineate seven dimensions of SLO: (1) developing and disseminating a student-centred vision; (2) creating and supporting opportunities for ongoing learning for all staff; (3) fostering teamwork and collaboration among all staff; (4) creating a culture of inquiry, innovation, and research; (5) embedding systems for knowledge and learning collection and exchange; (6) learning with the external environment and within a more extensive learning system; (7) modelling and growing leadership in learning (Siliņa-Jasjukeviča et al., 2023). These dimensions encompass a broad spectrum of aspects of effectiveness that require a combination of scientific and practical knowledge.

For our study, it was necessary to familiarise ourselves with how the research conducted by Siliņa-Jasjukeviča et al. (2023) was organised. They organized three semi-structured focus group discussions, during which they conducted deductive and inductive content analysis. Their research findings showed that focus group participants identified "supporting teamwork and collaboration among all staff and modelling and enhancing leadership in learning" as the most important and best-understood aspects of SLO.



We share the opinion of Siliņa-Jasjukeviča et al. (2023) that it is essential to emphasise the importance of a deep understanding of the SLO model for its successful implementation and to promote the transformation of education in Latvia. Additionally, this experience is valuable for other countries facing similar challenges in the field of education.

The study conducted by Salhab and Daher (2023), which examines the impact of mobile learning on students' attitudes, is an exciting example of applying the method in the context of educational technologies. Analysing the results of this study allows for a deeper understanding of the participants' views and opinions. It directs our research to consider important aspects of educators' professional growth. Salhab and Daher (2023) point out that technologies "have explosively and globally revolutionised teaching and learning processes in educational institutions, with massive and innovative technological developments, along with their tools and applications, recently infiltrating the education system." During the focus group study, it was established by the researchers that "mobile learning (m-learning) uses wireless technologies for thinking, communicating, learning, disseminating, and exchanging knowledge. Therefore, assessing students' attitudes towards mobile learning is crucial, as attitudes towards learning affect their motivation, productivity, and beliefs regarding mobile learning" (Salhab & Daher, 2023). We see that it was precisely through the focus group study that the researchers managed to identify the students' attitudes towards mobile learning. In the context of our research, we need to analyse how the researchers analysed the group discussions' results. Salhab and Daher used an explanation-based sequential mixed-methods approach to study the attitudes of 50 students towards lessons utilising mobile learning technologies. The researchers used a quasi-experimental and phenomenological approach to collect data from experimental and control groups. Three focus groups and 25 semi-structured interviews were conducted with students who had experience with mobile learning within their course by the scientists. Salhab and Daher utilised the statistical method ANCOVA, which compares the mean values of a dependent variable between two or more groups. The researchers identified the impact of m-learning on attitudes and their components by conducting inductive and deductive content analysis (Salhab & Daher, 2023). Since we planned to develop a guide for our research, we needed to learn how Salhab and Daher formulated discussion topics. They developed eleven subthemes derived from three main themes: personalised learning, visualisation of learning motivation, reduction of learning disappointment, enhancement of participation, learning on familiar devices, and social interaction arising from the data.

Currently, research on approaches to organising informal education is relevant. For instance, Erta-Majó and Vaquero (2023) explore the possibilities of transmedia storytelling, demonstrating how to structure and design educational processes using this approach in informal settings. A qualitative analysis was conducted, with multi-format focus groups describing the necessary points for developing transmedia educational processes in informal educational offerings targeting families, children, and adolescents.



The study results highlighted in the article by Lander et al. (2023) were essential for organizing our focus group study. The authors note that Synchronous Online Focus Groups (SOFG) more closely resemble the original format of face-to-face communication but are simultaneously more complex.

Development of online focus groups.

The authors emphasise the importance of inviting participants to online focus groups through direct communication, such as phone calls, during which oral explanations of data protection and anonymity in the online environment are crucial for participants' confidence and active participation in the discussion. Additionally, during SOFG, it is preferable to use two moderators: one as a discussion facilitator and the other providing technical support, as limited non-verbal communication roles and tasks need to be defined in advance. Interaction between members is crucial for focus groups, but it is tough to pull it off online. Hence, smaller group sizes may be utilised; however, the exchange of personal information and enhanced moderator attention to individual reactions are crucial. It is imperative to exercise caution when employing digital tools such as surveys and meeting rooms, as they can potentially hinder communication among individuals (Lander et al., 2023).

The development of online focus groups, paying attention to their proliferation over the past decade, particularly in the context of the pandemic, were explored. It has been noted that regardless of usage, whether telephone communication, online platforms, emails, or applications, online focus groups have been adapted to align with the typical parameters of face-to-face focus groups. This approach has led some authors to compare online focus groups with in-person meetings. Thus, most discussions regarding online focus groups have revolved around adapting in-person focus groups to the online environment and ensuring high-quality data. However, certain drawbacks have been recognised, such as limited interaction, technical difficulties with technology usage, and the absence of nonverbal communication in online focus groups (Estrada-Jaramillo et al., 2023).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Start with the research design. Review the ontological or epistemological orientation adopted in this study, including justification. The study adhered to the recommendations of Anita Gibbs, who analysed various studies and found that the optimal number of participants for a focus group can vary from 6 to 15 individuals. In our study, participants were selected through stratified sampling from diverse segments of the educational system. A strategic approach was used to ensure a diversity of opinions and experiences among educators at different levels. Specifically, our study involved 13 participants, including 7 academic and pedagogical staff members and 5 methodologists from postgraduate education institutions; among them were 10 women and 3 men, with teaching experience ranging from 15 to 35 years. (Gibbs, 1997).

Gibbs also notes that the role of the moderator or group facilitator is crucial, particularly in explaining the group's purpose, creating a supportive atmosphere for participants, and facilitating interaction among them. During the session, the moderator should stimulate



discussion using open-ended questions and address potential disagreements. Additionally, the moderator should remain objective, avoid expressing personal opinions, and allow all participants to express their viewpoints. This requires the moderator to possess high interpersonal skills, openness, and attentiveness to each group member. One moderator is also recommended to be the facilitator, while another ensures documentation of the discussion and oversees recording equipment during the meeting.

During the focus group, interviews were conducted in structured and semi-structured ways. During a structured interview, the moderator asked the participants specific questions prepared in advance to explore certain aspects of professional transformation, such as motivation, skills, resources, and barriers. Semi-structured interviews were also used during the focus group, where the moderator asked general questions and stimulated free discussion among the participants.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Participants' views and experiences of professional transformation in the context of the New Ukrainian School (NUS) reform will differ depending on their roles and positions in the education system. Specifically, it is assumed that academic and pedagogical staff may have different views than methodologists from postgraduate education institutions.

Hypothesis 2: It is assumed that the views of focus group participants on professional transformation will be shaped by their own experience, level of motivation, and availability of resources. This may lead to deviations in the perception of the transformation process and the assessment of the effectiveness of the New Ukrainian School reform.

Thirteen participants were selected: seven were academic and pedagogical staff members, and five were methodologists from postgraduate education institutions. Ten women and three men, with teaching experience ranging from 15 to 35 years, were among them.

Anita Gibbs highlights the critical importance of the role of the moderator or facilitator in a focus group, especially in clarifying the group's purpose, creating a conducive environment for participants, and fostering interaction among them. During the session, moderators should facilitate discussion, perhaps using open-ended questions. Sometimes, they may need to prompt participants to identify differences in opinions and discrepancies in interpreting the topic. Moderators must also manage details and stimulate dialogue if the conversation deviates from the main topic or reaches overly general conclusions. They should ensure equal participation and avoid influencing the group's opinion. The role of the moderator requires responsibility and the ability to show empathy, be attentive listeners, and adapt to the group's needs. These qualities promote trust and open dialogue among participants. One moderator is recommended as the facilitator, while another is responsible for documentation and equipment control during the meeting (Gibbs Anita, 1997).



Essential components in preparing for a focus group include developing the research purpose, identifying participants, selecting moderators (facilitators), developing a guide (questionnaire), developing a scenario for conducting the focus group and testing questions and the scenario.

The study was conducted by moderator Prosina at the Centre for Postgraduate Education Management of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv, Sichovykh Striltsiv St., 52A, with assistant moderator Feshchak, a postgraduate student at the Central Institute of Postgraduate Education of the State Higher Education Institution “University of Educational Management” (Focus group study, 2024).

A guide was prepared for conducting the focus group, consisting of question blocks related to teachers’ readiness for change, educational challenges, motivation of teachers for a professional transformation, and some questions regarding the prestige of the teaching profession. The survey results conducted in September-October 2023 on the topic "Assessment of the need for professional transformation of pedagogical workers (PTW) in the conditions of war and the post-war period" were systematised and summarised to understand the main trends. (Prosina, 2023a) within the framework of the research work of the Central Institute of Postgraduate Education for the University of Education Management National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Professional pedagogical staff transformation in the conditions of open postgraduate education (registration number NDR 0120U104637 from 30.10.2020) (Kyrychenko et al., 2021).

The prepared guide consisted of three blocks. The first block related to the survey results, “Assessment of the need for professional-pedagogical staff transformation (PPST) in conditions of war and post-war period”: “How do you perceive the survey results: true, contradictory? Can teaching experience be considered a key criterion? Why is the readiness indicator for professional transformation in teachers by the status of internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to military actions in Ukraine prevalent? What should the state strategy regarding teachers be based on?” (Prosina, 2024).

The second block of the guide included questions regarding motivation for change and professional transformation: “What realities of today can be considered motivators for the professional transformation of educators? What factors influence educators’ motivation in this aspect? In conditions of war, is the motivation of educators driven by the state or the school administration? Why doesn’t the state provide adequate compensation for educators? Formulate advice for educators to develop motivation for professional change. What kind of effective educator is it?”

The third block intended to discuss the prestige of pedagogical work: “What should be the content of the phrase ‘prestige of pedagogical work’? What is the current status of the prestige of pedagogical work? Considering the realities in your regions, is there a threat of a catastrophic outflow of educators to other fields? What makes a higher education institution prestigious when teaching pedagogical professions?”



In our study, technical aspects were effectively addressed because all participants were proficient in using Zoom, and moderators were prepared to alternate in case one moderator lost internet connection. Participants were also informed that they could rejoin the group if they experienced temporary internet disconnection. However, these threats were practically not encountered during the focus group session. Turning on the camera was essential for participating in the focus group study (participants were informed in advance). Unfortunately, another condition was not specified to inform participants about the need to choose a place for internet access separate from other colleagues at work or at least temporarily close the office door to prevent distractions from third parties. Several times, moderators observed that the attention of some participants decreased due to distractions related to ongoing work situations in their offices; however, this did not significantly affect the course of the study. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these aspects and alert participants to the importance of their undivided attention to the group interaction process during the research. To ensure anonymity, a code for participants was used instead of their surnames, first names, and patronymics during the analysis of focus group results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall, the focus group participants actively engaged in discussing the proposed questions. During the discussion, some questions elicited a more emotional response and sparked discussion, especially when it came to aspects related to providing personal examples of interaction with educational professionals in the context of the educational process in postgraduate education institutions and during informal events, which led to an improvement in teachers' internal motivation for change.

The most emotionally vulnerable moment occurred when participant A.B. in the focus group began to cry as the previous participant, V.G., talked about offline events to rally educators in the region and motivate them for change. Continuing the discussion, participant A.B. noted that their institution was relocated from the occupied territory. They cannot currently hold offline meetings, only online ones, with the team scattered worldwide. This episode emphasises the significance of personal experiences and intrinsic motivation for participants, both of which have the potential to influence their willingness to innovate and transform. Morgan and Kreuger (1993) confirm that focus groups contribute to revealing various views and emotional reactions in the context of discussing a particular topic.

First, the questions related to the reception of the survey results, "Assessment of the need for Professional Pedagogical Staff Transformation (PPST) in Times of War and the Post-War period," were discussed.

Initially, the focus group participants were presented with slides containing diagrams of the analysis results of the conducted survey. In total, ten slides were presented, each containing one diagram.



At that time, the question: «Do you consider professional transformation as an integral part of your pedagogical activity?» 718 respondents gave the answer "Yes" (this is 93% of the sample), and only 50 (7%) answered "No".

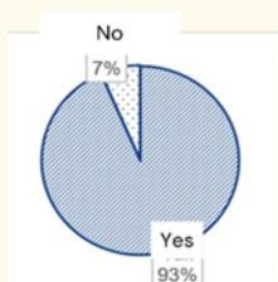


Figure 2: Slide №. 8 from the presentation for the focus group (Prosina, 2024)

		Do you consider professional transformation as an integral part of your pedagogical activity?	
		No	Yes
Do you feel the need to review and transform the components of your personal professionalism?	No	35 (4,6 %)	143 (18,6 %)
	Yes	15 (2,0 %)	575 (74,9 %)

The smallest percentage of respondents (2%) feel the need for the transformation of personal professionalism, but do not consider this transformation as an integral part of their pedagogical activity, 4.6% do not feel the need and do not consider it necessary to transform their pedagogical activity, the largest number, 79% of respondents they answered «Yes» to both questions.

Figure 3: Slide №. 9 from the presentation for the focus group (Prosina, 2024)

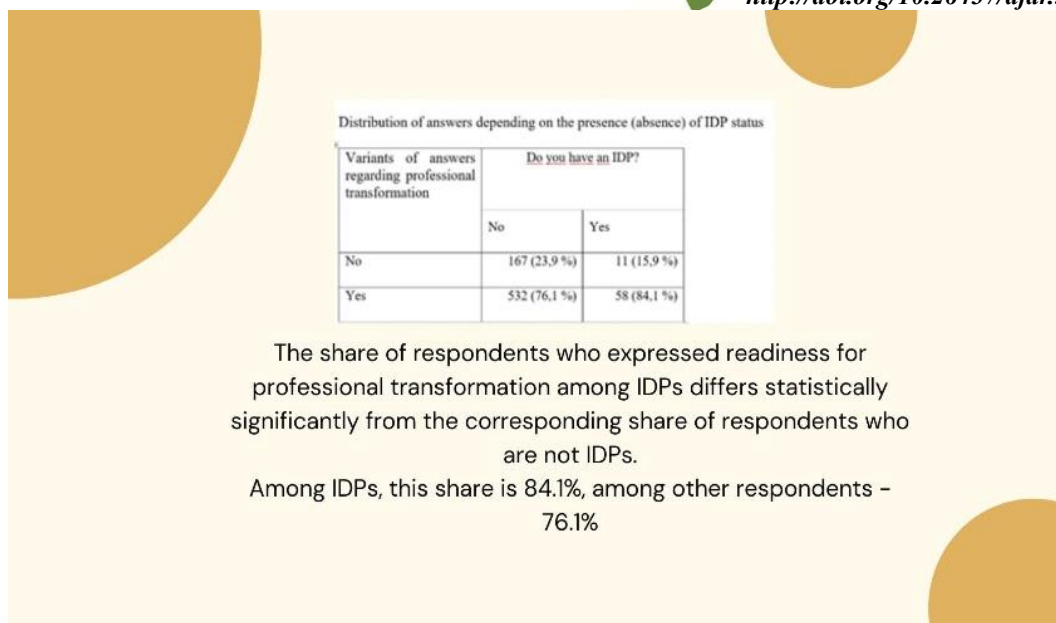


Figure 4: Slide No. 14 from the presentation for the focus group (Prosina, 2024)

Participants in the focus group noted that the survey results aligned with their observations and conclusions drawn during their professional activities while working with educators in secondary educational institutions implementing the New Ukrainian School (NUS) reform. It was noted that there is a need to consider the difference in research results between the opinions of primary and secondary school teachers, as they may differ. As participants pointed out, the implementation of the New Ukrainian School reform in primary education was organised at a higher level. At the same time, in secondary school, teachers lacked an understanding of some NUS fundamentals. The importance of ensuring communication between primary and secondary schools was emphasised.

Focus group participants indicated that their observations suggest that teachers generally make significant efforts to acquire new skills necessary for teaching in modern conditions, and the war does not deter teachers from trying to learn new things. Focus group participants pointed out that overall, the research results were expected.

The mentioned conclusions were essential to us because in the academic community, after the publication of the survey results “Assessment of the Need for Professional Pedagogical Staff Transformation (PPST) in Conditions of War and Post-War Period”, there was an opinion in discussions that the results do not fully correspond to the general situation, that teachers are not ready to change. However, focus group participants refuted this opinion, citing numerous facts that teachers unwilling to change, especially during the pandemic when they needed to master many new online tools, left the school. Moreover, today, the situation in pedagogical collectives is different.



In response to the question “What questions should be added to the next study?” participants in the chat provided the following answers: It would be advisable to start with diagnosing the level of formation of professional competencies (according to the teacher professional standard); perhaps it is also worth including questions about the purpose of the teacher’s activity, what accents are now - preparing for university or personal development; questions about self-assessment of achievements and shortcomings in teachers’ professional skills that impede their professional transformation; questions about what parents and children need, and so on.

Regarding the focus group block on teaching methods and student motivation methods, participants identified this block of questions as the main request of teachers now. It was noted that satisfying teachers' basic needs significantly influences their motivation for transformation. In the conditions of war, there are significant gaps because the basic human need for safety cannot currently be met while military events are ongoing in the country. Competency orientation in some teachers remains slow.

Participants noted that, based on their observations, the trust of the teaching staff in postgraduate education institutions in some regions reaches 80%. Currently, teachers feel the need for offline professional development courses and constant improvement of digital teaching tools to apply this knowledge in both offline and online classes (Kyrychenko, 2019). It was noted that the New Ukrainian School is based on many European practices. However, teachers’ motivation to create their materials is problematic because they prefer to receive ready-made materials: calendar planning, lesson plans, event scenarios, and so on.

The results of our study are in line with Kirichenko's (2021) statements that the culture of educational discomfort has not yet been formed; the reflective component among teachers is still relatively low; many teachers want to have ready-made solutions to their pedagogical problems, but are not ready to find these solutions on their own; it is worth paying more attention to the value-meaning component of teacher training; it is necessary to give priority to the Ukrainian tradition of solving educational problems, and then to experience from abroad; the majority of IDP teachers are ready to change - most teachers participate in various activities, because this is important not only for improving their qualifications but also for maintaining the morale of IDPs (Kyrychenko, 2021).

Responding to the question about motivation for change from the state and school, respondents answered as follows: In the Lviv region, mass events are held for teachers, and this works; the number of bureaucratic procedures could be slightly reduced, which would contribute to motivation, although much more simplification is needed in this aspect; humane attitude towards teachers is more important in the long term than instant results; it is worth considering communities of teachers gathering in an informal atmosphere; at least in this area, there is a



lack of systematicity and proper communication; the leadership of the majority of schools supports teachers who want to acquire new knowledge.

There was not much time left for discussion of the last questions regarding the prestige of pedagogical work; however, participants reported the following: the future of the state and the next generation is more important than money; many students from distant countries study in Ukraine because it is accessible and of high quality; internal motivation is more important than external motivation, so a significant increase in salary will not seriously change the quality of teaching, as it is based on other principles, which is confirmed, among other things, by research by scientists.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the results of a synchronous online focus group study conducted with the aim of exploring the readiness of pedagogical (scientific and pedagogical) workers for professional transformation in conditions of crisis and uncertainty allows us to state that: first, focus groups are an effective method of scientific research of current problems in education provided that the purpose of the research has been developed, the number of participants has been determined, moderators (facilitators) have been selected, a guide and script for the focus group have been developed, questions and the script have been tested, threats have been taken into account and correct instructions have been provided; secondly, the results of the discussion of the proposed questions by the participants of the focus group confirmed the assumption that the results of the survey “Assessment of the need for Professional Pedagogical Staff Transformation (PPST) in the conditions of war and the post-war period” correspond to the actual state of readiness of teachers for professional transformation; thirdly, there was a legitimate clarification of the central concept of the research: professional transformation is a dynamic process (or a state achieved as a result of this process), during which specialists or employees undergo significant changes or transformations in their professional life, which contributes to the acquisition of new skills, knowledge, approaches and understanding the value of one’s own professional mission.

So, the study's results proved a high level of teachers’ motivation for changes, readiness for self-improvement, and openness to the perception of updated educational values. The social significance of the study is to maintain the stability and development of the educational system, ensure a high level of professional training of teachers and create a favourable environment for the learning and development of each student. Given the current demands for education, this type of research contributes to increasing the competitiveness of the educational system at the international level and supporting sustainable social progress. The study's novelty lies in the emphasis on the motivational and psychological aspects of teachers' readiness for change and in the analysis of their openness to innovations in education.



In further research, we plan to experimentally test the author's synergistic tutoring technology for the professional-pedagogical (scientific-pedagogical) staff transformation as a basis for the successful professional transformation of educators.

Acknowledgements:

We thank the representatives of postgraduate education institutes for participating in the focus group study.

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