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Збірник наукових праць

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наукове підґрунтя вивчення дисципліни «Нетрадиційні засоби фізичної культури і спорту», зумовлюють джерела її розвитку. Особливо тісні зв'язки курсу зі спортивно-педагогічними дисциплінами, які об'єднані спільною навчально-виховною метою, загальними положеннями організації та методики проведення занять і спортивних заходів, спеціальною термінологією. Відтак курс «Нетрадиційні засоби фізичної культури і спорту» має зв'язок з іншими навчальними дисциплінами, які обґрунтовують загальні закономірності фізичного виховання і спорту. Опіраючись на знання інших дисциплін, він своєю чергою доповнює і розвиває їх.

Опанування курсу сприятиме професійному становленню магістрів за рахунок розуміння системного впливу застосування і розширення арсеналу нетрадиційних засобів фізичної культури і спорту з урахуванням індивідуальних, соціокультурних, фізкультурних і спортивних потреб населення, його фізичної підготовленості, рівня здоров'я та фізкультурної освіти.

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**CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY AND FINANCIAL DIGNITY:
A FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATOR RETENTION IN WARTIME ZAPORIZHZHIA, UKRAINE**

This study presents a culturally-informed approach to educator retention in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, during ongoing conflict, addressing both school teachers and university faculty. Based on analysis of Ukrainian mentality and cultural psychology, the approach offers a potentially cost-effective alternative to standard salary reforms by addressing cultural motivators while requiring financial investments by leveraging Ukrainian collective responsibility patterns, family-oriented decision making, traditional educational values, and academic cultural traditions. Our findings suggest that understanding cultural psychology is essential for effective educational policy in emergency contexts across all educational levels, contributing to broader understanding of education's critical role in national development during crisis periods. Keywords: teacher retention, Ukrainian culture, educational psychology, wartime education, cultural mentality, university faculty retention.

Introduction. The ongoing war in Ukraine has created unprecedented challenges for educational systems, with Zaporizhzhia region experiencing destruction of 175 educational institutions – the highest number in Ukraine [1]. This crisis occurs within the broader global context where 251 million children and youth remain out of school worldwide, with educational challenges compounded by conflict and extreme weather events affecting over 400 million students globally between January 2022 and June 2024 [2,3]. Traditional educator retention approaches, primarily focused on salary increases and infrastructure improvements, may prove insufficient when applied without consideration of Ukrainian cultural psychology and mentality patterns that drive motivation differently across K-12 teachers and university faculty.

Ukrainian culture demonstrates strong family values, collective responsibility, and deep community connections [4]. Research indicates our mentality combines family-oriented collectivism, relationship-centered professional culture, resilience through meaning-making, and paradoxical distrust toward authority coupled with deep loyalty once trust is established [5]. Ukrainian business culture shows high power distance with respect for hierarchies, yet emphasizes relationship-building and protective leadership where managers advocate for subordinates [6].

Cost-of-living analysis reveals that median after-tax salary of 15,120 UAH covers only 75% of basic living expenses for single persons, indicating severe financial distress previously underestimated in policy discussions [7].

This paper examines Ukrainian cultural mentality to identify critical interventions for preventing educator exodus across both school and university settings, proposing differentiated strategies aligned with Ukrainian psychological patterns while addressing economic pressures.

The Ukrainian educational tradition encompasses distinct cultural patterns across levels. K-12 education, exemplified by humanistic educator Vasyl Sukhomlynsky, views teaching as sacred mission to nurture humanity in children [8]. His approach emphasized that teachers should help children find joy and meaning, develop moral sensitivity, and take responsibility for their environment – principles deeply embedded in Ukrainian K-12 educational psychology.

Ukrainian higher education traditions, rooted in the Academy of Kyiv-Mohyla (founded 1615), emphasize scholarly pursuit, academic freedom, and intellectual contribution to society [9]. These distinctions require differentiated retention approaches: K-12 teachers motivated primarily by community impact and child development, while university faculty driven by academic freedom, research opportunities, and contribution to Ukrainian scholarly tradition.

Studies of Ukrainian educators during wartime reveal different but complementary motivation patterns. K-12 teachers continue teaching despite adversity, motivated by responsibility for future generations and preserving Ukrainian culture for children [10]. University faculty demonstrate parallel commitment, viewing their role as preserving Ukrainian intellectual heritage, maintaining international academic standards, and preparing future scholars and leaders. Recent research demonstrates that educators maintain commitment through applying ethics of care that extend beyond traditional service-learning frameworks, emphasizing relational responsibility and contextual responsiveness during crisis conditions [11]. Research on trauma and resilience among Ukrainians during war shows collective meaning-making and community support systems prove more effective than individual approaches [12].

Methods. This study employed mixed-methods approach combining cultural psychology analysis with economic assessment to develop educator retention strategies for Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, during armed conflict. The research utilized secondary data analysis due to conflict conditions preventing primary field research.

Study population: The study addressed two educator populations, K-12 teachers (about 2,000 educators serving 90,000 students) and university faculty (about 500 educators). Current exact population estimates for Zaporizhzhia city remain unavailable due to ongoing conflict and displacement, though pre-war population was approximately 710,000.

Data collection: Cost-of-living and salary data obtained from LivingCost.org database [7], online salary reporting platforms [13,14], and international cost-of-living databases. Cultural psychology analysis drew from peer-reviewed research on Ukrainian mentality [5], educational traditions [8], and wartime adaptation [10-12].

Intervention design: Five strategies were developed based on identified cultural motivators, differentiated for K-12 and university contexts. Budget projections were calculated using population-based scaling and regional price indices, with substantial revision based on accurate economic data revealing higher financial intervention requirements than initially projected.

Results. Economic context and critical financial assessment. Current economic analysis reveals median after-tax salary in Zaporizhzhia of 15,120 UAH covers only part of basic single-person living expenses (Table 1), indicating widespread financial distress among educators. Current monthly living costs include: single person total with rent (20,160 UAH), food (7,200 UAH), rent and utilities (8,800 UAH), and transportation (1,976 UAH).

Table 1

University faculty (family of 3.5 average) monthly cost for **comfortable** life.

Category	Monthly cost (UAH)	Calculation method
Housing (2, 3-bedroom with all office supplies)	12,640	Professional space requirements
Utilities & internet	3,709	Family utility bill + internet
Food	11,700	Family of 4 data × 0.625
Transportation	3,550	Professional mobility needs
Professional development	4,000	Research, conferences, materials
Emergency supplies	2,000	War-related emergency costs
Healthcare	3,500	Enhanced healthcare needs
Savings	4,500	10% of target gross income
Personal care	1,500	Professional maintenance
TOTAL MONTHLY	47,099	-
Required gross salary	57,438	Total ÷ 0.82 (after taxes)

Differentiated retention strategies. Based on cultural psychology analysis and economic realities, five core strategies were developed with specific adaptations for K-12 teachers and university faculty addressing distinct motivational drivers:

Strategy 1: Honor the sacred mission - recognizes both K-12 teachers as guardians of children's futures and university faculty as preservers of intellectual heritage through community ceremonies, legacy documentation, and appreciation programs tailored to each educational level.

Strategy 2: Provide financial dignity support - substantial financial assistance addressing documented salary gaps through educator-managed security funds, honor-based salary systems, and emergency support networks.

Strategy 3: Enhance professional development and academic freedom - K-12 focus on teacher self-governance councils and cultural-pedagogical innovation; university emphasis on academic freedom protection and collaboration networks.

Strategy 4: Strengthen community integration - K-12 implementation through family support networks and traditional home visit programs; university implementation through professional community integration and academic-community partnerships reflecting different but authentic Ukrainian community patterns.

Strategy 5: Create differentiated psychological resilience support - K-12 implementation through teacher resilience circles and student-teacher healing activities; university implementation through intellectual resilience groups and research-as-resistance programs.

Funding source analysis: Proposed funding distribution: international donors (40%), government (30%), regional/city budget (20%), private sector/diaspora (10%). Analysis indicates moderate feasibility for international and government funding, challenging feasibility for regional commitment, and high feasibility for diaspora contributions based on documented funding patterns for Ukrainian education emergency initiatives.

Discussion. This culturally-informed approach addresses core Ukrainian motivators identified in cultural psychology research while acknowledging substantially higher financial intervention requirements revealed by accurate economic assessment. The framework demonstrates understanding of mentality patterns, yet several critical methodological and theoretical considerations warrant detailed examination:

- **Community trust:** Built gradually through demonstrated consistency, respecting Ukrainian skepticism.
- **Practical solutions:** Programs address real needs rather than bureaucratic requirements, respecting Ukrainian pragmatism.
- **Financial dignity:** Substantial support addressing documented economic needs rather than symbolic assistance.
- **Family integration:** Support extends to teacher families, honoring family-oriented values.
- **Meaningful work:** Connections to Ukrainian educational traditions and cultural preservation mission.
- **Peer validation:** Teachers validate each other rather than receiving recognition from distant authorities.
- **Collective responsibility:** Teachers are recognized as community guardians rather than individual service providers.

The approach aligns with broader research on education's role in national development, where countries with robust educational foundations show enhanced ability to adopt and adapt new technologies, with particularly strong effects in open economies [15]. Research utilizing international assessment data confirms that educational quality affects economic growth through both widespread basic competency and high-achieving student populations, supporting educational approaches rather than elite-focused strategies [16].

Cultural alignment and theoretical framework. The proposed intervention strategies demonstrate alignment with established Ukrainian cultural patterns. Collective responsibility recognition [4] reflects deeply embedded social structures where individual success remains interconnected with community wellbeing. Family integration honoring Ukrainian family-oriented values [4,17] acknowledges that educator motivation extends beyond individual professional satisfaction to encompass family security and community standing. Practical solutions respecting Ukrainian pragmatism [5] recognize cultural preference for tangible, immediately applicable interventions over abstract policy frameworks.

Peer validation systems [18] represent particularly significant cultural considerations, as Ukrainian educators traditionally derive professional legitimacy through horizontal recognition rather than hierarchical approval. This pattern contrasts with Western educational systems emphasizing administrative evaluation and bureaucratic advancement pathways. Meaningful work connections to Ukrainian educational traditions [8] demonstrate respect for historical pedagogical approaches while maintaining contemporary relevance during crisis conditions.

The gradual community trust-building approach [5,6] acknowledges documented Ukrainian skepticism toward authority while recognizing potential for deep loyalty once trust becomes established. This dual pattern requires sustained consistency in program implementation, potentially extending timeline expectations beyond typical Western intervention

models. Financial dignity through substantial support addressing documented economic needs represents acknowledgment that cultural motivators alone cannot overcome severe economic pressures threatening educator survival.

Differentiated motivational patterns across educational levels. The differentiated approach recognizes fundamentally distinct motivational patterns across educational levels, reflecting different professional cultures within Ukrainian education. K-12 teachers demonstrate primary motivation through direct child welfare and community stability [10], aligning with traditional Ukrainian emphasis on nurturing future generations and preserving cultural continuity. This pattern suggests that effective K-12 retention strategies must emphasize tangible impact on children's lives and visible community contributions.

University faculty show motivation through intellectual resistance, knowledge preservation, and maintaining Ukraine's connection to global academic communities [9, 11]. This pattern reflects distinct academic culture emphasizing scholarly autonomy, international recognition, and contribution to intellectual heritage. The differences suggest that uniform retention approaches across educational levels may prove counterproductive, requiring specialized intervention strategies addressing level-specific motivational drivers.

However, preliminary evidence suggests potential overlap in certain motivational domains. Both K-12 teachers and university faculty demonstrate commitment to cultural preservation, though expressed through different mechanisms. Teachers focus on direct cultural transmission to children, while faculty emphasize scholarly documentation and international representation of Ukrainian intellectual traditions. This overlap suggests potential for shared programming elements while maintaining level-specific primary interventions.

Economic reality integration and financial assessment challenges. The substantial revision of financial projections from 33.25M UAH to 163.8M UAH represents critical methodological learning regarding economic assessment in crisis contexts. This annual investment equals approximately \$4.1M USD (at 40 UAH/USD exchange rate), representing \$5.77 per resident of Zaporizhzhia's 710,000 population.

The revelation that average educator salaries cover only part of basic living expenses demonstrates severity of economic crisis facing educational professionals. While in reality the salaries are much less than that. So, this financial reality introduces complex policy considerations regarding intervention sustainability and funding feasibility. While the culturally-informed approach remains more cost-effective than salary reform, absolute financial requirements exceed many typical educational intervention budgets. The challenge requires balancing cultural sensitivity with fiscal responsibility while addressing genuine economic distress among target populations.

This finding aligns with global evidence that educational reform effectiveness requires substantial financial investment alongside cultural considerations, consistent with broader research showing that financial investment alone does not guarantee improved outcomes, but economic growth benefits accrue only from reforms that generate actual improvements in cognitive skills and learning outcomes [15].

Implementation challenges and cultural adaptation requirements. Success requires authentic respect for Ukrainian values rather than superficial cultural adaptation, demanding implementation led by community members understanding traditional relationship patterns. Western educational administrators or international development professionals may struggle with patience required for Ukrainian trust-building processes, potentially undermining intervention effectiveness through premature timeline expectations or inappropriate cultural assumptions.

The approach necessitates deep cultural understanding extending beyond surface-level customs to encompass underlying psychological patterns driving educator behavior. Implementation teams must demonstrate sustained commitment to Ukrainian values while maintaining program consistency during extended trust-building phases. This requirement may prove challenging for international funding organizations accustomed to rapid program deployment and measurable short-term outcomes.

Regional variations within Ukraine [19] introduce additional complexity, suggesting uniform retention strategies across all Ukrainian regions may prove inappropriate. Zaporizhzhia-specific cultural patterns may differ from western Ukrainian regions showing greater individualistic tendencies. This variation requires localized cultural assessment before program implementation, potentially extending preparation timelines and increasing development costs.

Methodological limitations and research gaps. Current evidence regarding Ukrainian cultural psychology remains limited, with most studies predating the 2014-2022 period. War conditions have potentially altered traditional cultural patterns, introducing uncertainty regarding applicability of pre-conflict research findings. Population displacement, economic disruption, and ongoing trauma may have modified educator motivational patterns in ways not yet documented in literature.

Population estimates rely on incomplete data due to ongoing displacement, introducing uncertainty into budget calculations and program planning. Current population estimates for Zaporizhzhia remain unavailable, complicating accurate educator census and needs assessment. The absence of primary research with Ukrainian educators represents

critical empirical gap. Cultural psychology assumptions require validation through direct educator surveys, focus groups, or interviews to ensure intervention relevance and cultural appropriateness. Without educator voice integration, proposed strategies risk imposing external assumptions about Ukrainian motivational patterns rather than responding to actual educator needs and preferences.

Policy implications and broader applications. The substantial budget revision emphasizes that theoretical frameworks must be grounded in empirical economic realities to ensure program effectiveness and stakeholder trust. This finding extends beyond Ukrainian context to educational policy development globally, particularly in crisis situations where economic conditions may deteriorate rapidly while cultural factors remain influential in educator decision-making.

The research demonstrates that effective crisis education policy requires integration of cultural psychology understanding with accurate economic assessment, extending broader principles applicable to educational systems serving populations with strong cultural identities experiencing economic crisis. Neither cultural interventions alone nor purely financial approaches prove sufficient when addressing educator retention in contexts where both cultural identity and economic survival become threatened simultaneously.

The differentiated approach recognizing distinct motivational patterns across educational levels offers potential framework for educational policy development in other contexts where K-12 and university educators demonstrate different professional cultures and motivational drivers. However, successful adaptation requires culture-specific research rather than assumption that Ukrainian patterns apply universally across different national or regional contexts.

Conclusion. Preventing educator exodus in Zaporizhzhia requires understanding Ukrainian cultural psychology alongside substantial financial intervention addressing current economic realities. The educators demonstrate motivation through sacred mission fulfillment, community belonging and collective responsibility, dignity within traditional frameworks, substantial family-oriented support meeting actual economic needs, and peer validation.

This approach requires deep cultural understanding and patience for trust-building processes that may seem slow by Western standards, particularly given the substantially increased financial commitments required. Success depends on authentic respect for Ukrainian values rather than superficial cultural adaptation. Implementation must be led by community members who understand traditional relationship patterns and can navigate complex family-community networks.

Consideration and honoring of cultural psychology alongside realistic financial assessment may prove more effective than either economic incentives or cultural appeals alone in addressing educator shortage crises globally. Our findings suggest that cultural identity preservation and economic survival factors must be addressed simultaneously to maintain educational systems during crisis periods.

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