







“Academic management in war conditions: Chronicles of aggression and resistance experience of Ukrainian universities”

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SPECIAL ISSUE: ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT IN THE CONDITIONS OF WAR

Serhiy Kozmenko (Ukraine), Yuriy Danko (Ukraine), Serhii Kozlovskiy (Ukraine)

ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT IN WAR CONDITIONS: CHRONICLES OF AGGRESSION AND RESISTANCE EXPERIENCE OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES

The full-scale aggression unleashed by the Russian invaders against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, became an unexpected horror that struck the life of this European country. The war radically changed absolutely everything and for everyone. It has crippled the fate of millions of innocent people, claimed the lives of tens of thousands.

The crazy decisions of the Russian leadership and the influx of its hordes have turned a huge number of Ukrainian cities and towns into hell. Destroyed or damaged urban infrastructure, homes and businesses, hospitals and schools.

These monsters did not spare the universities either.

In the spring of 2022, the occupation of certain territories forced some universities to transfer their activities to other cities of Ukraine. Imagine that as many as 25 universities and 19 of their separate units were forced to evacuate. Before that, they had about 54,000 students and almost 7,000 teachers (Nikolaev E., Rii G., & Shemelynets I. In foreign walls: how displaced universities overcome problems. – Vox Ukraine, July 12, 2022. (In Ukrainian) <https://voxukraine.org/uchuzhyh-stinah-yak-dolayut-problemy-peremishheni-universytety/>). Teachers and students of educational institutions of Mariupol, Melitopol, Berdiansk, and Kherson had to get out of the occupied territories. Some people are still on that front line and are making every possible effort not to lose contact with their native university. 16 Ukrainian cities received their colleagues and provided them with temporary asylum.

At the same time, we should not forget that some of these universities, no matter how terrible it may seem, were forced to change their place of deployment for the second time. The first wave of such relocation occurred due to Russian aggression that began in 2014, when 18 universities were relocated.

Those institutions that were not occupied, but found themselves next to it in the first weeks or months of the war, also had a hard time. In the immediate vicinity or a few tens of kilometers from the front line, the universities of Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, and Zaporizhzhia have worked and are still working.

The work of universities in such conditions is a terrible, unusual and unique experience both for the management and for each teacher, each employee, each student. It would be extremely imprudent and irresponsible in relation to the world community and future generations to leave this experience within the walls of

Ukrainian universities. In this case, the expression “within the walls of the university” is an allegory, but the world should know that dozens of higher educational institutions and their subdivisions will indeed remain without walls. This was written about in many media from different countries, but, surprisingly, scientists, including direct participants in these global tragedies and changes, have so far presented very few studies on this topic.

This is what prompted the team of the publishing house “Business Perspectives” to turn to the Ukrainian scientific and pedagogical community with a request to analyze and document the chronicle of the functioning of universities during the year of the war. The idea was supported, and the result of its implementation was a special issue of the journal “Problems and Perspectives in Management” – “Academic Management in War Conditions”.

It turned out that the submitted manuscripts are not based on a powerful methodology, are not the result of scientific global experiments or large-scale surveys, do not contain calculations or forecasts. All this will definitely happen in the future. These papers are a reflection of the response of specific universities (their leadership, staff, students and graduate students) to the incredible and terrible challenges from the external environment.

Most authors are not theorists in the field of organizational management. They are practitioners of academic management – rectors, vice-rectors, deans, heads of departments and others. Perhaps that is why the texts are too formal, they have a certain “taste” of a report or presentation, and they sometimes feel the desire to most fully present the results of their own work, the work of the entire management team and the institute headed. They don’t write about bad and failed educational reforms, lack of funding, corruption, plagiarism in dissertations and student papers, and other types of academic dishonesty. All this, unfortunately, has not gone anywhere, but to some extent faded into the background. Now the number one task is to save lives and ensure the viability of educational institutions. The war not only destroyed the premises, forced them to go online, scattered personnel... The entire education system is unbalanced and in the future it will face fundamental changes and new challenges.

It is possible that the reader will not be interested in viewing a single article in this issue, but the value of the presented material lies in the fact that there are several such articles. Together, they demonstrate what a terrible and

absurd thing war is, and how team spirit allows you to survive and work for victory.

And we should not forget the conditions under which these articles were written. Here is a simple example from a letter from one of the authors to the editor: “They fired again at night. A little stumbled on the conclusions. But we will do it soon. Now we have another urgent meeting.”

This is how this issue of the journal was created. It contains 18 articles, the authors of which are united by the desire to talk about their own managerial experience in critical conditions.

Petrushenko et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.09](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.09)) made an attempt to analyze the available publications on the management of universities in war conditions. There were very few of them. The authors worked out the issues of transforming the mission of the functioning of universities during a long war and the future restoration of the country.

The vast majority of articles are devoted to the chronology of the destructive impact of hostilities on the life of a particular university, analysis of the resistance of their teams to external challenges, generalization of managerial experience aimed at the survival of the university, the preservation of human lives, the implementation of volunteer activities and humanitarian assistance.

Falko and Zhukov ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.03](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.03)) and Lopatina et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.02](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.02)) are working on the experience of universities relocated from the cities of Melitopol and Berdiansk to territories controlled by the legitimate authorities of Ukraine. Their cities and universities are still under occupation at the time of the study. The universities of Kherson have a similar experience, which was captured by the Russian occupation forces for several months, but has been liberated (Spivakovsky et al. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.06](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.06)).

An even more difficult fate befell the universities, which had to change their location twice. This anti-crisis experience is demonstrated in the article by Porkuian et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.12](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.12)). In 2014, Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University was forced to leave Luhansk for the city of Severodonetsk, and moved to Kyiv in 2022.

As a result of forced relocation, universities lose property, students and staff. Human destinies are crumbling. Zakharova and Prodanova ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.15](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.15)) talk about the experience of such movements, problems and research opportunities. Oksana Zakharova worked at the Donetsk National Technical University until 2015. In 2014–2015, she organized the activities of the department at the relocated university in Pokrovsk, Donetsk region. Since 2015, she has been a professor of the Cherkasy State Technological University. Larysa Prodanova until 2016 worked at the Donetsk National University of Economics and Trade named after Mykhailo Tuhon-Baranovskiy. In 2015–2016, the department resumed its activities after the relocation of the university to the city of Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region. Since 2016, Larysa Prodanova has been a professor of the Cherkasy State Technological University.

There are such cities in Ukraine and, accordingly, universities are located in them, along the streets of which columns of occupation equipment tried to move for several days, but this ended unsuccessfully for them. Cities were bombed and surrounded. Universities were working. This experience is summarized in articles about institutions in Chernihiv and Sumy (Novomlynets et al. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.05](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.05), Karpusha et al. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.17](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.17), Nifatova et al. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.11](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.11)). In addition, Nifatova et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.11](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.11)) made an attempt to compare the efficiency of the work of universities in the agrarian direction in war conditions.

Sadly, the capital of Ukraine, the city of Kyiv, also experienced a devastating shelling by aircraft, missiles and drones. Several times, the leader of Ukrainian higher education, the Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, has been at the epicenter of such attacks. The experience of the university resistance is explored in Bugrov et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.19](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.19)).

In practice, the working conditions for universities located hundreds of kilometers from the front line turned out to be difficult and in many ways new. They focused on organizing humanitarian work, on volunteering, on helping

refugees from the occupied territories (Tsos & Makaruk [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.16](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.16), Kaplenko et al. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.13](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.13), Nestulya et al. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.08](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.08)).

The implementation of the educational process would not have been possible without the implementation of various online learning projects. A certain practice of switching to such training was acquired by universities during the COVID restrictions, but with the outbreak of war, the problem escalated many times over. This experience is reflected in articles by Greshta et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.10](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.10)), Kuzheliev et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.04](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.04)), Kvyetny et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.07](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.07)).

Heads of various departments also have great responsibility in universities. The experience of organizing the work of a scientific library in the front-line Dnipro is covered in an article by Kolesnykova ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.14](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.14)).

Many Ukrainian researchers were forced to seek temporary shelter abroad. The article by Polishchuk et al. ([http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21\(2-si\).2023.18](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.21(2-si).2023.18)) is devoted to the ideas of their unification, joint solution of problems caused by emigration, and continuation of scientific research.

As for the administration of the process of preparing the special issue, reviewing articles, their editorial preparation and publication itself, all this was done on a volunteer basis. The project is dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of the company “Business Perspectives” (April 10).

The company is a commercial publisher, but this time they worked for zero APC. Instead, Business Perspectives asked the authors (if possible) to join the fundraising for the purchase of a medical evacuation vehicle for one of the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. All authors have responded to this call, and thanks to this publishing project, human lives will now be saved.

Sincerely,
Editor-in-Chief of the journal Serhiy Kozmenko
Special issue co-editors Yuriy Danko and Serhii Kozlovskiy