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Letters to the Editorial office

Staffing of Higher Educational Institutions of Ukraine in the Second Half of the XXth Century: Quality Assurance Issues

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Abstract

The importance of training researchers to provide quality higher education in Ukraine is an urgent need that cannot be ignored. As the world aims at attaining a golden age in education, it is crucial for countries like Ukraine to also take a second look at issues that may affect the quality of their education. The author reviewed educational regulations and analyzed some archival documents on educational policy regarding teachers' training and staffing of the Ukrainian Republic. It is remarkable that the ways of staffing higher educational establishments in the USSR between 1950 and 1990 revealed various successes and challenges of which, the Post-Soviet era today can learn from. It is important that future studies and policies look into how staffing issues affect the development of education in the independent Ukraine.

Keywords: Higher Educational Institutions, Quality Assurance, Research and Teaching Staff, Second Half of the XXth Century, Staffing, Ukraine.

Dear JARE Editors

A wide range of Ukrainian scientists [L. Berezovskaya, E. Goloborodko, A. Dubase, nuk, I. Zhorova, A. Zubko, B. Korolev, S. Krysyuk, A. Kuzminsky, V. Lugovoy, V. Maiboroda, A. Savchenko, N. Slusarenko, A. Sukhomlinska, I. Shorobura, Y. Sherbak, O. Yankovich, D. Doroshenko, O. Ohloblyn, M. I. Marchenko etc.] today study the national educational history. Research into the history of pedagogy gives an opportunity to reflect, to analyze and to make constructive critique of the past with the aim of transforming the establishment and development of the national system of education (Horak, 1965).

Most of the research on establishment and development of education in Ukraine began in latter part of the XXth and beginning of the XXIst centuries. Particular among them include; V. Vihrush who examined the development of theoretical and conceptual foundations of didactics [second half of XIX –beginning of XX century]. N. Hupan also researched on the development of the history of pedagogy in Ukraine. Others like M. Koziy also studied about the development of secondary teacher education in Ukraine [1945–1990] while M. Evtuh did a good work on the development of education and pedagogical thought in Ukraine [end of the XVIII – first half the XIX century].

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These were followed also by V. Lugoviy [who worked on the tendencies of pedagogical development in Ukraine (theoretical methodological aspect)], V. Mayboroda [worked on the formation and development of national higher teacher education in Ukraine (1917-1992)], L. Medvid [also worked on the history of education and pedagogical thought in Ukraine], N. Slusarenko [who studied the formation and development of labor education of girls in Ukrainian schools at the end of XIX–XX centuries], B. Struhanets [researched on the training of teachers in labor studies at higher educational establishments of Ukraine (1958-1994)] and O. Yankovic [who also worked on the development of educational technologies in theory and practice among higher pedagogical institutions of Ukraine (1957-2005)], etc. Notwithstanding these efforts, Ukrainian educational system has some quality assurance needs that are yet to be addressed ([United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund \[UNICEF\], n.d.](#)).

One of the important machineries of quality assurance for any educational establishment or institution is the availability of highly qualified personnel. The level of education which will form a component of future specialists depends on them. The governing structure of the Ukrainian SSR in the 1950s gave considerable attention to the faculty of the teacher training institutions [pedagogical Institute, teachers' institutes, pedagogical colleges, etc.] in order to improve their level of scientific work. However, as stressed by A. Onishchuk: *"the training of highly qualified personnel were governed exclusively by the Legislative Acts of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers, which was copied by the relevant Ukrainian authorities. Established in the beginning of 1955, the USSR Ministry of Higher Education of the USSR (MBO USSR) controlled only academic and scientific work of universities and colleges located in the territory of the USSR"* ([Onischuk, 2013: 182](#)).

Research shows that the number of scientific-pedagogical personnel in the universities within the Soviet Ukraine kept growing continuously in the early 1950s. For example, *"in 1954, 19218 people worked in the universities, while about 23280 people were employed in 1959"* ([State Statistical Publishing House, 1957: 445](#)). Nevertheless, as remarked by A. Sergeychuk, *"the number of persons with academic degrees and titles did not meet the needs of higher educational institutions"* ([Sergeychuk, 2002: 8](#)). In a Memorandum titled, the *"status of training teachers in teacher education establishments in the Republic"*, states that, higher educational establishments of the Republic in the 1950s recruited only 18.5% of teachers with scientific degrees and ranks. The issue of ensuring qualified teaching staff of universities was very acute, and therefore at the state level, some steps had to be taken to improve the situation.

In the 1950s also, there was an expanded admission for graduate schools. Moreover, permission was granted to undertake research trips, sabbaticals, internships and summer graduate school. Nominations were granted to able university graduates to teach. In addition to these policies, directives were given to universities to make use of the works of doctors and candidates of Sciences, and graduates of leading educational establishments. According to Sidorchuk (1998), *"training of scientific and scientific-pedagogical personnel in 1955 occurred in 85 high educational establishments and in 101 universities and research institutions, the Institute of Advanced Training of Physicians and the Institute for Training Teachers of Social Sciences"* (p. 13). For the period of the fifth five-year plan, the number of scientific workers in the USSR increased from 22.4 to 30.2 thousand persons, including doctors of Sciences – from 0.9 to 1.1 thousand and candidates of Sciences – from 6.1 to 10.6 thousand ([Institute of History of Ukraine, n.d.](#)).

According to V. Kozlov, despite the improvement of the qualitative composition of teachers, the level of their academic qualifications regressed their quantitative growth ([Kozlov, 1984](#)). As a result, though the 1953/54 academic year for the universities recorded 15347 scientific-pedagogical staff, about 783 people had a degree of doctor of science with an additional 5010 being professors ([Lyubchenko, 1954](#)). Within that same period, the qualitative component of the personnel for educational institutions began to face some challenges. To curb these challenges, each College was required to prepare perspective plan for the training of scientific-pedagogical specialists through postgraduate studies including schedules for teaching staff. Nevertheless, such formal approaches to handling such situations were not favorable.

The document of 1972 titled *"the future development of higher education"*, also focused on strengthening departments by employing highly qualified teachers. In particular: the extension of the practice with the *"secondment of qualified scientific and pedagogical staff in universities lacked highly qualified teaching staff for reading lecture courses, assisting in the improvement of*

the educational process and the organization of scientific research" (Lyubchenko, 1954: 9). This initiative was done to further improve the work of graduates at the Pedagogical Institutes and to also strengthen the controls over the preparation and training of scientific and pedagogical staff (Ministry of Education of the Ukrainian SSR, 1972).

The specificity of the Soviet period, given the subject of this paper showed that the main problems exhibited in the training of teachers were discussed at the reporting-election party conferences, plenums, the Bureau of the regional committees and the district committees of the party was covered on the pages of the Party-Soviet press. Party committees created a Commission to provide verification and implementation assistance to teacher training institutions and pedagogical colleges, education departments and schools, and other primary Communist party organizations. Meetings were held with heads of bodies of national education, principals, and secretaries of party organizations within educational institutions, municipal and district assembly of teachers, communists, intellectuals, meetings of party and Soviet workers, teachers, lecturers and students (Kozlov, 1984).

Actively monitored staffing of universities, as was required at the levels of both Ministry and faculties, reported on scientific and teaching staff of the university, faculty, department and their scientific capacity-building. For an example, the report on the work of the Department of Technical Disciplines in the 1986–1987 year at the Kherson Pedagogical Institute by Krupskaya (1986) noted that the population of employees included: teachers – 11, doctors of science – 0, candidates of Sciences, associate professors – 6, with no scientific degrees and titles – 5, and members of the CPSU – 3. One thing was certain with the past; the Communist Party controlled the system of education in Ukraine. Their controlled covered teachers' training, and the Council of Ministers RSRS. They also controlled the implementation of orders, decrees, laws of the Central Committee of the CPSU and ideological and theoretical content and methodological level of training sessions, best practices of teachers, the level of organization of pedagogical and industrial practice, and the qualitative composition of staffing.

Besides, the doctors who were in the system got overwhelmed due to the fact that most Ukrainians were not able to study the 'stuff' required in the doctoral programs. Chief among the factors that led to this decline was because they were not provided for by the normative legal documents of the USSR. It was as well found out that, there was a tight control over the staffing of higher education institutions by the Soviet leadership in the Ukrainian Republic. Undeniably, this control affected the vertical administrative interaction in the USSR and was actively built on the basis of normative-legal documents of the USSR (Krupskaya, 1986).

Subsequently, scientists from all Soviet republics were admitted into the doctoral program from only the leading Russian universities. Another challenge was that, it was opened only to those employers who have received appropriate directives, given the country's leadership in Moscow. In effect, this became a common feature for increasing the qualitative composition of teaching staff in higher educational institutions [i.e. steady tendency to train candidates of Sciences, associate professors] in Ukraine between the periods of 1950 and 1990. Taking to attention the complexity and the diversity of producing pedagogical personnel over the years, it is necessary for future studies in this direction to raise questions about the impact of these historical revolutions on modern day education in Ukraine. Concerns about the quantity and quality of staffing higher education establishments in the independent Ukraine can equally be looked at.

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