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**ZLEPŠENÍ POSTAVENÍ UČITELE  
VE SPOLEČNOSTI A JEHO VLIV NA KVALITU  
ŽIVOTNÍHO STYLU A RELAXACI**

**IMPROVING THE POSITION OF TEACHERS  
IN SOCIETY AND ITS IMPACT ON QUALITY  
OF LIFE AND RELAXATION**

**POPRAWA STATUSU NAUCZYCIELA  
W SPOŁECZEŃSTWIE I JEHO WPŁYW  
NA JAKOŚĆ STYLU ŻYCIA I RELAKSACJI**

**ABSTRAKT**

Tato práce se zaměřuje na zlepšení postavení učitele a jeho vliv na kvalitu životního stylu a relaxaci. Učitelé jsou klíčovými činiteli ve vzdělávacím systému a mají významný dopad na životy svých studentů. Bohužel, ve společnosti často nedostává tomuto povolání uznání a prestiž, kterou by si jistě náležitě zasloužilo. Tento článek se zabývá možnostmi, jak zlepšit postavení učitele a jaký vliv by to mělo na jejich kvalitu

života a schopnost relaxovat. V rámci studie jsou analyzovány různé aspekty, včetně finančního ohodnocení, veřejného vnímání, profesního rozvoje a pracovního prostředí. Klíčovými faktory pro zlepšení postavení učitele jsou ohodnocení vyššího stupně uznání, uznání ze strany veřejnosti, podpora profesního zajištění a příznivého pracovního prostředí.

**Klíčová slova:** Učitel, postavení, kvalita životního stylu, relaxace, uznání, platové ohodnocení, profesní rozvoj, pracovní prostředí, veřejné vnímání, vzdělávání, společnost.

### ABSTRAKT

Ta praca skupia się na poprawie statusu nauczyciela i jego wpływu na jakość stylu życia i relaksacji. Nauczyciele są kluczowymi czynnikami w systemie edukacji i mają istotny wpływ na życie swoich uczniów. Niestety, ta profesja często nie otrzymuje uznania i prestiżu, który zdecydowanie na to zasługuje w społeczeństwie. Niniejszy artykuł omawia możliwości poprawy statusu nauczyciela oraz wpływu, jaki miałyby to na ich jakość życia i zdolność do relaksacji. W ramach badania analizowane są różne aspekty, w tym wynagrodzenie finansowe, percepcja społeczna, rozwój zawodowy i środowisko pracy. Kluczowymi czynnikami poprawy statusu nauczyciela są wyższe uznanie, uznanie społeczne, wsparcie rozwoju zawodowego i korzystne środowisko pracy.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Nauczyciel, pozycja, jakość życia, relaksacja, uznanie, wynagrodzenie, rozwój zawodowy, środowisko pracy, postrzeganie społeczne, edukacja, społeczeństwo.

### ABSTRACT

This work focuses on improving the position of teachers and their influence on the quality of lifestyle and relaxation. Teachers are key actors in the education system and have a significant impact on the lives of their students. Unfortunately, this profession often lacks the recognition and prestige it undoubtedly deserves in society. This article addresses possibilities for improving the status of teachers and the impact it would have on their quality of life and ability to relax. Various aspects are analyzed within the study, including financial compensation, public perception, professional development, and working environment. Key factors for improving the position of teachers include greater recognition, public acknowledgement, support for professional advancement, and a favorable working environment.

**Keywords:** Teacher, position, quality of lifestyle, relaxation, recognition, financial compensation, professional development, work environment, public perception, education, society.

## INTRODUCTION

Teachers play an indispensable role in society and significantly influence the education of an entire nation. Education International, an international trade union organization representing education sector workers, officially published an online version of the report titled “Global Teacher Status Report 2021” on October 13, 2021. The aim of the report was to map changes in the status of teachers and the teaching profession from 2018 to 2021. Source: skolskeodbory.cz, online, cited July 10, 2023.

The report focuses on the status of teachers, issues of remuneration and working conditions, while also describing other current topics in the education sector. The report states that in many countries, teachers have growing concerns about the rise of precarity (i.e., insecurity regarding employment conditions) in the teaching profession. This negatively affects the attractiveness of the teaching profession for current and prospective new candidates.

According to the Education International report, the majority of trade unions perceive the media portrayal of teachers as unfavorable. Reasons for teachers leaving the profession vary and include a lack of professional support, limited opportunities for career growth, increased workload, and inadequate salary compared to other professions requiring similar levels of education.

Support for teachers and their professional development are not prioritized by governments, leading to a lack of investment in these areas. Overall, teachers’ working conditions have worsened over the past three years. Education unions believe that further education for educational professionals should align with their real needs, be accessible during working hours, and provided free of charge.

## 1. THE INFLUENCE OF WORK ACTIVITY ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF TEACHERS

Work has been a part of human life since ancient times. The activities that individuals engage in not only benefit themselves but also facilitate the lives of others. The same applies to the work of teachers, who not only fulfill an educational role but primarily a nurturing one. For teachers, work does not end with the ringing of the bell; it continues with additional teaching hours or even tasks that have little to do with the teaching profession. These primarily involve bureaucratic matters that teachers must attend to. The same can be seen in the preparatory phase of teaching, which teachers predominantly handle in their free time at home. The notion that teachers only teach a few hours is naïve and diverges from reality in many aspects.

Work activity, employment, or profession is a part of each one of us since the time we devote to work is roughly equal to our personal free time. Therefore, it has a significant impact on our attitudes, perceptions, satisfaction, and mental well-being. The same applies to the teaching profession, where teachers spend a considerably longer time at work compared to other professions. Teaching does not provide immediate satisfaction; rather, needs are fulfilled over a longer period of time when the teacher's intentions are realized (Matějka, 2021).

Ultimately, it is about imparting knowledge and skills to students, where the expected outcome of knowledge is either fulfilled or not. Therefore, frustration from failures in the teaching profession is more common than in other professional fields. All of this negatively affects the teacher's psyche and significantly influences their attitudes towards students and the public. Teaching work does not help satisfy basic and higher-order needs; instead, it involves self-realization, reinforcement of values and attitudes, and the formation of social identity (Čadová et al., 2006).

Quality of life is often described as self-sufficiency, autonomy, dignity, personal growth, satisfaction in social interactions, cultural connectedness, creativity, and the ability to contribute to society through one's work. In the contemporary world, the study of work and life quality is an interpersonal matter (Čadová et al., 2006).

Work is frequently associated with a high quality of life. The teaching profession has always been on the edge of conformity, respect, and recognition, although paradoxically, it still ranks high among attractive professions, with exceptions among the views of educators who perceive their profession critically and differently from the general society. Work and what a person does are part of their identity, their sense of self. A person's worth is often defined by their accomplishments rather than their character (Goodson, Hargreaves, 2003).

Work determines one's social position, and its importance is primarily determined by societal trends and needs. In our modern society, employees play a central role, with a deep tradition in society and being the driving force of the economy (Šimíčková, 2010). According to Freud, work is a bond that connects us to reality, as stated by Mayerová and Růžička (2008). Work allows us to socially integrate and identify with others in society, establish friendships, share personal experiences, engage in joint activities, and more (Matějka, 2021).

## 2. THE PROFESSIONALIZATION CONTINUUM OF TEACHERS

Professionalization can be described as a set of competencies (professional qualities, experiences, or specializations) expected from individuals in a professional role. Teachers must meet these conditions unconditionally and appropriately. The teaching profession requires a complex set of knowledge, experiences, skills, and, above all, a psychosocial understanding of education and upbringing. Therefore, it cannot

be expected that the theoretical framework will be simple and straightforward. For the teaching profession to be perceived as professional by society, it must consciously fulfill the specified aspects of various professionalism criteria (Walterová, 2001).

From the fundamental characteristics mentioned below, it can be inferred that some conditions are being met, while others have not yet been fulfilled. A significant problem is the substantial increase in unqualified teachers in the last two years, 2018 and 2019, at the primary school level. Their exponential growth may exceed up to 2 % of the capacity of unqualified teachers in the Czech Republic, which means 3,000 unqualified teachers out of 150,000 educational staff in the Czech education system. Mastery of all the professional skills that shape a teacher's personality takes time and occurs in developmental stages, which primarily come with age and long-term practice.

Teacher professionalization is influenced by several factors that contribute to the decline in the quality of the Czech education system. We will mention some of them:

- Aging teacher population: The retirement of teachers is an unfortunate phenomenon in recent years, affecting not only the Czech Republic but also countries such as Germany, Sweden, Norway, Italy, and many others.
- Feminization of Czech schools: This primarily applies to pre-schools and primary schools, where over 98 % of teachers are women. The problem lies mainly in the teacher's attitude and their perspective on teaching and upbringing. Women are more inclined to effectively educate the next generation of students compared to their male counterparts. Maternal instinct plays a significant role, predisposing female teachers, just like mothers, to care for and nurture their offspring, making them more suitable candidates for primary school teaching positions. Men do not have inherent maternal instincts like women, who are natu-

rally inclined to raise and care for their children. Male teachers who choose to work in primary schools find themselves in a predominantly female environment, and their division of labor may differ from the standard. Additionally, working at a primary school may not be as attractive and financially rewarding for men. They tend to prefer secondary schools, where salaries are higher, and technical expertise is also required. The prestige of a teacher at a secondary school holds more weight than that of a primary school teacher (Bendl, 2002).

- Unqualified teachers: In recent years, there has been an increase in pedagogical staff who do not meet the requirements for qualification and expertise. It seems evident that the main cause behind this phenomenon is the unattractiveness of the profession due to low financial remuneration and the high demands of the teaching profession. The Czech government has decided to address this problem in its own way. In Czech schools, individuals who have a connection with children and have achieved minimum educational requirements, such as passing the secondary school leaving examination and completing a minimum pedagogical program at a university, are allowed to teach. According to a study conducted in 2009 by Dr. Kateřina Trnková, Lucie Chaloupková, MSc., and Dr. Dana Knotová, out of 537 respondents involved in the research in small classrooms of Czech primary schools, 237 (44.1 %) did not meet the qualifications of a teacher. Therefore, 97 individuals (18 %) were pursuing qualification through external studies at a university, and 140 individuals (26.1 %) confirmed that they were not supplementing their qualifications (Knotová, Trnková, Chaloupková, 2009).
- Quality of teacher's work: Among the direct factors influencing the quality of a teacher, qualification stands out as a necessary and essential aspect for carrying out their work professionally

and at a high level of expertise. The way we convey information to students reflects primarily on their personal perception of the world, reality, and their attitudes towards others. A teacher not only teaches but also imparts their visions, attitudes, and life experiences to young individuals who are seeking autonomy in a world they are just beginning to understand. Therefore, it is crucial to determine the importance of a teacher's personal qualities and how they influence students. To comprehend the concept of a good teacher, it is necessary to consider the conditions in which a teacher's personality is formed. Can we create such conditions to have a universal model of education for future generations of teachers (Walterová, 2002)

### 3. STANDARD OF PEDAGOGICAL QUALITY

In recent times, pedagogical standards and their modifications for the 21st century have been increasingly mentioned. The International Step by Step Association (ISSA), a professional framework for quality, has been addressing the need for enhancing and establishing standards since 2002, aiming for measurability on a global scale. Under the auspices of the Step by Step Association, experts from across Europe and the United States created the Standards of the Program, which describe the requirements for student-oriented educational programs and teacher work (Kadlec et al., 2007). In 2010, these standards were revised in a document titled "Competent Educator of the 21st Century: ISSA's Definition of Quality Pedagogy." Over time, the document underwent further revisions with the input of two practitioners and teachers who implemented their insights into the program. The project had to be adjusted to align with Czech conditions and focus primarily on preschool and primary education (Kargerová, Krejčová et al., 2016).



The document reflects the latest international pedagogical and didactic trends for the 21st century. It serves as a tool, framework, and example of professional practice, self-reflection, and self-evaluation. The project aims to respect the uniqueness of the pedagogical profession, its complexity, the teacher's approach to knowledge, and, above all, their passion and love for knowledge transmission. The International Step by Step Association's professional framework for quality defines the following areas of educational processes, which reflect precise requirements, the teacher's needs, and their perception of teaching (Kargerová, Krejčová et al., 2016).

Areas of educational processes according to ISSA standards:

- Communication
- Family and community
- Inclusion, diversity, and democratic values
- Planning and assessment
- Educational strategies
- Learning environment
- Professional development (Kargerová, Krejčová et al., 2016, p. 2)

#### **4. WORKLOAD SITUATIONS IN TEACHER PRACTICE**

Řehulka and Řehulková (1998) differentiate the workload of teachers into physical and psychological aspects. When physical workload dominates, teachers themselves do not consider it demanding or stressful. They experience a moderate level of physical fatigue during teaching, mainly due to walking and standing up from chairs. Teachers often move between desks or pace around the board. It is a position of dominance that teachers assume in the classroom to have an overview of the students and to be visible. Howev-

er, many teachers also experience another form of fatigue related to vocal cords and voice weakness during continuous lecturing. From a medical perspective, teachers are often criticized for improper vocal hygiene, including proper articulation and effective voice use. According to Řehulka and Řeháková (1998), the workload of teachers, especially psychological workload, can be further categorized into sensory, mental, and emotional aspects (Krninský, 2012).

- **Sensory:** Teachers perform their work with full concentration, involving a significant part of their brain. High demands are placed on auditory and visual perceptions.
- **Mental:** There are requirements for processing multiple thought processes, including mathematical and logical information processing that teachers then interpret to ensure students' logical understanding. Often, these processes need to be repeated to achieve true comprehension of the subject matter.
- **Emotional:** Teachers are aware of their position and the burden placed on them. Sometimes they react hesitantly or adopt a neutral stance in response to students' or group's answers. This is a natural phenomenon without which teachers would not be who they are, primarily good individuals (Řehulka and Řeháková, 1998).

## 5. RELAXATION IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Preparation and implementation of the self-healing process require time. To achieve and initiate psychohygiene, the concept of “flow” in the inner dimension of the psyche, which refers to the state of flow or merging of energy, is used. To enter such a state, it is necessary to learn how to breathe correctly. Proper breathing enhances brain blood flow, activating it for the process of healing. According to Švamberka and Šauerová (2018, p. 66), “adopting principles of mental hygiene is an important

part of personal development, and in the case of the teaching profession, the adoption of these principles can be considered a significant aspect of professional development.”

A crucial aspect of mental hygiene is the implementation of preventive functions, which prevent illness and poor psychological well-being of individuals. There are many possibilities to manage poor mental and physical states for teachers. For example, various wellness activities are offered to educational professionals as part of their benefits package.

Docent Cathala (2007) describes several types of activities that significantly influence this process, including:

- Activities related to the range of movement (physical exertion of muscles), which constitutes about 10 % of the overall regenerative cycle of psychohygiene.
- Taking care of the body (skin, hair) through various regenerative massages, salt baths, whirlpools, or cold exposure, has a considerable impact not only on the physical system but also on psychological experience. These activities release a large amount of endorphins, which are opioid peptides, inducing feelings of happiness and well-being in the human body. These processes account for approximately 20 % of the overall regenerative cycle of psychohygiene.
- Healthy nutrition is another essential aspect as the foundation of a good and healthy life. Proper nutrition does not burden the human body with toxins that can disrupt the digestive system’s functioning and cause associated difficulties. Healthy nutrition contributes to about 10 % of the overall regenerative cycle of psychohygiene.

## CONCLUSION:

Improving the status of teachers in society can have a positive impact on their quality of life and relaxation. Reasons for teachers leaving the profession vary and include a lack of professional support, limited career growth opportunities, increased workload, and inadequate salary compared to other professions with similar educational requirements. Enhancing these conditions could increase teacher satisfaction and improve their quality of life.

The status of teachers in society is influenced by various factors, including educational qualifications for teaching, economic considerations, and moral expectations that teachers must adhere to in society. Improving these conditions could enhance the prestige of the teaching profession and consequently improve the status of teachers in society. This could have a positive impact on classroom climate and relationships between teachers and students.

Improving the status of teachers in society could also contribute to an increased interest in the teaching profession and consequently enhance the quality of education. Teachers would have more time and resources for their professional development, leading to an improvement in the quality of teaching. Thus, improving the status of teachers in society could have a positive impact not only on teachers themselves but also on society as a whole.

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