

ACADEMIC TEACHERS UNDER STRESS IN THE PUBLISH OR PERISH ERA



Anna Wieczorek, Maciej Mitreęa

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INTRODUCTION

People working in contemporary academia face a variety of challenges nowadays. According to Bell et.al. (2012), over the last fifteen years, pressure at work has been continually rising within global academia. Challenges that scholars now face concern their scientific progress in view of the wind of change in today's universities, issues connected with publishing in recognizable, international journals and working in multi-cultural teams (Hicks, 2009). At the same time, those scholars have to share their knowledge with students and many of them may find it all together tiring, boring and frustrating. All such challenges may result in occupational stress, therefore the focus of this monograph is on the issues concerning occupational stress of academic teachers who are said to be experiencing a higher level of strain than other occupational groups (Kinman and Jones, 2004). When scholars suffer stress, they become less effective educators and scientists, and since they have impact on the lives of many people (e.g. students, other faculty members), they should be regularly monitored and their emotional well being should be managed at university (Lease, 1999). There are numerous studies concerning general teacher stress, but much fewer studies on job stress experiences at the university level, so it is a gap worth filling (Leung, 2000). What is more, Leung (2000) concludes that such research carried out so far has been West-oriented only, so it would be worthwhile to investigate how occupational stress affects the life and career of other scholars, e.g. from post-communist countries.

Academic teachers fall into a broader category of teachers in general and, so far, much has been said in relation to pedagogical and cognitive concerns connected with teaching (Freeman and Richards, 1996), rather than the relationships that teachers have with others in the workplace (Hargreaves, 2000). Such relationships may affect teacher development and even have an influence on whether a given teacher stays within the profession or leaves it. Academic teachers do not only come into contact with their students, but also with other scholars while taking part in various research projects and conferences. Often these research partners do not speak the same language and have different cultural backgrounds which many scholars may find stressful. Collaboration is, though, necessary in order to do and disseminate

good research, especially in view of the new regulations unifying scientific promotion rules in nearly all European countries and many other countries around the world. All scholars are forced to work in English since English language is academic lingua franca and science is international in nature. Scholars need to speak English fluently in order to communicate with foreign colleagues and to write in English in order to publish in respectable (i.e. impact factor) journals. This all brings a lot of emotional tensions to academic teachers.

This book is devoted to academic teacher stress and academic collaboration as a stressor, and at the same time, a leverage to scholars' career. It comprises four chapters. Chapter one is an endeavour to give a theoretical perspective on the stress of academic teachers. As there are only a few studies on job stress experiences at the university level (Leung, 2000), general teacher stress is elaborated on and its potential relations to the stress experienced by scholars. Chapter two comprises a description of empirical study design and study results, which in this case are, with regard to factors evoking stress among academic teachers. Third chapter presents the main research results. This research was qualitative in nature and it was based on interviews conducted with academic teachers employed mainly in post-communist countries. The study results suggests that many stressors faced by scholars originate from their necessity to collaborate with other scholars, often on the international level. To acquire an in-depth picture of this collaboration-related mechanism, we also conducted a focus group interview. A group interview enabled determining to what extent and in what way a collaboration impacts the well-being of teachers working in contemporary academia and whether it exerts only negative influence, or maybe it can also be treated as a leverage to one's career. The fourth and final chapter describes the role that collaboration plays in the life of scholars, including research results devoted to this issue. Research conclusions and suggestions for further research are presented at the end of the book.

This book is dedicated to all university teachers from all over the world that choose a very difficult profession and struggle nowadays within the "publish and perish" academic culture. Authors are grateful for the support they received from scholars that participated in the research project. Our informants openness allowed us to look through their own private angles at modern academia. Our informants open their hearts with regard to difficult situations they needed to face in work and provided very informative stories that build empirical fundamentals for this book.

We believe that this book can contribute to the ongoing debate on the development and institutional changes that occur within academia in post-communist countries and all other countries that aim at leveraging their productivity at university level. As many countries experience nowadays radical changes in their academic systems (e.g. with regard to the academic promotion criteria), this book may work as a reference for authorities at the university and ministry level that prepare institutional changes in academia and manage human resources at universities. Last but not least, all scholars interested in occupation stress, academic networking and their impact on academic productivity may use this book in their work. According to authors' knowledge this book combined with other books that were published recently (Mitreġa, et al. 2014, Mitreġa et al., forthcoming in 2016) are the sole academic works devoted explicitly to attitudes and behaviour of scholars from post-communist countries.

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CHAPTER ONE

STRESS IN THE WORK OF ACADEMIC TEACHERS – THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter is devoted to the academic teacher stress, it is a theoretical perspective on the stress potentially experienced by scholars, who also happen to be teachers. As it has already been stated, there are only a few studies on job stress experiences at the university level (Leung, 2000), therefore general teacher stress is elaborated on and its potential relations to the stress experienced by scholars are then discussed.

The nature of teacher stress

The studies on teacher stress carried out in different countries show that it is a cross-cultural phenomenon and a very serious problem (Borg and Reading, 1991). Many researchers nowadays focus on the area of teacher stress as it has become a widespread phenomenon and a source of great concern (Williams and Gersch, 2004, Kyriacou, 2001, Lazarus, 2006, Jepson and Forrest, 2006). Teaching is generally characterized as a high stress occupation (Akinyele, 2014). Statistics show that there exists a staffing crisis in various types of schools (Botwink, 2007). Bontwink (2007) mentions that researchers indicate that this crisis is a nationwide phenomenon. Teacher stress has been identified as a major problem in nine out of ten workplaces (Warren and Towl, 1995) and teachers and teaching unions are more and more aware and worried because of that (Brown, Ralph, and Brember, 2002). In the teaching profession the issue of occupational stress is extremely important for the reason of possible health problems and reduction in work performance that the stress can lead to (Quick and Quick, 1984;

Borg and Reading, 1991; Van Der Linde, 2000). Teacher stress is also an important dimension to consider while trying to understand teacher-student relationships, especially the negative ones (Yoon, 2002).

The teacher stress may not only lead to physical and mental health problems, but it also affects the quality of a teachers' work and their relationships with other people (students, research partners, family members), therefore it deserves considerable attention. It may be assumed that teachers whose mental or physical health suffers due to occupational stress are less effective workers. Such teachers are very often on leave, their performance tends not to be good enough to pass their knowledge on, even if they do go to work every day. Lu (1999) emphasizes that stress is nowadays not only a problem for individuals, but for employers as well. There was a large research focus on the environmental factors contributing to teacher stress, and now also more and more researchers try to investigate the role of individual factors concerning teacher stress (Jepson and Forrest, 2006). Stress cannot be avoided in human life and, as it has been indicated earlier, it is a part of the professional life of a teacher as well. It seems, therefore, essential to focus on the roots, specificity and effects of this phenomenon in order to understand its nature and find effective ways of coping with it, since occupational stress lowers productivity and has a negative effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Akinyele et.al., 2014).

Research on teacher stress

The pioneer in research on teacher stress was Chris Kyriacou who became interested in this topic when he started his teaching career in 1972, and who published a review of research on teacher stress in 1977. It was also the first time when the term "teacher stress" was used in a title of a paper. Since then, the interest in teacher stress grew rapidly around the world (Kyriacou, 2001). Before, there was particularly no research literature related to teacher stress, only by the end of 1990s has this literature become voluminous (Kyriacou, 2001). Kyriacou (2001) suggests five directions for prospective research on teacher stress. These are: the influence of educational reforms on the levels of teacher stress, the exploration why some teachers can retain a positive commitment to their work and successfully negotiate periods of career reappraisals while their colleagues cannot, the clarification of the nature of stress processes triggered by excessive demands or self-image, the assessment

of the effectiveness of some coping strategies, and the role of teacher-pupil interaction and classroom climate in teacher stress (Kyriacou, 2001).

In this work the focus is on the influence of the recent reforms in academia on the stress of academic teachers since those reforms are connected with changing the path towards academic promotion. It now entails publishing in impact factor journals which, in turn, is usually connected with cooperating with foreign peers and that may generate stress due to language and intercultural problems. Additionally, teacher-student interaction will also be of vital importance here hence academic teachers need to interact with students on a regular basis and they usually do not have appropriate pedagogical background which, in turn, may result in their low ability to cope with some problems associated with teaching. Student evaluations have an influence on the promotion of teachers and that may also generate a lot of stress, not only due to promotional issues mentioned above, but also due to the self-image of teachers.

Defining teacher stress and related notions

According to Austin, Shah and Muncer (2005), stress is difficult to define for the reason that it has different implications for different individuals. There were, however, researchers who tried to work out a definition of this phenomenon, which built the ground for scientific research in this area.

Hans Selye (1976), who is said to be “the father of stress theory”, defined stress as an unusual reaction of the organism to all demands set to a particular person. Selye (1976) and Leach (1984) emphasise that stress should not be associated with something negative only, because it can also be a positive stimulus. Selye (1976) claims that there are two kinds of stress: eustress, which is stimulating stress and distress which is negative and harmful to one’s organism. Selye (1976) classifies stress into four categories which, beginning from the worst one, are: hyperstress, hypostress, distress and eustress. According to Leach (1984), some amount of stress can even be beneficial hence it stimulates people to develop new coping strategies and, as a result, to reduce the anxiety created by difficult demands and to reduce the frustration caused by non-facilitative features of the environment. Such situation may lead to greater success at work as a result of positive personal or organisational development. Stein and Cutler (2002) are of the opinion that stress is a total response to one’s environmental demands and pressures and it

cannot be avoided in life. People should rather find out how to deal with it. As it can be observed, Selye (1976) and Stein and Cutler (2002) do not see stress in negative terms only, the first one perceives some positive aspects of it, and Stein and Cutler (2002) draw our attention to the fact that this phenomenon is inevitable and we should be able to live with it.

The definition of stress provided by Kyriacou (1987), seems to be most accurate for the purpose of this work as we are going to deal with negative aspects of stress only, and in accordance with it, stress is a response syndrome of the negative affects which are developed in a situation when there are prolonged and increased pressures that cannot be controlled by an individual's coping strategies. Stress should not be confused with nervous tension or anxiety since they occur as regular features in many cases and do not have a long-lasting impact on the working capacities of the employees (Akinyele et.al., 2014). Some researchers attempted to define stress in general, but since in this work the focus is on the stress of academic teachers, it seems worthwhile to focus more on the understanding of occupational stress.

There is little consensus in the literature as to how to define occupational stress, but, in general, the concept of job stress has been described in two ways. The first refers to the physiological responses of individuals resulting from their frustrations or negative appraisals of their interaction with the environment (Leach, 1984). This can be a personal perception of a threat from the environment, a discrepancy between one's own abilities and job demands, or the perceived frustration of attempts to meet important goals. Physiological responses mentioned above can be, among others, increased heart-rate, blood pressure, etc. The second way of describing job stress refers to the stressors (or the negative stimulus characteristics) of the environment itself that can be associated with a certain job and which create anxiety for a person who tries to meet job demands to their own satisfaction and frustrate attempts to meet important goals (Leach, 1984). Teacher stress belongs to occupational stress, but there have been researchers who endeavoured to define it more elaborately and in strict relation to teaching.

When it comes to defining teacher stress, most researchers (e.g. Borg, 1991, Williams and Gersch, 2004, Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis and Parker, 2000, Lazarus, 2006) seem to unanimously choose the definition constructed by Kyriacou (1987) which says that ***teacher stress may be defined as the experience by the teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher.*** (p. 3)

In this definition stress is viewed as a negative emotional experience that can be triggered by a teacher's perception that his/her work situation was a threat to their ego or well-being. Kyriacou (2001) also indicates that there were some researchers who were of the opinion that stress is the level of pressure and demands made on an individual, while the reaction to such stress should be called strain. Leach (1984) calls for a comprehensible definition of teacher stress that reflects not only the importance of personal perspectives of the teacher, but of the school environment as well. Therefore, taking these things into account, Leach (1984: 160) defines teacher stress as: *a state of the individual in which physiological and biochemical changes in the organism (such as increased heart-rate, blood pressure or the release of adrenocorticotrophic hormones into the bloodstream) occur as a result of some discrepancy between the teacher's perceived work demands and ability, or an anticipation of negative consequences (such as a threat to self-esteem or well-being) following a failure to cope with demands seen as important by self or others, or following the frustration of attempts to apply skills effectively to achieve goals perceived as important by the individual by factors in the school environment.*

Leach's definition seems more elaborate and environmental factors are taken into account there as well. The definition proposed by Kyriacou (2001), however, may imply that environmental factors are also given appropriate importance for the reason that it is said there that negative emotions of a teacher result from some aspects of their work, which can be environmental aspects, as well as personal ones or affective factors. This definition is probably so widely used because it is accurate, but simple at the same time. It cannot be denied, however, that it should be used by people who are quite familiar with the nature of stress/occupational stress and who are aware of all the components of such stress and who know that that definition is oversimplified in order to make it more convenient to use by researchers.

While defining stress and teacher stress, it is unavoidable to elaborate on the notion of stressor and burnout as well. A stressor is something within the environment that can act as a stimulus that is physical, psychological or behavioural in nature (Travers and Cooper, 1996, Jepson and Forrest, 2006); whilst burnout is a state of emotional, physical, mental and attitudinal exhaustion that may develop when a teacher cannot cope effectively with stress over a longer period of time or when he/she is exposed to an accumulation of pressure at work (Kyriacou, 2001; Jepson and Forrest, 2006).

Sources of teacher stress

The main factor triggering stress within an individual is their perception of some aspect of their situation as threatening to their self-esteem or well-being and that very perception triggers the emotional response of stress (Travers and Cooper, 1996; Kyriacou, 2000). The threat may be a real, or a very probable one that almost every teacher will classify as a threatening situation, such as, for instance, a student that suddenly becomes critical or is about to attack the teacher. There are, however, other situations that by some teachers may be perceived as a threat, whereas by others, not. These may be evaluations, correcting many tests, etc. Kyriacou (2000) stresses that in order to try to work out why the perception of a threat varies from person to person, and/or from situation to situation, three elements involved into it should be analysed.

First of all, there may be an aspect of the work situation that needs to be dealt with in some way, or that does not agree with a person's self – image of themselves as a teacher.

Secondly, if this aspect of a situation is not dealt with successfully, it is likely to have unfortunate consequences for the teacher. In general, dealing with this aspect of the situation is important.

Last, but not least, the teacher feels they are unlikely to be able to deal with this situation adequately.

Kyriacou (2000) claims that after taking into account those three elements, it is clear why the things and situations triggering stress vary so much. To his way of thinking, while facing such a situation as described above, teachers are likely to differ in what aspects of the situation they think need to be dealt with and whether it agrees with their self-image. For instance, in taking into account a student talking to their friend during a class, it may be found insulting and requiring an immediate reaction by one teacher, but a different teacher may simply feel unconcerned about this and may not take it as an affront to their self-image as a teacher. Another point worth making is that teachers differ in classifying a given situation as an important one and in whether the consequences of not doing so successfully will matter to any great extent. Such situation, may be, for example, making a good presentation at a staff meeting – some teachers will feel it is very important and its consequences may influence their future role in the schools, while others may feel this task is of little importance and consequence for them. The last thing is that teachers differ on how easily they feel they can deal with the situation successfully. All of these issues raised above suggest, in accordance with what Kyriacou (2000)

advocates, that a given teacher's perception of a threat very much depends on their unique appraisal of what this given situation means to them and whether they feel they can deal with it successfully.

There have been authors that attempted to classify and describe the sources of teacher stress. All those endeavours, however, were modifications of a typology proposed by Kyriacou (2000), and for that reason only this typology is going to be described here. Furthermore, this typology as most universal one, is best for the context of academic teaching as it does not focus on any type of teaching (e.g. teaching children, teaching languages, etc.) in particular. As mentioned earlier, academic teachers fall into a broader category of teachers in general, therefore general teacher stressors are to be described. Some of them relate to all teachers e.g. time pressures and workload, whereas others relate more to school classroom teaching (e.g. maintaining discipline). On the other hand, even such issues as discipline problems may affect the work of academic teachers, but in a different way than school teachers. In such cases it is explained how such factors may affect scholars.

Sources of teacher stress according to Kyriacou

Kyriacou (2000) indicates that there are ten areas considered as the most frequently occurring sources of stress reported by teachers (after Borg, 1990; Dunham and Varma: 1998). One should, of course, remember that every teacher has their own unique profile of what typically causes their stress. Therefore, apart from the ten main sources of stress that will be elaborated here, the main source of stress for a particular teacher may be something particular or context-related, not listed explicitly here, however such factor can be usually incorporated into one of 10 wider categories proposed by Kyriacou. The ten main sources of stress identified by Kyriacou (2000: 22-35) are:

- Teaching students who lack motivation
- Maintaining discipline
- Time pressures and workload
- Coping with change
- Being evaluated by others
- Dealing with colleagues
- Self-esteem and status
- Administration and management

- Role conflict and ambiguity
- Poor working conditions

Teaching students who lack motivation

Kyriacou (2000) and Wilhelm et al. (2000) are of the opinion that teachers find it very stressful, frustrating and exhausting if they are trying to encourage to work harder those students who are uninterested in making any effort to do well. Although such students very often tend to be polite and sociable, they are not motivated to do as well as they can. They rather try to work at a slow pace, they are unresponsive when asked questions and they lack initiative in terms of doing anything more than what is expected of them. At the same time, whenever possible, they will try to engage in social conversation, or hand in work that is incomplete and unfinished. Some students are constantly trying, to transfer their responsibilities to lecturers and in a situation when the latter point out that students should work harder, they complain that the school sets them too much to do. Kyriacou (2000), indicates that it may be extremely difficult to teach a group comprising of such students for the reason that teachers often find that they need to exert extra enthusiasm and effort into their teaching in order to create a more positive feel to the class. The situation seems better if there are a few motivated participants in the group, because thanks to their contribution and efforts, the teacher feels that the task is much easier. Teachers in general stress that it is the sheer effort of trying to animate students who lack interest that is the single greatest cause of their feelings of physical and emotional tiredness at the end of a working day. (Kyriacou, 2000: 23).

As it can be seen, a lot of stress is generated by the level of concentration that teachers typically have to sustain throughout the teaching day in communicating with students. Academic teachers need to interact and communicate with other people all the time and they might find it tiring and frustrating if the result of this interaction is not satisfying or if fulfilling the result entails a strenuous effort. This, in turn, may lead to the feelings of emotional exhaustion and occupational stress. Teachers feel that too much is demanded of them in relation to enhancing student motivation and it may lead to anxiety, problems with concentration, and reduction in work performance effectiveness (Quick and Quick, 1984). Additionally, such tiredness may imply a teachers' negative attitude towards their students and teaching them, which results in frustration, tension and stress. Many academic teachers lack pedagogical background since they were not educated to be teachers and they,

in this way, may lack skills and tools to motivate students. Additionally, one needs to remember that teaching is just a fraction of what a scholar needs to do at work. Regular school teachers teach pupils at school, deal with paperwork, prepare and mark tests – in general do things connected with teaching, organizing lessons and childcare at school. Academic teachers, though, apart from doing all that schoolteachers do (besides organizing childcare), must do and disseminate their research, attend conferences and workshops, better their knowledge of English in order to distribute research internationally, and co-work in multicultural teams (Wieczorek 2014b). This means that academic teachers are likely to face more stressors than other teachers.

Maintaining discipline

Another factor causing teacher stress, is maintaining discipline. According to Forlin (2001), disruptive behaviour and a lack of student discipline are rated more often by teachers as potential stressors than students' abilities, the lack of materials, or a suitable curriculum. There are two aspects of maintaining discipline that can cause stress (Kyriacou, 2000); first of all, it concerns the level of alertness and vigilance that a particular teacher needs to sustain during a lesson to prevent student misbehaviour. If students are bored, cannot understand a given task, lack a piece of equipment to do the task, have learning difficulties and these problems are not dealt with quickly, they may misbehave. Secondly, another aspect of maintaining discipline is dealing with misbehaviour that actually occurs. This may be the lack of attention, which can be dealt with easily, or something much more serious, such as, for example, student questioning what a teacher says. In case of the lack of student attention, it is usually enough to use eye contact or give a student a soft reprimand to solve the problem, whereas in case of the latter problem, the teacher needs to be very careful while choosing an appropriate strategy, staying calm and asserting a firm course of action afterwards. Kyriacou (2000) indicates that dealing with discipline is usually not a major problem for teachers, because they have developed a high level of skill in pre-empting discipline problems and in dealing with misbehaviour. Academic teachers, however, often lack pedagogical background since they were not educated to be teachers and for that reason may find discipline problems and student misbehaviour very threatening and tiring. Although university students are adults, they may misbehave in such a way as, for instance, chatting instead of listening to the lecturer, not preparing for the class, not bringing materials, or not participating in the discussion. Academic teachers, as people lacking pedagogical background, may not be able to solve such problems, or may be

strongly affected emotionally by the situation. In general, student misbehaviour is said to be one of the most common or persistent sources of teacher stress (Wilhelm et al., 2000) and it also affects academic teachers even in view of the fact that they work with adults.

Time pressures and workload

Boyle et al. (1995) found out that workload, together with student misbehaviour, were the two major contributors to stress. Pierce and Molloy (1990), claim that heavy workloads and time pressures in teaching are well-documented. According to Kyriacou (2000), a lot of stress results from the combination of having a heavy workload and tight deadlines which need to be met. Since teachers have to conduct classes on different topics, taking into account students' interests, abilities and motivations additionally, they really have much to do. Even if they should not be prepared from time to time, they still have to carry on the class, so it can be said that regular teaching is a continuous series of mini-deadlines to be met all the time. Furthermore, there are many other activities that academic teachers have to participate in, like, for instance writing reports, marking students' work, preparing materials, checking equipment and attending staff meetings, which all have associated tasks and deadlines. Of course, these are only duties referring to teaching and scholars need to also work on their professional development and research dissemination. If teachers establish successful routines and use effective time-management skills, they can prevent many problems. There are, however, occasions where heavy workload and associated deadlines put together, generate stress. Whenever it happens, teachers have to meet the demands made upon them as best as they can, but, in a situation when their performance falls below the level of their own expectations or below the expectations of others, the stress the teachers experience is likely to be high (Kyriacou, 2000). According to Tuetteman and Punch (2007), the workload is one of the main stressors teachers encounter at work. Kyriacou (2000) claims that work as a teacher can be unforgiving for the reason that students tend to get bored if a given class is not well prepared and colleagues may complain if some important deadlines and standards are not met. In that sense, therefore, the teacher will usually get immediate and critical feedback if others consider their performance inadequate. Such situations, of course, create pressure to perform well all the time, which is not always possible, which, in turn, leads to stress. Forlin (2001) states that workload, time management and a lack of general support (which he classifies under the common heading of administrative stressors), were recorded most frequently in various studies

as pervasive for teachers. In his (2001) opinion, these factors interrelated with workload are stressful because they are perceived as interfering with a teacher's instruction time, including increasing amounts of paperwork, extracurricular demands and interpersonal conflicts.

When it comes to academics, in the opinion of Christo and Pienaar (2006), such factors contributing to stress as a result of workload, e.g. working long hours, are expressed through the rules and regulations of universities (Akinyele et.al., 2014). In the work of academics a lot of time is spent not only on teaching, but, first of all, on science. In conclusion, academic teachers experience not only typical stress associated with teaching in general, but also stress connected with publishing papers, meeting foreign colleagues, or giving presentations during conferences. Bell et.al. (2012) the stress of mounting pressure to publish research, rising workloads, frequent restructuring and short-term contracts contribute to rising job stress. To make matters worse, academic teachers' salaries in developing countries tend not to be as satisfactory as salaries of their colleagues from more developed countries, which makes many teachers take on extra work Wiczorek (2014a), which, in turn, also contributes to time pressures and workload. It is, therefore, apparent that some teachers may have a too heavy workload and that they are under constant time pressures, which, according to Travers and Cooper (1996) and Kyriacou (2000), makes teachers stressed and, according to Brown, Ralph and Brember (2002), results in the reduction of work performance effectiveness and, in severe cases, burnout syndrome. Workload, in view of Smyth et.al. (2000), results in ineffective teaching and great tiredness, these two, in turn, result in teacher stress since they affect performance in a negative way.

Coping with change

Teachers need to change their working practices continually in order to take account of external demands from the ministry and other official bodies, concerning what should be taught, and how students' work should be assessed, reported and documented (Kyriacou, 2000). Such continuous changes are part of life as a teacher, some of them, however, may be imposed so fast, that the teachers have to quickly give up ways of working they were used to and that they were successful with, and replace them with other ways of working that they are not always clear about. What makes the matters worse, is the fact that the implemented changes sometimes strongly condemn the previous practices as out of date or ineffective. In such situations, teachers are aware of the criticism of previous practice, but, at the same time, they

are still uncertain about their ability and rationale to implement the new practice that is now demanded. Teachers are likely to experience stress when they have to change their practice because their job satisfaction and self-esteem rest heavily on the feeling that they are doing their job well. Academic teachers have to deal not only with changes concerning curriculum and teaching practices, but also ways of documenting students' progress and new promotional requirements concerning their own development (Wieczorek 2014a). New career path development entails new skills and practices (e.g. applying for grants, writing in English for impacted journals, co-working in international teams) and that may be perceived as a threat to one's ego. The changes that universities have been witnessing for the last twenty years, concern according to Bell et.al. (2012), growth of student numbers, increased focus on quality research, international and domestic competition. Changes are stressful in general, and taking into consideration the fact that academic teachers face changes connected with the very nature of teaching, together with promotion system changes, one may conclude that coping with change may be extremely stressful in case of scholars.

Being evaluated by others

Another problem that many teachers may experience is the fact that the work of teachers is continually being evaluated. The work is informally evaluated by students and by other teachers as well. What is more, teachers themselves constantly evaluate their own performance against the standards they have set for themselves and with respect to how well in their opinion their colleagues are doing their work (Kyriacou, 2000). Apart from this informal evaluation mentioned above, many forms of formal evaluation take place on a regular basis. These may take the form of professional development activities, such as schemes of staff appraisal, or external evaluations made by outside agencies. According to Kyriacou (2000), it is obvious that formal evaluation generates a high level of stress for most teachers and student teachers report this to be their major source of stress, exceeding dealing with discipline and workload. Even for experienced teachers, who are highly regarded by others and who are very confident in their skills, being evaluated is stressful. For those experienced ones, the fear concerns being criticized by an external evaluator despite others regarding their teaching high. Because of so much time and energy invested into developing their approach to teaching, the consequences of negative feedback may be devastating as they represent a major threat to teachers' self-esteem. For that reason, many teachers dread inspections because of the high level of stress generated by them which

causes stress-related illness and prompts teachers to leave the profession. Jeffrey and Woods, 1996), state that such inspections produce a high degree of trauma and the strong feeling amongst the staff that their self-worth and professional integrity were being undermined by the whole experience. Nowadays in the majority of Polish universities evaluation is organized each semester and many teachers tend to fear it due to the fact that it did not use to be like that in the past and older academic teachers especially are not used to it. Furthermore, younger scholars are sometimes observed by their more experienced colleagues and they find it embarrassing, or even extremely stressful. Scholars are also observed and evaluated while giving conference presentations and they then fear audience criticism.

Dealing with colleagues

Wilhelm et al. (2000) reports relations with staff to be a common source of stress for teachers. It may frequently happen that teachers have disagreements with each other. This may stem from different views on how something should be done, for example how much time should be given to different subjects or what format to use while writing school reports, etc. Sometimes a teacher in senior position has to encourage another teacher to change their practice or to criticise some aspect of their performance. The majority of teachers, for most of the time, are able to resolve problems and conflicts in a professional and positive manner; occasionally, however, a given problem may be addressed in such a manner that the quality of the working relationship between some members of staff is impaired (Kyriacou, 2000). If such feelings persist, future disagreements between these colleagues are possible, which can generate further stress for one or all of the teachers concerned. Many teachers obviously have a close working relationship with particular colleagues and when there are some disagreements between them and they still have to cooperate on a regular basis, the levels of stress generated by this can be high. In conclusion, people spend a lot of time at work, and it is natural, that they build close relations with their colleagues who they spent so much time with. It might be helpful to have friends in the workplace since they have somebody to talk to about their problems and worries. Besides, fellow teachers understand the problems their workmates encounter and may give useful advice. On the other hand, however, everyone has their own expectations towards the organization of work, tasks to do, curriculum and contacts with others and those expectations of various teachers may stand in opposition. In such a situation, conflicts are likely to occur, and for majority of people conflicts lead to stress, frustration and anxiety. Hence people differ, communication between

them and performing tasks together can be difficult and tiring for them and they need to learn how to cope with it in order to combat stress accompanying it. Academic teachers may easily fall victim of colleagues' jealousy concerning their popularity among students, impact factor of their academic work or h-index that concerns citations of their publications. Nowadays scholars are expected to work in teams, but some of them (e.g. those from post-soviet countries (Wieczorek, 2016a), may not be used to it due to the lack of such tradition. Besides, in some countries, in the process of schooling soft skills are not paid attention to and then, as a result, people lack appropriate social skills to cooperate with others, doing projects, etc. Now all scholars are expected to do it as it is easier to produce impacted publications in teams due to synergy effect (Wieczorek, 2014b), so some of them, not socially developed, may find it stressful, especially if the team is multicultural.

Self-esteem and status

Another type of stressor elaborated on by Kyriacou (2000) refers to self-esteem and status. Self-esteem refers to evaluations that people make about their own worth, Brown (2000) claims that any successful cognitive or affective activity cannot be carried out without at least some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence and belief in someone's capabilities for that activity. Janowski (1994) points out that the degree of self-esteem has influence on many aspects of human life. The best situation is when a person is characterised by high, but realistic level of self-esteem – it is self-esteem confirmed by other people. The threat of having one's self-esteem and status undermined makes people stressed. Nowadays there are public attacks on the teaching profession by politicians and other agencies and these can undermine a teachers' sense of the value of their work and the self-esteem in which their profession is held by the public. Although various surveys show that teachers, among other professional groups, are widely held in high self-esteem (Kyriacou, 2000), attacks on the quality of their work and the claims about failing standards in schools contribute to a lowering of teacher morale. The removal of levels of responsibility and decision making can also be the cause of diminishing teacher self-esteem. A good instance of the shift of the decision making from teachers to other agencies is the one of curriculum – in the past teachers were able to make certain decisions about curriculum matters and later on it was taken over by government agencies, what implicitly undermines their sense of status. Teachers often report that they sometimes feel that their efforts and the good work they do are not fully recognised by society and they are the ones to blame if the standards

of work their pupils achieve are low. Some teachers claim that it should be taken into account that there are limits to what they can achieve. As far as ambitious teachers are concerned, Kyriacou (2000) claims that a crucial period seems to come when they are about 35 years old and then they begin to see how realistic their initial career aspirations are and how difficult it will be to achieve them. The teachers simply become aware of the limits of their future career development at this stage. Even in case of unambitious teachers, however, the lack of promotion opportunities can generate stress. In case of scholars, one can witness a slightly different situation since they, unlike school teachers, have opportunities of promotion and the older they are, the more respected they usually become. They all, however, may have self-esteem problems, especially if criticized by others or while experiencing a change (e.g. curricular one, or one connected with their professional development). Scholars, who are often characterized by type-A personality (Wieczorek, 2014b), may suffer severe stress if their self-esteem is undermined by a third party. Those, who are non-native speakers of English and have to use this language while interacting with foreign colleagues, may experience problems with self-esteem if they have inhibitions concerning speaking a foreign language (Brown, 2000). Self-esteem and inhibition levels are closely connected (Wieczorek, 2016c), so language inhibitions of scholars have an influence on their self-esteem. This, in turn, if low, results in scholar stress.

Administration and management

While choosing their future profession, very few teachers-to-be are aware that this job entails administration and management apart from teaching. Kyriacou (2000) is of the opinion that most teachers are attracted to teaching because they think they will enjoy classroom teaching, focusing on topics they like and helping pupils to succeed. Teachers have to, however, carry out a range of administrative and managerial tasks additionally. In case of academic teachers these are recording information required by other agencies, monitoring budget when it comes to financing projects, appointing new staff (e.g. PhD candidates) and contributing to the decision making of senior management and do other paperwork in general. Some teachers tend to complain that this is not part of their job and they show their dissatisfaction with the administrative work they are required to do. Furthermore, administrative tasks connected with their own role as a teacher can also be heavy and may lead to work overload and stress as its result (Tuetteman and Punch, 2007). Marking exams according to criteria set by examination boards is time-consuming and stressful as a result. There are teachers that may be good at teaching their subject matter,

but who may not like doing administrative and managerial work. If such work contributes to a sense of heavy time pressure and workload, it may generate a high level of stress (Kyriacou 2000).

Role conflict and ambiguity

The role stress, and particularly the topics of role conflict and role ambiguity, have been a concern in organisational research for a long time. Conley and Woosley (2000) define role stress as anything about an organisational role that produces adverse consequences for the individual. Schuler et al. (1977) state that such role stresses as role conflict and role ambiguity, have been associated with a number of negative work outcomes hence they are usually associated with negatively valued states, such as tension, absenteeism, low satisfaction, low job involvement, low expectancies and task characteristics with a low motivation potential. Because of role stresses, not only an individual teacher's well-being is affected, but work commitment and employee retention as well, which seems to affect the whole school system in a way (Conley and Woosley, 2000). Dworkin, Haney and Telschow (1988) had also reported that role stress plays a significant role and public school teachers experience much stress as an effect of conjoining role conflict and role ambiguity. Conley and Woosley (2000) claim that regular teaching is an occupation where many role demands are present. Indeed, while conducting a class, a teacher can play several roles at the same time (Harmer, 2003). Scholars are teachers, researchers, project managers, conference organisers, etc. Sometimes some of the scholars' roles stand in opposition or are too time-consuming to perform others. Kyriacou (2000) defines role conflict as a situation when two or more roles of a teacher suggest different actions. As a result, meeting one set of expectations from organisational members, makes meeting other expectations more difficult for a teacher (Conley and Woosley, 2000). Stress is generated when a given teacher feels that role conflict makes it difficult to deal with an important situation successfully. As far as role ambiguity is concerned, it arises when a teacher feels that the tasks which make up a particular role and the level of performance expected of them in that role are not clear (Kyriacou, 2000). In other words, if a given teacher is not sure what they are expected to do, there is a threat that they may be criticised for poor performance. Similarly, teachers may be criticised for something that was not done and what had been expected of them to do, but what they had not been aware of. In modern academic environment characterized by changing promotion paradigms, and changing some principles concerning teaching students, academic teachers may experience great stress. According

to Kyriacou (2000), teachers are often sensitive to criticism and, as a result, role conflict and role ambiguity can be powerful sources of stress. One could also talk about role overload which can be witnessed when organisational members' expectations about a given teacher's behaviour are excessive (Conley and Woosley, 2000). Role overload can also generate teacher stress for a reason that it contributes to heavy workload which has already been elaborated on and stated as stress-generating. Scholars are nowadays expected to fulfil multiple role demands at work, such as teaching, research, consultation and supervision. Apart from teaching duties, academic teachers have many other duties connected with doing research, writing papers, working on projects and there may be witnessed a role conflict between teaching and research (Mitreğa and Wieczorek, 2015; Bell et.al., 2012). Such conflicts often result in stress (Travers and Cooper, 1996).

Poor working conditions

There seem to be situations where poor working conditions can be a source of stress for teachers. Such poor working conditions as e.g. a lack of adequate resources and materials, poor physical condition of a classroom building, inadequate level of support from administrative staff, lack of time for preparation, and a lack of opportunity for professional development activities cover a cost of potential sources of stress (Kyriacou, 2000). Stress is likely to be generated by things which are felt to hinder the teacher's ability to do their work, such as broken photocopier, the lack of space to keep materials or too short breaks. Taking into account heavy workload and time pressures that teachers face, even a simple problem connected with poor working conditions can generate stress, especially if a given teacher discovers shortly before a class is due to start that the equipment is broken or that they lack appropriate devices to conduct the class. Furthermore, the reasonable working conditions can contribute to teachers' self-esteem for the reason that the better their working conditions, the more likely the teachers are to feel that their self-image is enhanced (Kyriacou, 2000). Poor working conditions have the opposite effect and undermine teachers' self-image. Teachers often get physically tired in a situation when they have to cover great distances or a climb flights of stairs on a regular basis at school and such physical tiredness can make it more probable that other problems will generate stress. In case of scholars, infrastructure is equally important when it comes to teaching and research. The equipment availability such as overhead projector being used is very important due to the fact that university class lasts longer than an ordinary lesson and it is more difficult to maintain students' focus. Equipment is of help then, especially

while giving lectures. According to Akinyele et.al. (2014), resource inadequacy also affects the quality of research and publications produced by the academic staff to a large extent. Such inadequacy leads to job dissatisfaction which, in turn, has a bearing on the academic excellence of university workers. As far as infrastructure (e.g. university buildings) is concerned, it matters a lot since scholars receive foreign colleagues at work and for many of them the size and condition of office reflect their status at work.

Kyriacou (2000) has attempted to prepare a thorough study of factors evoking stress among teachers, he covered ten areas of teacher stress which were most common among the teachers he investigated. One should, however, realise that many of those above mentioned stressors are interconnected and they mutually affect one another and for this reason they should not be treated as separate groups of stressors, but rather as constituents of a certain whole,. This, therefore, seems a weakness of this typology. It happens very rarely that one person is affected just by one group of stressors and does not have problems with other stressful aspects of their work. Having problems with, for instance, discipline in the classroom usually entails problems with one's attitudes towards student motivation and self-esteem of the teacher. If a given teacher has problems with discipline, they are likely to get negative feedback from their colleagues or school authorities, which they may find stressful, etc. As far as academic teachers are concerned, they are likely to be affected by the stress factors elaborated on above since they do the job of teachers, additionally, according to Leung (2000), there are some potential sources of faculty stressors including teaching/research conflict, recognition, organizational practices, relationships at work (similar to Kyriacou's dealing with colleagues) and home/work interface. Leung (2000) also mentions workload, but, in view of the research by Kyriacou (2000) and Travers and Cooper (1996), we assume it refers to teaching in general rather than solely to academic teaching.

The typology proposed by Kyriacou (2000) is followed by many scholars focusing on teacher stress. This typology, however, is not without drawbacks. One may have an impression that presented a list of teacher stress factors is not being fully exhausted, especially while considering other typologies (e.g. Travers and Cooper, 1996). On the one hand, it is positive that Kyriacou focused on the 10 most common teacher stressors without complicating the matter too much – this list is well-explained and followed by numerous examples. The typology by Kyriacou is quite simplistic, but, at the same time, clear and universal, which is its advantage while elaborating on academic teacher stress.

On the other hand, not only do some factors identified in this chapter as things that the majority of teachers find stressful, trigger teacher stress, but also some personality traits, such factors as age and experience, and, an individual's appraisal of what a given situation means to them. Taking all those things into account, one can see how complex a phenomenon teacher stress is and how many other things need to be said and interpreted about it.

Scholar's individual features determining their proneness to stress

Although there seem to be many researchers who, so far, have attempted to make numerous comparisons between various subgroups of teachers, such as young/old teachers, female/male, or primary/secondary school teachers, etc., the level of stress reported is, according to Kyriacou (2000), very similar for each of the subgroups. He (2000) claims that about 25% of teachers describe their job as stressful or extremely stressful and these people belong to a so-called survival population of those who are generally able to cope, but where about one person in four experiences the higher levels of stress. The others who found the job too stressful either left it, or changed their role within it so as to be able to cope with the demands made upon them. The reason why some teachers cope with the stress they experience at work and others do not may lie in their personality. Jepson and Forrest (2006) are of the opinion that some individual contributory factors either mediate or moderate the relationship between teachers' perceived levels of stress and stressors intrinsic to the job, as well as environmental ones. Travers and Cooper (1996) indicate that there are some characteristics that make certain workers more prone to stress. These characteristics are type A personality, external locus of control personality, and neurotic personality; all of which are going to be elaborated on here. Jepson and Forrest (2006) also state that type A behaviour and level of teacher-specific achievement striving, which can be defined as a tendency to work hard in order to achieve goals, contribute to increasing levels of perceived stress.

Type A personality

Jepson and Forrest (2006), state that stress is related to a tendency of an individual to strive for achievement, which, in turn, is associated with Type A behaviour patterns. They (2006) define this type of behaviour as a continuous struggle, an unrelenting attempt to accomplish more and more things, and they associate it with such traits as impatience, irritability, hostility and

competitiveness. Due to the specificity of academic work, most academic teachers tend to be type-A behaviour holders as they are usually ambitious, they need to accomplish more and more in their whole professional life, and they are competitive. Type B behaviour, which is opposite to type A personality, is the second of the two categories under which individuals can be categorized. According to Ganster (1987), in case of Type A and Type B facing equal occupational demands, Type A is likely to show more pronounced physiological and emotional reactivity, such as gastrointestinal and respiratory symptoms, sleep disorders, chest pains and headaches. Kyriacou (2000) is of the opinion that teachers with a Type A personality tend to overload themselves with tasks because of their impatient, aggressive and striving disposition towards getting things done, whereas those with Type B personality have a more laid-back and relaxed attitude towards life. He (2000) claims that the reason why people with Type A personality are prone to stress stems from taking a workload that is too heavy and, because of that, they are placed under pressure. Although these people should develop a more realistic workload for themselves after a few attempts to cope with those previous demands, Kyriacou (2000: 16) stresses that there are people who can get addicted to stress for the reason that there is a buzz that comes from the high level of concentration and arousal that occurs when you have to work under intense pressure. Some of the chemicals that the human brain releases during periods of such intense activity, may be, very often subconsciously, felt as pleasurable, therefore some people may seek out situations of intense pressure. In the long run, however, Type A behaviour causes disturbing stress among teachers (Zurlo, Pes and Cooper, 2007).

There appears to be a vicious cycle here hence some teachers find their job extremely stressful and suffer from physiological and emotional symptoms of this stress and, at the same time, they subconsciously seek intense pressure because they are addicted to stress. Those teachers who manifest Type A personality suffer because they are usually perfectionists who spend a lot of time working hard and who cannot understand that their colleagues and partners are not like them. The environment, in turn, also suffers because life with such people is not easy and interacting with them may be very frustrating for their surroundings. Such situations contribute to conflicts which are considered stressful and exhausting.

External locus of control personality

External locus of control personality refers to one's strong expectancy that they have little control over important events in their life where one feels

vulnerable and helpless when exposed to problems that need to be dealt with; whereas internal locus of control can be associated with having a generalized belief that one has it within their own power to influence important events affecting them (Kyriacou, 2000). Teachers with external locus of control are likely to claim that most of the important events happening to them in their life are the result of luck and that they are not able to alter the things affecting them and, as a result, they are more prone to stress in situations where they feel that there is little they can do in a given situation and they perceive it as a threat. As these people seem to perceive most situations in their life as beyond their control, it is highly probable for them to see a source of stress facing them at work as one that is impossible to deal with. They usually see various life and work situations as more threatening as they really are and they allow the source of stress to continue in stead of trying out strategies that could help them to solve the problem. One should not also forget about the concept of hedonic bias, according to whose principles individuals tend to attribute responsibility for success to themselves, whereas responsibility for failure to others (Anderson, 1991). This tends to support the claim that there are people (especially those with external locus of control), who blame others, or unfavourable circumstances for their problems and for the threats they are exposed to, which results in their unwillingness and inability to tackle their problems themselves. Hedonic bias is connected with attribution-of-responsibility model for teacher stress, which was proposed by McCormick (1997) and which is concerned with how teachers cognitively organize domains to which responsibility can be attributed for their occupational stress. As schools and school systems are perceived by individual teachers as different conceptual distances from themselves, it is assumed by McCormick (1997), that these distances are not fixed, but they may vary in response to a positive or negative affect.

For the teachers characterised by external locus of control it may be extremely difficult to try to solve their problems since they strongly believe they do not have any influence over them. Such people often tend to expect that others should solve their problems for them – at work this may be colleagues or superiors, whereas at home – partners, relatives and friends. Such teachers are likely to talk much about their troubles and this way they may make others fed up with them and, as a result, they cannot get their help and are more stressed due to their problems. According to Leung et.al. (2000), academic teachers characterized by external locus of control tend to have low job satisfaction and to suffer from psychological distress.

Neurotic personality

Kyriacou (2000) points out, that teachers with a neurotic personality tend to worry about things and ruminate for problems (often hypothetical ones) for long, they lack self-confidence, often feel disgruntled and think about possible misfortunes. People with neurotic personality are prone to stress because they easily perceive situations as more threatening than they really are. Much stress is, as a result, generated by thinking about situations that may not occur at all.

On the other hand, Kyriacou (2000) reports that a picture of a teacher that can be called “stress-resistant” has been built and the teachers who can be called stress-resistant may be described as well balanced, avoiding ruminating on problems, having a relaxed approach, avoiding overloading themselves and believing in their own capabilities with solving problems effectively. It seems obvious that people with stress-prone personalities tend to avoid choosing teaching as a career and for that reason this occupational group, according to Kyriacou (2000) tends to have a higher than average level of mental health. On the other hand, as it was mentioned earlier, academic teachers are not teachers by education, so they may not be stress-resistant enough to do the job. These people usually stay at university after graduation and start their academic career, not expecting to what an extent teaching will dominate their professional life. Kyriacou (2000) also stresses that there are other personality traits, not necessarily linked to a teacher’s overall level of stress, but playing a role in accounting for vulnerability to particular sources of stress and contributing to stress at work. The case whether someone experiences stress in their personal life, such as, for example divorce, death of a spouse, or illness, etc, may contribute to someone’s work stress. There are also other features that predispose some teachers to deal with stress in a particular way, which, according to Travers and Cooper (1996), are such features as age, experience, life events, life stages and ability, attitudes, values and needs. They state that there is evidence that such factors also play a role in perceiving certain situations as stressful by teachers, but, on the other hand, they do not deny that there are researchers who are of the opposite opinion. Jepson and Forrest (2006) are of the opinion that gender of a teacher, their experience of teaching and whether they work full- or part-time, contribute to teacher’s stress perceptions. Travers and Cooper (1996) attempted to work on some of these factors and their relation to occupational stress of teachers and the outcomes of their study are going to be presented next.

Other personal factors contributing to teacher stress

There are some personal factors that according to some researchers (for instance Kyriacou, 2000; Travers and Cooper, 1996) that may have a vital influence on a given teacher's response to stress. These factors are age, experience and the gender of the teacher.

Age and experience

Age seems to be an important characteristic that may have an influence on teacher's response to stress which is because, according to Travers and Cooper (1996), at each stage in our life we may experience a particular vulnerability, and/or a certain coping mechanism. According to Travers and Cooper (1996), age may affect the impact of stress in two ways. First of all, the age and biological condition of a person may determine their perceived levels of stress hence the older someone is, the more fatigued they can be and, as a result, they are likely to find the work too difficult because of the necessity to work long hours, or in the shift system, etc. Secondly, past experiences of a person exert an influence on their way of perceiving the stress that they experience. If they failed to cope the previous time, they may be stressed because of the perspective of doing it again. Antoniou, Polychroni and Vlachakis (2006), stress that teachers who are young and relatively new in the profession present higher levels of stress and burnout. This may be caused by the fact that teachers beginning their job invest all their energy so as to achieve their initial objectives while dealing with various stressful and intense demands from their environment at the same time.

Age seems to be connected with experience because the older we become, the more experience we gain. In accordance with the findings of Travers and Cooper (1996) and Antoniou, Polychroni, and Vlachakis (2006), the entrants to the profession, who are usually young, experience the highest levels of stress for the reason that they still have not worked out effective coping strategies and/or they feel greater stress deriving from pressures associated with discipline, poor promotion prospects and management issues. Travers and Cooper (1996) report the findings of Laughlin (1984) who suggested that for young teachers the main concern is connected with students, for the middle-aged ones career aspects together with mid-life crisis, whereas for the old ones the teaching itself. It appears that young teachers worry about their relations with students, discipline, the students' achievement, which stands in accordance with what Kyriacou (2000) wrote about student teachers and their greatest concerns because those teachers lack experience the same as

novice teachers who start working at school. As far, as middle-aged teachers are concerned, Warnat (1980) claims that their fears and tension may result from worries that their skills are outdated and their experience is of little value to the profession. Older teachers, in turn, may find teaching difficult for the reason that their teaching methods may be outdated, or they may no longer have good rapport with their learners and are not likely to develop themselves professionally. In the academic context, older or senior faculty members are often less stressed than their younger counterparts (Leung, 2000). It may be caused by the fact that in academia the older somebody gets, the higher they usually are on the career ladder. This results from professional development paradigm according to which it takes many years to complete all the stages of scientific/academic development and promotional stages.

As it can be seen, teachers are likely to experience stress no matter what age, it should be stressed, however, that inexperienced teachers tend to experience greater stress than their colleagues; and that each age group is exposed to different stressors. Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis and Parker (2000), first five years of working as a teacher play a crucial role in deciding whether a given teacher leaves the profession, or stays for good. It may suggest that it is true that the youngest teachers are the most exposed to stress and if they cannot stand the tension, they leave the profession. Those who managed to work out their own coping strategies can work as teachers since they are not as much receptive to stress as some of their colleagues.

Gender and teacher stress

Teaching is a profession which can be entered by men and women, although, more women seem to choose such a career. When it comes to academia, though, it may not be the case since there are many male scholars. Borg and Riding (1991) state that female teachers are less stressed than male teachers, whereas Antoniou, Polychroni, and Vlachakis (2006) state something totally opposite and justify their opinion by saying that female teachers stress more than male ones because of confronting difficulties in the classroom and because of the interference of their private life and family into their job. They (Polychroni and Vlachakis, 2006) claim that their hypothesis is supported by many international researchers. Although Borg and Riding (1991) state that males are more stressed, they admit that females report more absences than males which may suggest that they cope with their stress that way and therefore the level of stress reported is lower than in case of men who do not try to avoid stressful situations, but try to attack problems. When it comes to the stress of academics, Leung (2000) states that female

university teachers are more likely to perceive more stress and display more strains and job dissatisfaction than their male counterparts.

To conclude, it is apparent that researchers cannot agree whether male or female teachers are more prone to stress; there seems to be a grain of truth in both approaches. An assumption could be risked that men and women stress in a different way and adopt different coping strategies, besides, they are likely to experience different stressors – men may be more vulnerable to stressors connected with status, financial aspects and responsibility; whereas women may be stressed because of work/home interface, self-esteem problems and discipline problems.

Cross-cultural differences and stress

Jepson and Forrest (2006) are of the opinion that the levels of teacher stress differ cross-culturally, which can be supported by Kyriacou (2001) who illustrates his conviction with an example of a Chinese study of teacher burnout, whose results revealed that the major source of stress for Chinese teachers is a too heavy workload and being given additional duties. He (2001) also stresses that the differences in the main sources of teacher stress between countries derive from the precise characteristics of their national educational systems, the particular circumstances of teachers, as well, as schools in those countries and the values and attitudes of a given society towards schools and teachers. Academic teachers from Europe, however, have recently experienced a unification of promotion system in the whole of Europe and all need to meet similar standards. On the one hand this means that they now face similar challenges and face similar stressors, on the other one cannot deny that impacted publications that are highly valued nowadays are published in English-language journals, so English-speaking scholars are privileged. Research by Wieczorek (2014b) proved that scholars from eastern Europe, especially ones from post-soviet countries still face language problems, have language and cultural barriers (especially older ones), and find it difficult to publish in IF journals. This may cause their stress and this way cross-cultural differences matter even in academia which is said to be international.

Jepson and Forrest (2006) stress that teacher stress also varies across levels of education and that it, therefore, is associated with multifarious factors, such as intrinsic job factors, environmental, and individual factors (Jarvis, 2002). All of these factors were taken into account by Cox (1978)

in his transactional model of stress, where he drew our attention to the interplay between the environment and the individual, where probably the external factors trigger stress perceptions, and individual factors play a role in mediating or moderating the perceived stress.

In conclusion, people of different origins and living in different countries tend to manifest vulnerability to different stressors. Each culture has its own unique features, such as, for example general ways of coping with problems, various roles attributed to men and women and because of political and cultural reasons, different situations trigger their stress. One should remember that teacher stress should not be treated the same way in each case, as all the worlds teachers work in different circumstances and it should be taken into consideration even in the case of scholars working in academia that is international by design and in nature. An additional issue worth mentioning here is the fact that academic teachers do not only differ cross-culturally as all human beings, but they also experience cross-cultural encounters as a part of their job (foreign conferences and projects, foreign students, reading and writing in English as part of research dissemination, etc.) and such encounters can be stressful especially for eastern scholars who did not develop long IF publishing traditions and who did not have much experience with international teamwork and are now at a loss in view of the reform from 2011 regulating European scholars' development (Wieczorek 2014 a).

The symptoms of teacher stress

The experience of stress, according to Kyriacou (2000), varies a lot from person to person and affects people in a different way, there is, however a symptom of stress that almost everyone tends to report, which is the feeling of tension. One can distinguish between physical and psychological responses to stress where the latter can manifest themselves by, for example, losing one's temper easily, whereas the former by getting mouth ulcers, etc. Kyriacou (2000) stresses that everyone usually develops their own unique profile of how they respond physically and psychologically to stress and only after recognizing those symptoms do they realize that they are under the influence of stress, or somebody else spots it. For that reason, it appears very important for everyone to recognize their own responses to stress in order to be able to react fast and deal with it hence the sustained experience of intense stress may result in stress-related illnesses, ranging from a reduced resistance to

common infections, such as a cold, to serious physical and mental illnesses such as peptic ulcers and depression. Sometimes it happens that a teacher faces pressure on a few different fronts, such as home, work, etc and there may happen that this teacher at some point feels they are unable to deal with all the pressures and they become overwhelmed by that situation. Guglielmi and Tatrow (1998) claim that a high level of stress can lead to various unhealthy behaviours like, for example, irregular meals, heavy drinking and smoking, and working until late at night without sufficient sleep; and that those unhealthy behaviours precipitate illnesses more likely than the direct effect on the body of the stress itself. Kyriacou (2000) makes a point that the experience of high level of work stress over a long period of time can result in teacher burnout which has three main elements to it: attitudinal exhaustion, physical exhaustion, and emotional exhaustion.

Attitudinal exhaustion manifests itself in teacher's lack of enthusiasm for work and a lowering of a sense of job satisfaction. The teacher is usually unwilling to do anything in a different way if it involves spending more time and effort on teaching and they become uninterested in the achievements and work of their students. One may risk an assumption that teachers who are not interested in the achievements of their students may not want to enter into interactions with them, may not be creative in order to design interesting classes, and as a result, may be additionally stressed by low results which their learners are likely to achieve if their teacher is not enthusiastic about the subject they teach.

Physical tiredness of a teacher for much of the time at school is a manifestation of physical exhaustion, together with a complete lack of energy at the end of a working day. It may be caused by work overload which characterizes many teachers (Travers and Cooper, 1996), by discipline problems in case of which the teacher must devote much time to pacifying their students.

The difficulties in sustaining a positive feeling during the working day and the overwhelming feeling of heavy resignation towards getting through the tasks in hand, together with depression, stem from emotional exhaustion of a teacher. Such type of exhaustion may result from bad rapport with students, colleagues, or the school management, students who lack motivation, or work overload. In case of the last factor, the teacher may simply have a feeling, because of excessive work, that they are at work all the time – even if they are at home, they may think about their occupational tasks to do, tests to check and lessons to design. Even after their teaching day, academic teachers still mentally stay at work because of publications, contacts with

foreign colleagues and projects to make, so they may be more prone to emotional exhaustion than other teachers.

Kyriacou (2000) stresses that the sense of withdrawal from the situation and trying to survive as best as one can, may be associated with burnout. It seems obvious that this is not a positive thing. First of all, it destroys the teacher themselves because of the negative feelings and tensions, secondly, it affects the process of teaching in a negative way for the reason that the teacher does not put any effort into it any longer and is not interested in the progress of their students, which, in turn may lead to their achieving low results, which, finally, can be a source of teacher stress and the beginning of a vicious cycle of stress and burnout.

Other common symptoms of stress at work, according to Kyriacou (2000: 5) are:

- irritability
- depression
- feeling unsettled
- short temper
- feeling off colour
- stomach complaints
- general aches and pains
- compulsive thoughts about work
- feeling tense
- feeling tearful
- sleeplessness
- loss of sex drive
- feeling tired
- nervous tics
- mouth ulcers
- indigestion
- panic attacks

As it can be seen, some of the symptoms enumerated above are physical ones, whereas the others are psychological in nature. Of course, as it was stressed earlier, the symptoms may vary from person to person, but one

thing is certain – they affect one's life in a very negative way. Furthermore, a person may not be aware that they suffer from these symptoms because of the experience of stress, which can result in their worrying about their health additionally and triggering more stress. Some of the symptoms elaborated on above may even be dangerous for one's health or life, such as, for instance, depression, which, if uncured, may lead to a suicide; panic attacks, or it can result in road accidents, health problems and withdrawal from social life.

The effects of teacher stress

Much has been said in this chapter, so far about the stress itself, its sources and symptoms, there is, however, something very important that needs to be tackled and this concerns the consequences of teacher stress. Of course, as Travers and Cooper (1996) rightfully claim, sometimes stress can have a positive effect on somebody when it motivates them to do something, or an increased challenge. Here, however, we are going to explain the negative effects of stress. Travers and Cooper (1996) are of the opinion that stress has serious implications for certain attitudes and behaviours and that the presence of negative stress has many costs incurred at an individual, organizational and national level. The consequences concern the costs of stress for the individual teacher, for the organization and the society (Travers and Cooper, 1996: 21-39).

Costs of teacher stress for the individual teacher

As far as the consequences of teacher stress for the individual teacher are concerned, they may reveal themselves in emotional manifestations, behavioural manifestations, and physiological manifestations (Travers and Cooper, 1996). The emotional manifestations can be, possibly, the feelings of undefined anxiety, depression, dissatisfaction, fear and frustration, the lack of self-esteem, and, in extreme case, teacher burnout. When it comes to behavioural manifestations of teacher stress, these are such behavioural problems as, for instance, appetite and sleeping disorders, excessive smoking, alcohol and/or drug abuse (Bell et.al., 2012) and possible displays of withdrawal symptoms, like, for example absenteeism or resignation from the profession. The physiological manifestations of stress are heart disease, psychosomatic illnesses, fatigue, and depleted energy reserves.

Mental ill-health, burnout, and job dissatisfaction among teachers suffering from occupational stress

Travers and Cooper (1996) summarized the conclusions and implications of other researchers concerning the issues of mental ill-health, burnout and job dissatisfaction of teachers who are under the influence of stress.

As far as mental ill-health is concerned, psychological disorder, which can be associated with poor mental health, tension, headaches, etc, is to be blamed for 40 million days that are lost each year according to the claim made by Tinning and Spry (1981).

As we can see, poor mental health, which is a result of stress, can lead to absences at work which, in turn, disorganize classes, can have a negative influence on the process of teaching which influences not only students who do not make progress, but the teacher as well since we already know that low results of students can be a source of teacher stress, so it seems that a teacher who is stressed out and due to this stress is absent often, tends to be more stressed because of it since their absence can influence students' results which, in turn, has an impact on teacher self-esteem. According to Akinyele (2014), stress of academics results in absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, and it even has a negative impact on the quality of graduates, research and publications. Furthermore, Miner and Brewer (1976) stress that particular occupational stresses can be a source of emotional disorder whose reactions may take the form of depression, anxiety, helplessness, insecurity, vulnerability, general uneasiness, emotional fatigue and low self-esteem. Dunham (1977) distinguished between the two most common types of manifestations of mental ill-health with relation to occupational stress, which are frustration and anxiety, where the former can be associated with the physiological symptoms of headaches, sleep disturbances, stomach upsets, hypertension, body rashes and even depressive illnesses; while anxiety can be related to loss of confidence, feelings of inadequacy, confusion in thinking, panic, and, in severe cases, physiological psychosomatic symptoms of a nervous rash, twitchy eye, voice and weight loss and, in prolonged cases, a nervous breakdown. Although all of the effects of stress can also be called symptoms, which they actually are, one should not forget that they are the consequences of stress at the same time, as they influence the life of the affected teacher, the learners and the school for the reason that, for instance, a teacher suffering from depression or a nervous breakdown either is not very effective at work, or they are absent and neither of those situations is good for the teacher themselves, the learners and the school. Increasing stress levels of university staff may cause universities as institutions not to function as well as they might have in the past (Bell et.al., 2012).

When it comes to burnout, which is a long-term effect of stress, it may lead to out-of-school apathy, alienation from work and withdrawal into a number of defensive strategies (Hargreaves, 1978). According to Mancini et al. (1982), burnout influences the process of teaching and student-teacher interaction in a negative way since teachers affected by it give significantly less information and less praise, show less acceptance of their learners' ideas and interact with the learners less frequently than other teachers.

Job dissatisfaction is said to be one of the major behavioural manifestations of stress at work (Moracco et al., 1983). Travers and Cooper (1996) indicate that dissatisfaction can be a result of stress, as well as the cause and moderator of it, so, apparently, it plays a complicated role in the work experience. Even though, Needle et al. (1980) found out that there is a correlation between teachers reporting high levels of job stress and greater job dissatisfaction. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979), however, specify it more and state that job satisfaction correlates negatively with such job stressors as poor career structure, individual misbehaving pupils, inadequate salary and disciplinary policy of school, noisy pupils, difficult classes, trying to maintain or uphold standards and excessive work. Feitler and Tokar (1981; in Travers and Cooper, 1996) additionally report that biographical differences influence job satisfaction. As it can be seen, job satisfaction really is a complex phenomenon which can be a result of job stressors and biographical differences, it can be, however, also a moderator and cause of stress. When it comes to the influence of stress on academic staff, it causes teaching below par, conflicts with students and job change. These all generate additional stress.

Behavioural responses to stress

Travers and Cooper (1996) are of the opinion that many changes in behaviour, such as, for instance excessive eating, smoking, or drinking, restlessness, emotional outburst, absence from work, and unstable employment history, may result from stress; and that teachers are likely to be vulnerable to these responses to stress as any other occupational group, although there is little evidence on their population. If a teacher drinks alcohol, or takes drugs, they are likely to lose their job and not be able to find another one (academic teachers need to sign a declaration that they did not have problems with law), which, again, can serve as a source of tension and stress. Moreover, people who are not able to restrain emotional outbursts should not work as teachers because such work requires a lot of patience and emotional stability. If the teacher lacks it, they are going to have trouble

with students and school authorities for the reason that they will probably provoke the former with their aggression and over-excitability to misbehave and they are likely to react too emotionally in case of such misbehaviour. In case of serious misbehaviour school staff become involved, which can affect the teacher's well-being and sometimes even their career if it comes out that they cannot restrain their nerves during the class. Not only may it be another source of stress for them, but also a factor contributing to their unstable employment history if they have to resign from work.

Withdrawal from teaching as a response to stress

Withdrawal from teaching can be understood as, for instance, absenteeism, early retirement, or the intention to leave the profession (Dunham, 1977) and this can be a response to stress and sometimes the only possible option if as given teacher finds themselves in a very stressful situation. As far as absenteeism is concerned, Miner and Brewer (1976) found out that poor health and mental well-being are responsible for it. Additionally, Muchinsky (1977) concluded that the frequency and duration of absenteeism and the tendency for progression from absenteeism to labour turnover are also related to job stress. Travers and Cooper (1996) report more specific findings which reveal that failed expectations, lack of autonomy, poor social support and inadequate pay, together with certain personality variables such as high anxiety, ambition, aggression, emotional insecurity, etc., lead to high turnover. It should not be, however, forgotten, that also such factors as, for example age or tenure contribute to it.

Travers and Cooper (1996) indicate that the turnover of teachers is increasing and that it results in a host of problems. They point out that nowadays there are fewer and fewer well-trained teachers and that this is believed to be a direct manifestation of teacher stress. Sickness absence is, according to Simpson (1976) a teachers' way of withdrawing temporarily from stress at work, without having to make a definite break. It is, of course, difficult to determine whether a given teacher is absent due to a stress-related physical illness, or a psychological cause, like, for instance, depression. It should not be denied, though, that the absenteeism of a teacher is not good for the learners and for the school itself. Another way of withdrawing from teaching seems resorting to an early retirement, which, according to Travers and Cooper (1996), means that the society and the education system are losing an experienced workforce relatively early in their career. They additionally claim that such situations impact the society also on a local level as the local authorities have additional costs of recruiting and training a new workforce.

To conclude, although stress is an integral part of human life, if excessive, it can complicate our existence. The levels of stress in the same situation vary from individual to individual, there are, however, some universal factors that may evoke it on a personal or occupational ground. Teachers are under stress since they work all the time with other people and need to interact with them, which is usually evoking emotions and requires leaving one's comfort zone. Academic teachers, apart from struggling with problems and stresses that all teachers generally encounter and experience, need to do and disseminate their research on a national and international level, spend much time on literature reviews, combine it with teaching and household duties and perfect their knowledge all the time. For that reason it is worth investigating what triggers their stress.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN WITH REGARD TO FACTORS INFLUENCING ON ACADEMIC STRESS

The research designed for this project was qualitative in nature. The main research objective was to identify factors evoking stress among academic teachers. Although stress is a ubiquitous phenomenon accompanying all human beings and animals throughout their entire life and much has already been said and written about it in general and in relation to teachers in general, there are relatively few accounts of factors evoking stress among scholars (Leung, 2000).

The research gap

In the opinion of Leung (2000), the empirical studies focusing on the job stress experienced at the university level are scarce. The research that has been carried out in this area so far, was conducted in Western context, i.e. highly developed countries such as the US or the UK (Leung, 2000, Kyvik, 2013). Winograd (2005) suggests that we should improve academic knowledge about how important emotions are for teachers. Those emotions, whether they are positive, or negative, have an influence on teacher development and teacher well-being which, in turn, has influence on the process of teaching and on the professional development of an academic teacher. It was therefore assumed, that the results of the research will allow for minimizing the existing gap and will shed new light on factors determining stress of academic teachers.

Since talking about one's stress is a personal matter, the process required much sensitivity and tact on behalf of the researcher. On the other hand, the researcher also needed to find out as much as possible about this phenomenon,

including deepening some interested aspects of academic stress that were not anticipated before. For those reasons it was decided to use qualitative type of research. The principles of the qualitative research are said to be the best ones to apply while investigating how people construct the world around them (Konecki, 2000). Qualitative methods allow the researcher to be very close to the ones constructing and presenting the empirical data, and such closeness would not be possible in case of quantitative methods (Rosen, 1986). This approach assures that the experience of people with regard to the phenomenon being investigated could be explored (Bazeley, 2007). Thus, a qualitative empirical study using semi-structured, depth, face-to-face interviews and a purposive sample (Silverman, 2000) was employed to explore to fulfill research objectives. Similarly to Mitreġa and Zolkiewski (2012) we used open-ended and probing questions in the interviews to encourage discussion of the phenomena, however the interviewing process was controlled through the utilization of predefined list of questions and topics to be discussed while interacting with informants.

The study objectives and general research approach

The research designed in this work is qualitative in nature. Nowadays more and more researchers acknowledge the importance of qualitative research as an independent research approach (Konecki, 2000). Qualitative research has become an established and respected research approach across a variety of disciplines and contexts, it is no longer, according to Gibbs (2010), considered a research type simply opposite to quantitative research, but a phenomenon with its own multiple identity. Because of the multiplicity of qualitative research approaches, it is difficult to define. While interpreting empirical data collected with the help of a particular research technique, this very technique applies to a specific system of philosophical assumptions, paradigms, which are the basis of interpreting the obtained data. According to Konecki (2000), very often qualitative techniques of data collection are thought to be inherent of so-called “the interpretative paradigm” because they best investigate how people construct the world around them. In the interpretative paradigm it is assumed that the researcher should be very close to the ones who construct or present the empirical data and such closeness would not be possible in the case of quantitative methods (Rosen, 1986: 61, in Konecki, 2000).

Qualitative data show great diversity and they are essentially meaningful. They do not include counts and measures, but they include any form of human communication, which may be a visual, audio, or a written one, and behaviour, symbolism or cultural artefacts; which includes, among others, individual and focus group interviews and their transcripts, diaries, online chat group conversations, various documents such as books and magazines, videos of interviews and focus groups (Gibbs, 2010). The most common form used in qualitative data analysis, however, is text which can take the form of a transcription from interviews, field notes from ethnographic work, or other kinds of documents.

As already mentioned, the main research task was to identify factors invoking stress among academic teachers. The detailed objectives of the empirical research were as follows:

- to identify who and what may cause the stress of academic teachers
- to investigate whether, and if so, to what extent, there are stressors unique to academic teachers and scholars as opposed to teachers in general
- to investigate whether academic collaboration is a factor triggering the stress of teachers
- to investigate how the teaching experience influences factors evoking stress among academic teachers
- to investigate how individual-related and context-related features such as gender and family situation of a teacher or position as the university influence factors evoking academic teachers' occupational stress

The respondents' possible personality traits making them more prone to stress and other affective features were not focused on. The interviews concentrated on university teaching and work of a scholar and its relation to occupational stress rather than on the association between personal features and their connection with stress. However, to control the influence of some other factors on stress level being experienced, the interviews referred also to some other aspects such as: marital status, family situation, and the attitudes of the respondent's family towards their job or the family-work conflicts.

Since the research was qualitative in manner, there was no pre-defined set of hypotheses. Instead, some theoretical propositions were derived as the result of the qualitative data analysis (Pope, Ziebland, Mays, 2000). The

researchers were of the opinion that, taking into account the specificity of university teaching and specificity of scholars' work, the academic stressors may differ from the stressors of school teachers. At the initial stages of the project the researchers were talking to various academic teachers about their feelings and emotions towards their profession, job, work-family matters, etc. Some of the teachers were colleagues of the researchers, whereas others were met during conferences and workshops. Their age and gender was varied, as well as the type of university (size, public versus private) or position. All informants represented two fields – namely business studies and language studies hence the authors are from those fields and as a result found it very interesting. Besides those two fields which belong to humanities and social sciences respectively, in our opinion mutually complement each other and allows for deeper understanding of the phenomenon of occupational stress of scholars. As a result of those talks, some detailed research issues emerged. Those issues concerned teachers feelings towards their chosen profession, their professional development, transforming academia, their emotions concerning their students, colleagues and persons in charge, their fears connected with teaching, work-family conflicts, mobbing and bureaucracy at work. The informants were also talking why, in their opinion, job of academic teachers may be different from schoolteachers' job; whether it is more or less difficult and why. They were also asked at the end of each interview what makes them stressed at work and how they try to cope with this stress. The very term "stress" was tried to be used in the talk as less as possible and as late as possible in order not to provoke them to answer in such a way so as to please the researcher or show themselves in a socially desirable light (Nederhof, 1985).

Research population

The subjects of the research were academic teachers working at various types of universities in post-communist European countries. By academic teachers we understand university scholars teaching students and doing other tasks associated with being a scholar (supervising students, marking exams, writing research papers, attending conferences, etc.), but not necessarily being educated on how to be a teacher. Scholars usually are people who did not choose teaching as their profession, but who have to do it in order to work at the university. For that reason they may suffer various problems connected with interacting with students and they may lack appropriate background to

solve such teaching-related problems. We assumed that teaching may influence their professional development in a positive or negative way.

Informants' selection

The selection of subjects for this research was non-random – the researchers tried to choose academic teachers working in different types of universities (big or small, public versus private) and representing different positions (research assistants, assistant professors, associate professors, etc.) in order to make the informants' population diversified. Since stress is a sensitive matter and people not always want to talk about it openly, the researchers decided to look for informants using social media and their own social network¹. The informants represented two fields – language studies (6 informants) and business studies (9 informants) since the authors represent them and they wanted to deepen their knowledge on the nature of scholar stress in their professional environment. There were elements of snowball sampling utilized (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). The colleagues of the researchers were asked to invite their colleagues and friends to participate in the project. They themselves were rather not recruited hence they knew the researcher too much and it was assumed to be too high risk of social desirability phenomenon (Nederhof, 1985). The selected participants were informed that the research concerned the problems academic teachers encounter at work and their feelings accompanying it. The word “stress” was not used. The subjects were also assured that they would stay fully anonymous, i.e. the researcher would never reveal their identity to anyone. The sample was composed of 15 participants because interviewing was stopped when theoretical saturation was achieved. The theoretical saturation was identified as the moment when no new significant issues emerged despite researching some new participants.

Informants' characteristics

Thirteen respondents worked in public universities, whereas 2 respondents in private ones. Some interviewed teachers working at public universities

¹ In this project we have reused the relevant part of empirical dataset that was gathered within the study focused on scholars' productivity and its determinants. The results of this productivity-related project are presented in detail in Mitreğa et al. (2016). Additionally, we have reused selected interview transcripts that were originally utilized for preparing Phd thesis on foreign language teacher stress (Wieczorek, 2014c).

worked at the same time part-time for private ones, or held another position at a different public university. The teaching experience of the respondents varied from three years to twelve years of experience. As far as gender distribution of the respondents is concerned, there were 5 women and 10 men. When it comes to position, the majority of the respondents held positions of assistant professors, four were research assistants, whereas two held the position of professors. The majority of the respondents were married and had children.

The non-random, purposive selection was utilized. According to the suggestion of Konecki (2000), the issue of gaining respondents' trust was treated as priority in order to obtain honest answers. All of the respondents were kindly asked to take part in the research. There were some teachers who refused to participate and they were not forced or convinced in any way, their choice was respected. Those who agreed and became the respondents were informed in advance who the researchers were and that their identity would not be revealed to anyone. The respondents were also assured that what they had said would not be discussed with their colleagues and friends who had introduced them to the researcher. As it had been planned, the additional informants were systematically selected throughout the whole process of data collection and analysis until the data saturation was observed (Francis, et al., 2010).

Field research procedure

The initial stage of field research was the specification of areas to be covered in relation to factors triggering stress among academic teachers. Before the interview scenario was set, the researcher spoke to a few experienced academics in order to specify detailed research questions. During the main interviewing stage, at first the researcher was looking for a potential subject, then they were initiating contact with them and arranging a meeting. During the meeting the areas of interest were tackled in a form of questions e.g. "why have you decided to be a scholar", "was it a good choice?", "what do you like about your job?", "what don't you like about it?", "what do you and don't you like about teaching at university", "which area of your work as a scholar is problematic", "is there anything that makes you stressed at work", etc. After each question was answered the researcher asked the question "why" and at that stage usually more issues worth tackling were emerging and broadening the interview scenario being constructed.

Each time the whole set of questions was slightly different and the same questions were asked sometimes in a different way, depending on the context of each talk. Some questions did not need to be asked explicitly at all for the reason that the subjects covered while answering other questions. The researchers were recording the interviews and taking notes during the talk. Afterwards, the recordings were analysed and some conclusions were drawn – the researcher tried to improve the way of asking questions in order not to influence the answers and to avoid other biases. Some more questions were added and the questions which had been unclear for the respondents were reworded according to their instructions. It was decided that the interviewing would be carried out until the theoretical saturation was achieved. After that the results were analysed by two researchers and an additional focus group interview was carried out in order to validate the research results.

Interviewing individuals

The main research tool selected for the purpose of this study was an in-depth semi-structured interview. The final version of its scenario, after which the theoretical saturation was achieved, was composed of 78 questions, which were classified according to 11 discussion topics. There were always few questions concerning the same discussion topics in order to make sure that a given respondent was honest with the interviewer. For the same reason there were some deepening questions asked from time to time to extract as much information as possible and validate the research. The scenario was treated as an outline whose purpose was to remind the interviewer about basic issues to be covered.

In the introductory part of the scenario there were suggestions to greet a given academic teacher, introduce oneself and inform the teacher briefly about the discussion topics, but without mentioning that the study concerned academic stress. The respondents were usually informed that the interview concerned scholars' feelings and attitudes connected with teaching and working as a scientist. All the respondents were assured of retaining anonymity.

In the first part, called "the general part", basic questions concerning working at a university were asked. The questions tackled such issues as type of university, experience, the reasons for choosing the profession, qualifications, professional development, earnings and general feelings accompanying teaching. The researcher needed such pieces of information in

order to determine later on whether some factors triggering stress depended, for instance, on the type of school, the respondents experiences, etc.

The next set of questions was devoted to professional development – the reasons for trying to get promoted, the attitudes of university authorities and colleagues towards it and the feelings of a given teachers towards it. The interviewer wanted to know whether the interviewees were not forced by authorities to advance professionally and whether it was stress-triggering or not.

The following set of issues to be raised was connected with the atmosphere at university – among fellow lecturers/scholars, the relationships with the management and the attitudes in the academic system and the university education in general. The authors aimed at determining whether academic teachers could feel well in the workplace, whether they could count on their colleagues, superiors and on the institution.

After all the questions devoted to the atmosphere at workplace were asked, an exploratory question was asked and it concerned other things influencing teacher's moods, comfort and well-being. The interviewer assumed that at this stage some stressed out teachers would admit that there were things/people making them feel unwell.

Next, the interviewees were to rate how difficult an academic teacher's job was and whether the job of an academic teacher was less/more difficult, or equally difficult/easy as school teaching. The researcher supposed that some teachers might state that their job is more difficult than the job of an average teacher due to specificity of scholar work, what may, in turn, trigger additional stress.

It was also assumed that an academic teacher's job as a difficult job could sometimes be associated with relationships with students, therefore the next set of questions were devoted to these lecturer-students relations. The researcher wanted to examine whether relationships with students, and especially the negative ones, cause stress of scholars and what kind of problems occur, and whether some of them are only academic teaching-specific. It was assumed that at this stage, it was high probability that the term "stress" would be used, therefore the next question, which was exploratory, concerned other things at work that scholars found stressful.

The following set of questions which were connected with key elements of the job of a scholar and concerned problematic/stressful situations they encounter in their job. The questions revolved around the hardships of conducting research, most difficult part of scholar's work, staff meetings

and feelings accompanying being evaluated. It seemed important for the interviewers to investigate whether there were some elements of scholars' job that were more stress-triggering than others and what exactly was stressful for scholars.

It also seemed vital to determine whether some technical-organizational matters brought stress to academic teachers due to the specificity of teaching at university, for instance academic teachers use overhead projectors more often than school teachers and the researchers were curious how such aspects moderate stress levels teachers, therefore next few questions related to organisational aspects of academic teaching and using multimedia.

Some questions that followed next were exploratory and concerned things evoking academic teacher stress and attitudes of those teachers towards the beginning of each working week. The researchers expected to, first of all, obtain the information whether the respondents were stressed at work and what caused this stress, and secondly, they asked about their feelings towards each beginning week in order to check the reliability of the answer to the previous question.

The questions that followed, concerned academic teacher's roles at work – some roles that the teachers need to enter into may be contradictory and there may be conflicts between them and expectations of others towards teachers playing those roles, therefore the interviewer wanted to examine which roles are favourite and problematic to the respondents, whether they are sometimes contradictory and to what an extent it might be stressful for teachers.

In order to check subjects' honesty, some controlling questions were asked again. The first question concerned things causing academic teachers' frustration at work, whereas the second one was aimed at directly asking each respondent what caused their strong stress at work.

Another set of questions revolved around the private life of informants and the questions concerned marital status, family situation, the attitudes of the respondent's family towards their job, the influence of work on private life and family-work conflicts. It seemed crucial for the researchers to investigate whether the respondents received support from family members, or whether their job had a negative influence on their family life and if so, to what an extent.

The next set of questions concerned the effects of stress and the methods of fighting with it. The researchers wanted to determine whether the subjects were aware how severe the effects of occupational stress could be, and what strategies of coping they applied when under the influence of stress.

The informants were also asked whether they knew a person whose life was destroyed due to stress at work – there the researchers counted on an interesting life story telling that could be analysed carefully afterwards.

The last set of questions was devoted to mobbing, and more exactly, whether teachers knew how to define this phenomenon, whether they experienced it at work, and if so, to investigate who the mobber was. It is widely known that mobbing is stress-triggering, therefore it seemed crucial to check if some of the respondents experienced it and how it influenced their feeling of security and well-being.

The last questions were a closing type, the first one concerned situations in which the informants felt helpless and in the last one the interviewees were asked whether they would like to add anything to make the whole interview complete. After all the questions were asked, the subjects were always thanked and once again assured of retaining their anonymity.

Carrying out each personal interview took around 1 hour, depending on the course of action. If a given respondent was stressed by many things, was very talkative, or wanted to illustrate their answers with many examples, it took longer. The interview never looked exactly the same, but, of course, some main areas of interest mentioned were always the same and each time new areas/questions were added. The process of interviewing was very dynamic, the order of questions was never the same hence many stressors seem interconnected and when somebody started talking about one, they had to talk about few others connected with areas of interest which were supposed to be discussed after some other questions had been asked. The researchers tried to be open to modifications and tried not to interfere when the respondents were speaking and changing areas themselves. The researchers were just crossing out the areas covered so as not to come back to them in the later course of action unnecessarily. After each question was asked the researchers enquired why a given respondent was of such an opinion. At the end of each interview the researchers asked the respondent whether they would like to add anything.

As far as the problems connected with this stage are concerned, there sometimes was the problem of time – for some interviewees the interview seemed too long – the researchers could see that they were becoming impatient. In such cases they were asked whether they would like to continue another day, or take a short break. They usually chose a short brake and then the interview was finished without further problems. While talking to the interviewee and recording the talk, the researchers were taking notes in order to set which areas were most problematic and, therefore, worth paying close attention to during coding.

When the interview was finished, the researcher would move it to the computer and name the respondent using numbers, never surnames, which were, however retained in a separate file with assigned number in case further contact with a given respondent was necessary. After that each interview record was transcribed. The transcript was then printed and the researcher was writing codes over the text. The codes were the names of a potential stressor assigned by the researchers; if somebody, for instance claimed that they feared going to work because of the dean, the word “dean” was a code, etc. After the codes had been written on the paper transcript, the researchers would transfer them to a table in the computer in a row with a given respondent number. When a new respondent was investigated, a new row was added to the table, the same stressors were marked and new stressors were added. This way, at the end of the interviewing process the researchers could see which respondents had the same stressors and what else they had in common hence all the information concerning them (such as type of university, position, etc.) was also transferred to the table. There were some stressors which were true to practically every participant, like, for example, workload.

Focus group interview

As far as the scenario of the focus group is concerned, it was less structured than the individual interview tool since its purpose was just to validate and deepened already existing interview results and not to explore very different research areas. The questionnaire was composed of 5 discussion issues concerning the topics covered in the in-depth interviews carried out with the respondents. For the purpose of carrying out the focus group interview, new group of informants was selected.

In the introductory part of the focus group scenario it was suggested that the researcher should greet the participants, explain to them briefly the purpose of the meeting and discuss the principles of anonymity, recording and moderating the discussion. Then the participants were asked to introduce themselves and after that the interviewer proceeded to the main discussion issues.

The first issue under discussion concerned scholars' general opinions on their job at university. The researcher wanted to make sure that the theoretical saturation has really been achieved and new pieces of information would not emerge. Discussion issue 2 revolved around factors causing stress of scholars that were identified in the prior research, and their roots.. The interviewers

wanted to investigate again whether the specificity of academic teaching adds to additional stressors than non-academic teachers do not experience. Discussion issue 3 concerned informants' opinions on the collaboration with others as a part of academic life.

Discussion issues 4 and 5 concentrated on scholars' opinions on the role of academic collaboration – discussion issue 4 concerned opinions on potential disadvantages of collaboration, whereas discussion issue 5, opinions on collaboration as a potential leverage to scholars' career.

Concluding discussion issues comprised of open questions relating to additional factors connected to emotions associating with working as a scholar. At the end the moderator asked the respondents which additional issues they would like to raise and then they extended their thanks.

Data analysis

Due to the fact that the obtained data was qualitative in nature, it was not presented in the form of graphs, charts, numbers and percentages. As suggested by qualitative researchers (Konecki, 2000; Kyriacou, 2000), interviews were transcribed, coded and then some dominating tendencies were described and explained. Sometimes direct quotations crucial to the study objectives were included. The data was presented in such a way so as not to reveal the anonymity of the respondents who were called Respondent 1, 2... 12, respectively. The data was presented in a qualitative way – as a flow of information with direct quotations where necessary.

While analysing the data, the researchers were trying to notice some phenomena, collect them and think about them in order to arrive at some conclusions (Seidel, 1998). Sometimes the process was repeated for hours on end and for that reason it has been compared to a cycle (Seidel, 1998). During each interview the researchers were recording it and taking notes. After the interview was over, it was each time transcribed and the notes were added in brackets or at the end. The transcriptions were word-to-word transcriptions. After one interview was transcribed, the researchers were coding the results combining a deductive coding and an abductive coding approach (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). When each transcription was ready, it was printed and the researchers were reading it and writing codes over the text. Then the researchers were listening to the recording once again without looking at the transcript and trying to find some general tendencies visible. When the data

was being coded, theoretical memos were being written (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008). At the end, the whole data gathered while interviewing (individual interviews and focus group) was analysed once again and final conclusions were drawn in relation to the existing literature.

Subjective as it may seem, qualitative research may be less biased than quantitative research if one pays attention to such an issue as so-called researcher's pre-understanding. All human beings have their own understanding of the world around them which is the result of their life experiences, education and significant others surrounding them. In order to minimise the prospective negative influence of their own pre-understanding, the researchers decided to double-code the data. Transcripts were independently analysed by two researchers (Krippendorff, 2004; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003) to identify academic stressors. A reliability check was carried out with an internal replication test (Krippendorff, 2004): the two coders exchanged a sample of two interviews and provided an alternative and independent coding. Only some minor differences between the initial coding and the alternative coding existed, thereby indicating reliability of the analysis (Kaplan and Goldsen, 1965). After all interviews were coded, and all stress related activities identified, the two researchers worked together on a final list of codes. Each time if there was different wording for research codes, the two coders were discussing the differences and were trying to arrive at common conclusions. At that stage the data obtained from the focus group interview were of significance since the author of the thesis carried out those interviews after the process of "double coding" and they knew which issues to tackle with the respondents in order to resolve remaining doubts.

The next possible problem that could arise was the problem of social desirability phenomenon (Nederhof, 1985; Malhotra, 2008). There was a risk that the respondents may answer the questions either in such a way as to help the researcher find the answers they are hoping to find, or in order to present the respondents in a good light. In order to avoid such bias the researchers decided not to interview their close friends who knew what the research is about and who might try to show themselves in a better light since they knew the researcher and might be ashamed of losing face. The respondents were not informed in detail about research objectives, they were usually told that the research concerns scholars attitudes, feelings, problems and emotions accompanying their work at university. Usually at the end of the interview some of them started to suspect that it concerned occupational stress. After an interview those respondents who wanted to know were informed directly about the detailed nature of the research.

Appendix: Part 1. The scenario of an in-depth interview with an academic teacher

THE IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW SCENARIO *

Introduction

- Greetings and introduction
- Informing a scholar that no names will be mentioned and the anonymity will be retained.
- Informing a scholar that the interview concerns their emotions and feelings associating their work as a teacher and researcher (without mentioning directly that it concerns stress).

General part

1. Describe your work at the university.
2. How long have you been working as a scholar?
3. What type of university have you been working at (public versus private, big/small, etc.)
4. Why did you choose this profession?
5. Would you do it again?
6. Which degree do you hold?
7. Which stage of your professional development are you at?
8. Is there anything that makes you consider quitting your job?
9. Who would you swap profession with if it was possible?
10. Is this your only job/position? / Do you need to hold another one/ take some extra assignments to get satisfying salary?
11. What has surprised you in a positive and/or negative way in your job so far?
12. Are you satisfied with your salary? Why/not?
13. Can you develop at work?
14. What does the job of a scholar entail?
15. Which aspects of being a scholar do you and don't you like?

Promotion

16. Are you trying to get promoted?
17. Is it, in your opinion, necessary to try to get promoted? Is it disturbing?
18. What do you need to do to get promoted (what are the requirements) and how do you feel about it?
19. What are the attitudes of university authorities towards scholars' promotions/ obtaining higher degrees? Are they pushing you to do it, or maybe are they against?

Atmosphere in the workplace

20. How would you generally describe the atmosphere at your workplace?
In the academia?
21. What's the atmosphere between colleagues?
22. How do you feel about it?
23. Is it different in comparison to the initial stages of your career?
24. Does the workplace atmosphere have an influence on the well-being of an academic at work?
25. Who can you depend on in case of workplace problems?
26. Who can help a scholar at University in case of problems?
27. Is this help efficient?

Exploring question

28. What else influences the well-being of a scholar? In what way?

The hardship of being a scholar

29. Is the job of a scholar easy or difficult? Why?
30. When compared to school teaching, is the job of an academic teacher easier/more difficult/the same?

Relations with students

31. How would you describe the attitudes of students towards university/ studying/academic teachers?
32. How would you describe the attitudes of students towards you?
33. Has it changed through your career?

34. How has this influence impacted on you?
35. Are students problematic for the scholar? Why?
36. In what way can students disturb a scholar?
37. Which type of student disturbs you most?
38. Are discipline problems troublesome?
39. Which discipline problems have you experienced?
40. How does lack of student motivation influence you?
41. To what extent is a new group troublesome to you?

Exploring question

42. What else is problematic in your job? Why?

Key elements in the work of a scholar

43. Which situations concerning your scientific work are problematic?
44. What is difficult about conducting research?
45. What part of being a scholar is the most difficult one?
46. Is being evaluated as a scholar stressful?
47. What is easier: being a scholar or being an academic teacher?
48. Are staff meetings stressful?
49. Which part of an academic year is the most stressful?
50. How do you feel Monday morning?

Technical-organisational aspects

51. Which organisational problems do you encounter at work?
52. Do you find it stressful?
53. Who is to blame for those problems?
54. Is using multimedia and other technical devices problematic for you??

Exploring questions

55. What evokes your workplace tensions?
56. How do you approach the beginning of each week?

Roles at workplace

57. Do you need to enter many roles at work at the same time(e.g. students' supervisor, examiner, colleague, rival, subordinate, supervisor, etc.)?
58. Is there a conflict between those roles?
59. Which roles suit you?
60. Which roles don't you like?
61. How do you utilise this variety of roles?
62. Are expectations of others towards you as a subordinate/teacher/supervisor/colleague/spouse contradictory? If so, do you find it stressful?

Controlling questions

63. Is there anything causing you frustration at work? If so, what it is and why?
64. What evokes your strong workplace stress??

Private life

65. What's your family situation?
66. Do you live on your own, or with somebody else?
67. What are the attitudes of your family members towards your profession?
68. In what way does your job influence your private life?
69. Do you experience work-home conflict?

The effects of stress and coping methods

70. What may be the causes of workplace stress?
71. How do you generally tackle stress?
72. How do you tackle workplace stress?
73. Do you know a scholar whose life was destroyed due to workplace stress?

Mobbing

74. Do you know term mobbing? Try to define mobbing.
75. Have you encountered mobbing in the workplace?
76. Who was the mobber?

Closing questions

77. Which situations make you feel helpless at work?
78. Would you like to add anything?

Thank you for the talk, it helped me a lot.

** The interview scenario, was treated as a general model of conduct during an interaction between the interviewer and a respondent, what is in accordance with the principles of carrying out in-depth interviews. This outline was prepared to remind the interviewer about basic issues significant for the research problem and to help formulate indirect questions relating to it. According to the principles of qualitative research methods, this scenario was from time to time complemented. It would happen whenever a given respondent tackled an issue particularly crucial for the research and there was a need to enrich it by asking additional questions.*

In the very appendix particular structural elements of the exemplary in-depth interview were grouped together in order to make it more reader-friendly. While carrying out interviews, however, those groups or larger categories were not mentioned directly and the order of the questions would change depending on a course of a given talk and on the specificity of a given respondent.

Appendix: Part 2. Scenario of a focus group interview with academic teachers

Introduction

- Greeting the participants
- Explaining the purpose of the meeting: a discussion on feelings/emotions connected with working as a scholar and cooperating with others
- Explaining the principles of anonymity, recording and moderating the discussion.
- The participants introduce themselves using their first name only and briefly elaborate on the course of their career
- The moderator proposes the first discussion issue.

Discussion issue 1: General opinions on the job of a scholar in the contemporary academia.

Discussion issue 2: Comments on the factors causing scholars' stress identified in the prior research and their roots.

Discussion issue 3: Opinions on the collaboration with others as a part of academic life.

Discussion issue 4: Opinions on any potential disadvantages of academic collaboration.

Discussion issue 5: Opinions on collaboration as a potential leverage to scholars' career.

Conclusions

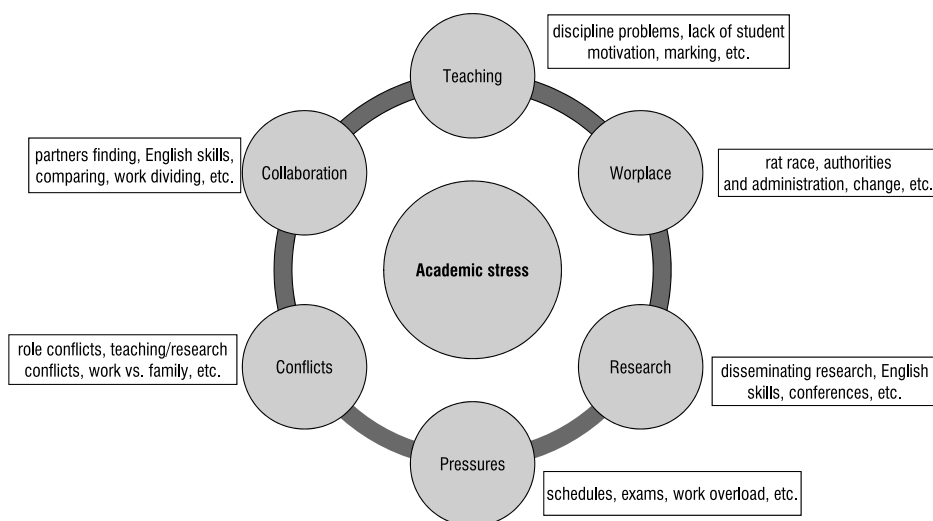
- Open questions concerning additional issues connected with emotions associating working as a scholar.
- Extending thanks.

CHAPTER THREE

FACTORS EVOKING STRESS AMONG ACADEMIC TEACHERS – QUALITATIVE STUDY RESULTS

The data obtained through interviews refer to the factors evoking stress among academic teachers. The stressors were divided into groups referring to various aspects of job stress of scholars, as a result of long talks with the respondents, fierce debates between the researchers during coding, and the results of focus group interviews. In the research process a relatively big number of stressors emerged, many of them, however, were closely related to one another and for that reason they were grouped together. Figure 1 illustrates how all identified stressors were combined into six main categories. The circular shape in the figure emphasizes the interconnections between various stressors as, indeed, they are influencing on each other.

Figure 1. Stressors experienced by academic teachers



In this chapter we will elaborate on these stressors and provide some narratives from interviews for them. However, collaboration as a stressor and at the same time, scholar's success leverage will be described in detailed way separately, i.e. in chapter four. Presenting collaboration-related research results separately was due to relative importance of these issues as emphasized by informants and also due to complexity and various functions and dysfunctions of academic networking (McKay, et al., 2008; Abramo, et al., 2009; Bozeman, et al., 2012).

Stressors associated with teaching at university

Discipline problems

Discipline problems are reported to be a marginally stressful part of the job. Only few teachers taking part in the study mentioned directly that issues relating to discipline are a source of concern for them. The vast majority of the respondents were of the opinion that problems with discipline – maintaining it and reacting if there are discipline problems, do not concern academics since they teach adults. Those who reported such issues understood discipline problems as disruptive behaviour and associated it with students' noise, lack of student attention and participation.

Disruptive behaviour is difficult to define hence it is subjective, i.e. teacher-dependent. Many researchers, e.g. Harmer (2000), Brown (1994), are of the opinion that disruptive behaviour is behaviour unacceptable by a given teacher and for that reason for one teacher learners talking silently manifest bad behaviour and for another, they do not. When asked what they meant for discipline problems, the interviewed scholars would say that it was disruptive, because students were not paying attention to what the teacher was saying, they bothered schedule through coming late for class, etc.

The lecturers report disruptive behaviour of learners as the most serious case of discipline problems; by this they mean learners manifesting aggression towards the lecturer and not following lecturer's directions. Some academic teachers reported discipline problems as follows:

"I know it's ridiculous to report discipline problems with students, but there are students who seem to contradict – sometimes verbally, but more often non-verbally, each thing I say. No matter whether it is proved by research and

concerns the subject taught, just or my personal opinion concerning the subject matter, weather, spare time activities. They seem not to like me, that's all. There are not many of them, just 2 or 3 persons in some groups, but they seem to have a bad influence over the whole group. Whenever I teach a group where there are such "disrupters", I feel the group is not as eager to be with me as other groups. Maybe it is their bad influence, or just myself – feeling I'm not liked by some group members, I'm somehow tense and all the people can sense it. Whatever it is, I find teaching such groups very tiring and at the end of my teaching day I'm dead tired and as a result I usually have a headache." Respondent 3

"In general I don't have problems with discipline, but I really hate when students chat with each other while I'm talking to them, or when they play with a phone. It really should be forbidden to use mobile phones during classes, in my opinion it is a foux pas. I don't want to treat them like children and make them sit separately, I just pretend not to pay attention to their chatting, but the truth is it makes me tired and irritable." Respondent 22

Visibly, some academic teachers feel helpless and disruptive behaviour of students has a negative impact on them and their health directly hence they claimed that after classes with disruptive students, they suffer from headaches, which suggests somatic symptoms of stress. There are no differences between male and female teachers, there is a tendency, however, that teachers reporting such cases of bad behaviour were young teachers. The majority of the university teachers investigated, however, did not perceive it as a problem. On the other hand, many teachers reported problems with students who seemed this way, or another problematic.

Problematic students

Another problem, although not being equal to discipline, but connected with selected students and making lecturers stressed is the problem of so-called "problematic students". By problematic students the scholars understood students who do not attend classes on a regular basis and then want to obtain a credit and the teachers are torn between wanting to fail them due to the fact of skipping classes and between the willingness not to complicate their lives, e.g. by never-ending individual marking. Another issue concerns foreign students, e.g. Erasmus students who spend at university one semester, but want to go home long before the end of the term and they cannot write end-of-semester tests. Their teachers must then prepare extra

exam sheets, or give them credits basing on projects/speeches which they find unfair in relation to other students.

“I teach a lot of students from Turkey. They usually go home in the middle of December – they say they want to spend Christmas break with their family. My domestic students attend uni till the very last days before break, and I usually organize first test just before the break. Then the Turkish guys come back in the middle of January and they are surprised they need to sit for an exam. They are of course not prepared and I need to prepare extra test nearly each week from mid January till February. In the end they knock at my office door and say they are going back home and still don’t have credits. What can I do- I just give the credit not to complicate their life and mine. But I’m really frustrated.” Respondent 4

There are students who contradict what the lecturer says and do it not because they are disruptive/malicious, but really interested in the subject matter. The main impact of working with such students is tiredness, frustration and the feeling of tension. Such tension is sometimes manifested by headaches, rapid pulse and stomach problems. Teachers working at university claim that such situations trigger their negative attitudes towards their work in general, the students group and the subject they teach.

“At my faculty we need to teach various subjects, often not connected with our research interests. The subjects change each year, so nobody sees a deep sense in preparing the materials and class in a thorough way. Then, however, sometimes a given student knows more than I do, because he is simply interested in the subject. I feel really stupid if it turns out that the student knows better than me how something works. I then feel my heart beating fast and I blush. I usually change the topic, but then I think about it for the rest of the day. I fear classes with such students. One should be professional in what they do and I cannot be for the policy of my boss.” Respondent 7

Some academic teachers also mentioned low-ability students who should not pass exams because they are not able to prepare good projects, do not understand basic notions elaborated on during classes, or cannot keep up with the rest of the group. Because of the demographic crisis (Wieczorek, 2014b), however, there is pressure from university not to get rid of them.

Low results achieved by students are also a source of teacher stress, because lecturers seem to attribute their students’ failures to themselves. When asked why they are stressed by the low results of their students, the majority of them respond that in their opinion those unsatisfactory results are their fault because they are not good enough teachers, or they cannot make their learners motivated enough to learn more. Some of the respondents stress that it is not enough to teach students the subject, but they would like to prepare them to

be autonomous, which they seem not to be able to do. Learning in general is accelerated if students are autonomous, especially nowadays when skills and abilities of finding relevant information in the fast-moving world are much more important than things learnt by heart.

The lack of student motivation

The lack of student motivation as a source of stress, was enumerated by nearly all respondents. Informants distinguish the lack of motivation from negative attitudes towards the lecturer, and the lack of student attention since some of them claim that there are students who have positive attitudes towards the teacher, are polite and even try to pay attention to what the teacher is saying, but they completely do not see any benefits of learning the subject matter or other subjects, e.g.

"They (the students [by authors]) are completely not interested in learning a language or any other subject. They don't care, don't see any purpose and perspectives." Respondent 24

The teachers claim that this may be caused by the fact that there is an economic crisis in Europe now and many of the students' parents may have lost their jobs and they may think that it is not worth learning any more. Not to mention all the messages conveyed by media that there is now more demand for plumbers rather than for educated people in the job market. The respondents are of the opinion that the lack of student motivation has a very negative impact on them since it discourages them from preparing interesting classes and developing themselves in order to be good teachers. They feel that whatever they do, their students are unmotivated, so there is no sense doing anything. This is, however, a vicious cycle hence teachers not seeing the sense of preparing interesting classes are not able to motivate their students to learn, which, it turn, leads to their own dissatisfaction and frustration. This problem with student motivation is not only the problem of European teachers caused by unfavourable economic situation, but a worldwide problem since Travers and Cooper (1996) and Kyriacou (2000) also report it as a source of teacher stress. It seems that young people all over the world, at least some of them, feel that education is not one of the most important things in human life and it is not a tool for leveraging one's success. This may be caused by worldwide crisis, parents not devoting enough time to their children, or just a sign of changing collective consciousness of people who seem to become aware that education solely is not a path to a better life. Nowadays experience

and skills appear to matter more, which makes many people to reformulate their thinking. It all changes their priorities and may have an impact on the drop in student motivation which, in turn, has impact on the well-being and motivation of academic teachers.

In conclusion, the student as a learner is one of the two most important persons in the teaching-learning process. Our interviews suggest that learner-teacher dynamics has huge impact on academic teacher's well-being or the lack of it which is in line with Traver and Cooper (1996).

Marking

The last, but not least stressor mentioned by the respondents as connected with learner-lecturer dynamics, is the case of some students extorting better marks from the teachers although they do not deserve them. There were few respondents who expressed their strong disapproval of such practices and rated them as stressful. There are cases when some students ask their teacher to raise their final mark because they would like to get a scholarship, need a credit in order not to be expelled from the university or not to repeat some courses, e.g. after Erasmus foreign university visiting. The teachers feel under pressure then hence they do not want to take the blame for students' misfortunes, but they at the same time feel it is deeply against their principles and code of conduct. Some teachers just refuse in such situations, others help their students unwillingly; in both cases they usually feel guilty and are tense because of the uncomfortable situation.

The learner-lecturer dynamics has huge influence not only on the process of teaching, but on the well-being of academic teachers as well for the reason that learners are people with whom teachers come into contact at work on the biggest scale. If scholars have good rapport with their students, they tend to feel better and have more positive attitudes towards their daily work, the group they teach and their profession. The learner may be a source of teacher stress not only because of their learning results, intellect, environment and marking demands, but because of their attitudes towards learning as well.

The attitudes of students towards learning and towards the teacher may cause teacher stress, there are, however other people that may encourage or discourage a given academic teacher to do their job. These are all the people who the lecturers work with and the atmosphere or organizational culture at university together with the management style and management techniques being experienced.

Stressors associated with the workplace

There are some stressors enumerated by the respondents, which are connected not with teaching students directly, but more with the university itself. By the university we mean here not the very building, but the ethos of a given university, its organizational culture and people working there.

The atmosphere in the workplace

One of the problems associated with the very workplace is the atmosphere there. Many respondents expressed their opinion that not only the students, but also the colleagues and the university authorities build the atmosphere in the workplace, which is, in their case, academia. A significant number of the respondents said that the bad atmosphere at work is the source of their stress and the feeling of discouragement towards going to work. One of the respondents said:

“It is terrible how some lecturers behave towards one another. One should think that people who are well-educated and who are supposed to be able to have good rapport with other people because of their profession, can behave, but they actually cannot. Academic teachers treat some of their colleagues as foes which influences the atmosphere at work in a negative way. I’m stressed because of it.” Respondent 4

All of the respondents were of the opinion that the atmosphere at work makes the teacher either like or dislike their job, and many of them claimed that the atmosphere in their universities was not nice, which was a source of their frustration, tension and stress. They blamed the current situation on the labour market for it since because of the drop in the birth rate fewer and fewer academic teachers are needed at universities, especially those teaching-oriented ones. The lecturers, therefore, are generally afraid of losing their job and want to show the authorities that they are better than their colleagues, which leads to conflicts. All teachers working in one university, instead of supporting one another, fight for extra privileges, better classrooms to teach in, or better classes to teach. They also want to discredit the achievements of their colleagues in order to present themselves in a better light. Such behaviour is stressful itself and it consumes much of their stamina, what is more, it leads to rat race, which is also a source of academic teacher stress.

Rat race among teachers

Some academic teachers claim that their workmates contend for more paid overtime, for better classrooms and better classes. They try to show themselves from a better perspective hoping that they will get what they want if they prove that they are better than other lecturers. It is a source of constant tension for some of the respondents. They feel that the teaching itself and satisfaction derived from it are no longer important, it is achievement that matters. The rapport with students and their real knowledge is not as important as marks and statistics. Those teachers who have better statistics referring to, for instance, higher exam scores, are considered better teachers by the dean and other university authorities. This makes the lecturers to not think about the learning and teaching process as the process of passing knowledge, but it makes the lecturers think about ways of winning over their colleagues by means of easily-measurable results which usually have very little to do with real achievement. This, of course, can be influenced by the head of a given institute/faculty, who may stop such practices or encourage them, which, in case of the latter, is a source of teacher stress. One of the informants claimed:

“I’m sick when I think about the constant competition with my fellow academic teachers. This competition concerns all – who teaches what and whom, who is to give a lift to the head of the institute, who can have their conference financed. Sick, really sick and my boss accepts such practices, actually she encourages them.” Respondent 5

University authorities and administration

Although the rector/dean or other head at university should be the one in charge of good atmosphere at work, they are many times another vital source of academic teacher stress. Nearly all respondents claimed that the head is their source of stress. Around one-fourth of the respondents even admitted to have been or to be mobbed by their direct boss (e.g. head of the division/institute, etc., not necessarily the dean or rector) at least once in their career. Some of the above mentioned teachers were not able to define the very notion of mobbing and they were not aware of the fact they had been mobbed. After the phenomenon had been explained to them, they realized they had been, or still were the victims of mobbing. Some respondents were spontaneously aware what mobbing was and admitted to have been its victims. The heads usually

mobbed teachers who had refused to sign time-restricted job contracts, or to prepare something that was not part of their job description. Those people were not to be paid for their extra work and they had their own families to take care of, but the heads could not understand it. Apart from mobbing the lecturers and causing their stress this way, the heads also made their workers frustrated by not allowing them to develop because they, for instance, refused to let them attend conferences or blocked their promotion possibilities.

“The head of my institute said at the beginning of this academic year that we are not to do the habilitation [associate professorships] because there are enough professors at the faculty. But what about us? It’s not only about the ambition to develop, but about my contract to be extended. Now we have 8 years between PhD and habilitation, if my habilitation is blocked, I will lose my job.” Respondent 17

Some respondents claimed that even though the rector or dean was not the person to stress them directly, they were responsible for the atmosphere in the workplace and for its ethos. One informant even reported that at their faculty mobbing is developed to such extent that they have special funds for legal trials against former or existing employees. This means that the people of authority are aware of what they do and how they influence the well-being of their employees and even though they continue such practices.

Additional issue to be tackled here is the role of university administration in evoking academics’ stress. Some academics claim that such administrative staff as secretaries, dean’s assistants, class schedule coordinators instead of helping them in their daily work, make them miserable. These people shift some of their responsibilities on the scholars, are not helpful in case of applying for grants, take doctor’s leave at the exam session and this way the scholars need to teach, mark and organize everything on their own. Some of the administrative staff are even rude towards younger scholars.

“The secretaries at my faculty are more proud and reserved than the dean. Whenever I ask a question or want them to do something for me, they treat me as if I was a student. No, actually students are treated in a better way cause they are clients. I’m a serf, because I’m treated like that by my boss, so secretaries do the same. It’s because of the atmosphere there.” Respondent 4

In conclusion, the interviews suggest that the peers and the non-academic staff at university instead of helping, make the life of scholars more difficult. It is, however, usually due to the policy adopted by the authorities who sometimes even encourage such practices.

More experienced colleagues

Teachers working at universities, and especially research assistants and some young assistant professors that participated in the research claimed that their source of stress were the professors because they felt they were being used by them and it led to their extreme frustration. Respondent 6 claimed:

“I would like to get a permanent position at my university, so I do everything to get it – I stay late to help with the organization of some events, I help some professors to carry out exams and conduct seminars, but I get nothing in exchange, they seem to be used to using me. I would like to stop behaving like that, but I cannot because I care so much about getting a position there. It all makes me feel very bad. I’m extremely stressed because I know that I’m being used on my own request, but now I’m afraid to stop it because they may get offended and I may never obtain my PhD degree. On the other hand, after whole days of such hard work I’m not able to write the thesis anyway.” Respondent 6

Other young respondents were of the opinion that their older colleagues did not want them to develop and succeed because they were afraid of losing their own current position since some of them did almost nothing after obtaining highest positions, including professorships. What is more, more experienced colleagues would like the younger ones to invite them to their project teams, but without doing anything and those younger scholars are more and more aware of such practices and are dissatisfied with being victims. This leads to conflicts which are very stressful as well. Of course, the interview results do not suggest that all heads refuse to support their employees and all university professors take advantage of their PhD students. We may only assume, that this is the issue of the dynamics of relations between teachers/PhD candidates and the people in charge of them. Some younger scholars themselves encourage others to delegate duties to them and then they feel overloaded and blame their superiors.

Inspections

Inspections are generating a lot of academic teacher tension throughout the whole period of academic career. The majority of the investigated teachers stated that they feared inspections even though some of them, especially the more experienced ones, claimed they knew they were good teachers. Nevertheless, they found inspections stressful for the reason that somebody may say they are not good enough teachers and point at the prospective

mistakes made by them. It seems that they teachers are afraid of losing face. Especially teachers with A personality type (Caplan and Jones, 1975; Taylor, et al., 1984) and those who manifest strong achievement striving must find it very devastating if their authority is undermined by someone's criticism. Kyriacou (2000) also investigated that teachers as the subjects of his research feared being evaluated by others. Harmer (2003) even compares teachers to actors being on stage all the time, so the teachers should be accustomed to being observed. It, though, seems that it matters who the observer is. The teachers at the university do not mind being observed by their students, but the case is different when it comes to inspections of the head, colleagues or some outside bodies.

"What I don't like about my job, is inspections. I have nothing to hide or to be ashamed of, but I simply don't like being observed, because I am constantly thinking that they may laugh at me together or speak about me. I know that they are not omniscient and make mistakes like myself, but it is an artificial situation to be observed by people you usually drink coffee with at the break time. It doesn't feel right, it's stressful". Respondent 21

Change

When asked what makes them stressed at work, some academic teachers also state that it is their own helplessness in view of new rules and regulations constantly implemented by the central government. It seems to be related to groups of stressors which Kyriacou (2000) classifies as related to any kind of change that takes place in the school and which disorganizes teachers' work or forces them to change their habits. Those interviewees who enumerate this stressor claim that there are many new regulations and rules to be implemented and followed, but there are neither money nor ideas how to do that and the scholars feel extremely helpless because they do not know what they are supposed to do. They say they feel they are not good scholars and they have remorse because of it, especially because authorities usually expect of them to behave according to the new principles, but do not instruct them what is meant by them. One of the informants said:

"We are supposed to implement all new regulations even before it is exactly explained what they are like. Our university is first to implement new things, sometimes even before it is officially expected by the Ministry. What a pity nobody helps us to understand them; the head does not understand it himself, but expects us to understand and put into practice. It is extremely stressful if one doesn't know what is expected of them." Respondent 7

Even though the teacher and the student are the most important “components” of the teaching-learning process, the workplace (the university) itself with its atmosphere and people building it can be a source of stress as well. The university is the place where the teachers work and interact with others on a daily basis and which can be a nice or discouraging workplace. The people with whom teachers come into interactions build the atmosphere and they may be a source of their stress.

Stressors associated with being a researcher

Academic teachers in their job do not only teach students, but, first of all are scholars. In order to become an academic teacher one usually needs to do research as well and disseminate it. The duties of scholars, apart from teaching students, include doing research, applying for funds, writing and reading in English as a foreign language, attending conferences (Wieczorek, 2014b).

Doing research

Some informants stated that they found doing research tiring and difficult, for the reason that they did not feel they had been well-prepared to do it in a proper way. Many interviewees claimed that they had not been taught at university or, especially at PhD courses how they should really conduct research, which type of research is most applicable in a given context, or how to operate computer software while doing quantitative or qualitative research respectively. What is more, few subjects indicated that doing research in a proper way, with representative samples, is simply expensive and they could not have it financed entirely by their faculties. The scholars investigated, in such cases either tried to apply for funds which is really difficult nowadays due to increased competition and limited funding, or tried to do research using their own software, without software, with smaller samples, etc. This, in turn, caused their dissatisfaction with the research procedures and results, and occupational stress emerged.

“How to do research if I don’t even have a good computer in my office. Not to mention the unwillingness of my faculty to buy a good software, pay for a sampling frame and such staff. I can’t do reliable research without it and I do what I can – namely research full of flaws. You can imagine I’m not very

pleased. It's somehow devastating, especially because it influences the quality of my papers." Respondent 7

Writing peer reviewed papers

While speaking about their occupational stress and factors evoking it, the majority of scholars mentioned writing scientific papers. They were of the opinion that writing itself was not stressful, but the necessity to write a given number of papers per year and deadlines associated with it were considered very stressful and frustrating. The same respondents who mentioned doing good research as impossible due to lack of funds and abilities mentioned writing papers as stressful, and stemming from that inability. Others stated that nowadays it is more and more difficult to publish in good journals because of the very good quality of papers published in journals included into relevant scientific rankings.

"Conference papers are no longer sufficient to get promoted. Now the ministry appreciates impacted papers, but writing them is a nightmare – even if they are not rejected, one must correct them even 4 times, it's called rounds. It indeed is like rounds – myself against the reviewers. One needs to be very persistent and motivated to endure this. Then you are really satisfied and proud, but before you're really stressed. Mostly when the e-mail comes and you realise that your paper is not worth much." Respondent 2

It appears that it is not the process of writing which is so stressful, but the necessity to come up with a given number of papers per year, being forced to publish in top-tier journals or revising the paper many times before it is accepted by its reviewers. Scholars are stressed and tired of it, especially in relation to the difficulties with delivering high-quality research as already mentioned. The interviewees were of the opinion that in many cases low-quality writing is because they do not have appropriate funds, were not trained appropriately in the area of academic writing, etc. This all results in frustration with publishing as an unavoidable part of being employed in academia.

Applying for funds

Applying for funds as a scholar's stressor is closely connected with the two previous types of stressors elaborated on. Scholars need money to finance their research and the research, in turn, if it is good, allows for writing

good papers. The informants claimed that it is more and more difficult to apply for grants nowadays due to fierce competition. Besides, few of the respondents mentioned that applying procedures are really elaborate and require many skills – budget planning skills, managerial skills in order to design a good project, assess how many people are able to realise it, the knowledge of the latest regulations, etc. Interviewees were emphasizing that it is almost impossible to get a governmental research grant, if the applicant is not successful, well recognized scholar yet. This is because a successful application usually demands having some publications in top-tier journals, which is very difficult at early stage of academic career. The informants claimed that university administration staff were not willing and/or not able to help with all the forms and procedures, even though it is theoretically a part of their job description. This way, some scholars cannot get adequate support and applying for funds is another stressful task for them.

“You know what’s the most stressful – not the applying procedures because I already went through them successfully. I know how to do it to get a grant. Stressful is the fact that they are there to help you, but do nothing for you. They are either on doctor’s leave, or extremely busy doing nothing, or forget to go through your form, and you know that tomorrow you must send it to the ministry. In such moments I feel as if I was about to have a heart attack or a stroke.” Respondent 11

Reading and writing in English language

The necessity to read and write in English is connected with the emphasis to publish in impact factor journals since the whole “impact factor academic world” is English (Wieczorek, 2014b). Older informants who were not taught English at elementary and secondary school may find it especially difficult and often ask translators to translate their paper from their native language into English. It is not enough, though, because in order to write a good paper one needs to read a lot of papers of other authors. The vast majority of them are written in English. The lecturers who don’t use this language often, my find it very problematic. The informants stated that using English for academic purposes is stressful because its level, in case of scientific paper writing, needs to be high. Those scholars who do not speak English very well, admitted to be using the services of professional proofreaders. They need to pay for it usually themselves and the good English language level does not guarantee paper acceptance, so scholars find it very frustrating altogether.

"I'm not a very good English user, I speak English, but I have problems with writing, especially paper writing that requires a certain style. I prefer to write in my native language and then ask somebody to translate it. It is, however, expensive and if that person translating is not my field-oriented, the paper then has flaws. I'm then stressed or very, very tired, because I either pay a translator and have a manuscript with flaws, or I do it myself, I then also have a manuscript with flaws and I'm devoid of energy. Crazy." Respondent 7

Attending conferences

Attending conferences as a stressor is closely connected with the previous two stressors – the issue of money and the issue of language. Some informants claimed they feared confronting other scholars at conferences (foreign ones), for the reason that they did not consider themselves good users of English. Other subjects stated that they were not able to attend desired conferences they really wanted due to financial reasons – the faculty was not able to pay the expenses. They had to attend conferences that they did not find interesting (e.g. local ones), and felt frustrated because of it. Even people having grant-based financing found conferences stressful in such a way that they wanted to spend their own grant money, but could not without the consent of their university. As bureaucracy at universities is perceived as really high, such formal acceptance of money spending is sometimes very long and disappointing. Some respondents mentioned that they did not like conferences because they did not want to part with their families (children). There were also other issues raised in relation to conferences and finding colleagues there, but these are going to be described in the next chapter devoted explicitly to stress associated with collaboration and factors evoking it.

Stressors associated with pressures exerted over academic teachers

There are some events or mechanisms at a university that are treated by the academics as a source of constant or temporal pressure which they find stressful. They are called pressures here since they are connected with time pressures and other events that the teachers feel forced to take part in or things that need to be done even at the cost of a given teacher's private life, free time, etc.

Exam pressure

The first pressure is the so-called exam pressure. Some of the respondents claim that they feel strong need to prepare their students to pass various exams, and not in order to help them become autonomous specialists in their field. They are of the opinion that they cannot, for instance, devote 3 classes to teaching the principles of, for instance, SWOT analysis/teaching foreign languages/operating a machine (depending on the field) in order to make it possible for the students to understand it and use freely and correctly because there are some other issues to be covered for the exam. Furthermore, the teachers also claim that they tend to constantly compare the results that their students obtained with the results of the students taught by their colleagues. If another lecturer's group does better, the given teachers are likely to suffer stress and tension since they are afraid of losing face and they are not sure what the head of the division might say. They report that in the times of the lack of job security and demographic crisis, examining students is a really a source of their great concern. Especially in view of the fact that students evaluate academic teachers each semester, the teachers fear giving them low marks. Some of the investigated lecturers admit that they mainly work on their students' ability to do well at tests, skipping many other topics that should also be covered for the students' well-being at their future job. This causes the internal conflicts of the teachers practising it and it is a source of their occupational stress.

"I need to teach the students just to pass the finals. Really, there's no time for other things. The course schedule is so tight that I need to skip some things and focus on those that are likely to occur at the exam. Sometimes they have very little to do with the subject matter. My students don't think about real life yet, about their future job... If they did, they would be more active, inquisitive. They want nice final marks, scholarships, peace of mind. If I don't arrange it for them, they may give me low marks on the evaluation scheme. And it doesn't matter if I'm a good teacher or not, it's a matter of liking or disliking me, depending on a person, a given context. Instead of teaching them how something works and how to do something in a proper way, we teach how to pass the exams. It is the way it is. I'm just sad and don't want to do it any more [teach]." Respondent 15

It seems very sad that because of the contemporary emphasis on the results obtained at tests, the core purpose of teaching, which is passing knowledge, seems to be very minimized. The lecturers, who cannot count on the head's support, but who rather are constantly asked to present an account of their students' progress measured by tests, are no longer willing to really teach.

They are inclined to teach how to do well at tests, which is not real teaching since it does not teach the learners to be autonomous professionals. Those lecturers who really wanted to teach effectively and support students' further professional career, and for that reason decided to work as an academic teacher, find this situation very frustrating.

Time pressures

The exam pressure seems to be closely connected with the time pressure which is also said by the respondents to be a source of occupational stress. The respondents are of the opinion that there are too many problems to cover during each semester and this makes them work fast and superficially, without paying attention to details which, in turn, results in their students' achieving low results, for which the teachers blame themselves. To make the matters worse, the lecturers report that in order to manage everything, they take a lot of work home which is the cause of work-family conflicts, teaching/research conflicts and of a constant feeling of fatigue. It is in line with the study by Pierce and Molly (1990) who emphasize that heavy workloads and time pressures, which are well-documented in teaching, cause teacher stress. The interviewees claimed to have very little, if any free time. One of the respondents described it as follows:

"Free time? I don't have anything like free time. When I come back home after work, I have a lot of things to do – I assign a lot of homework in order to cover all the problems necessary for the exam, so then I have to correct it at home. I don't go out in the evenings because I prepare materials for the next day. If I have some time, it's during the weekend, on condition that there is no event planned at university. I feel tense and stressed because I feel I'm at work all the time" Respondent 4

Overload and bureaucracy

The very quotation presented above also refers to another stressor enumerated by the respondents, which is work overload. As it has been mentioned, because of the exam pressure and the time pressure the teachers are really overloaded and, additionally, they are forced to organize extracurricular events and classes which they find, first of all tiring, and, secondly, frustrating since they do not get paid for this extra time spent at work.

Much of the work overload is, in accordance with the opinion of the respondents, connected with bureaucracy at university nowadays. The scholars report that there are many forms to fill, papers to sign and reports to write if one works as an academic teacher. They stress that working as a teacher is no longer about teaching, but more about working in an office at present.

When asked what disappointed them after beginning their work as a scholar, many respondents claim that it was the amount of paperwork. The teachers need to correct the written work of their students, such as essays, homework, tests which is also considered paperwork and, of course, they need to do that at home what deprives them of the time they could spend with their families and friends. An assumption could be made that the teachers should be taught at university how to develop time management skills. Time management skills are important in accomplishing all complex tasks (Trueman & Hartley, 1996), but it appears to be especially important in teacher's job because teachers not only manage their own time, but the time of their students as well. Some informants think it is great responsibility since they suggest their learners how much time they should spend learning, in what time they should be able to cover certain problems, etc. If classes are not planned carefully, the process of teaching is affected and, as a result of it, students achieve low results or their motivation drops if the pace is too slow or too fast. In such cases the teachers become stressed which, in turn, devastates them. Time management skills are also very important to devote enough time to research, which in turn leverages strongly scholars productivity and professional success at academia (Hu & Gill, 2000).

There is workload perceived by informants connected with the necessity to publish papers and disseminate research combined with obligation to conduct all other tasks at the same time (e.g. teaching, organizing conferences). The informants state that they are required to publish few papers each academic year, but they are often not able to do it, so they devote their summer holidays to it. This way they have no time to rest properly. Continuous changes in the educational and marking system which force the teachers to develop all the time and devote their private time to academic things may lead easily to professional burnout.

As it can be seen, there are many types of pressure that may be exerted over academic teachers. Boyle et al. (1995), Pierce and Molly (1990), Travers and Cooper (1996) and Kyriacou (2000) have also reported time pressures and workload as factors triggering teacher stress. Apart from the types of pressure elaborated on above, one may also think of students, colleagues, heads exerting pressure over them due to a variety of reasons, starting from

students' demands concerning obtaining better marks they do not deserve, and finishing with teachers being mobbed by colleagues. The relationships with others, however, have already been focused on in this chapter.

"I sometimes feel that everyone around wants something from me – like students who need to know their marks, have their index books signed, research partners sending manuscripts to revise, colleagues asking me to review their students' theses. There's family wanting me to be there with them. I feel constantly under pressure, often having a headache as a result." Respondent 1

Stressors associated with conflicts

Conflicts seem to be stressful in general and people usually try to avoid them, but there are situations which can be conflicting and which cannot be avoided. Besides there are people with whom one needs to interact even though those interactions are not necessarily nice. Scholars work with various other people, so conflicts are unavoidable in their professional life. Conflicts also refer to internal conflicts of the teacher, i.e. role conflicts and contradictory expectations of many people towards the teachers nowadays.

Role conflicts

The investigated lecturers reported to be stressed because of role conflicts. The teachers specified that by role conflict they mean the conflict between teaching their subject and acting like mentors or "parents" towards their students. They claim they do not feel prepared or entitled to act as they were parents of their students. In their opinion, the students are grown up and should act in a responsible way on their own, whereas nowadays they expect the academic teachers to solve problems on their behalf, organize their process of learning, even rewrite their MA theses. Interviewees would like to teach their course, but very often they are forced to step in their students' private life and problems since the students often treat the talks with their lecturers as it was confession or counselling. The teachers claim that they were not prepared for that at university and therefore they treat it as a source of emotional burden. It consumes their energy, it also very often steals their private time or class time. As a result lecturers feel that they devote too little time to teaching and too much of it to other issues. One respondent claimed:

“Once a girl dropped me an e-mail, stating that she had kidney cancer and she doesn’t know what to do to get my credit. I didn’t know if it was true, I didn’t know what to say. I gave her the credit, but felt I should comfort her somehow, but I just didn’t do it. Students sometimes lie to get credits, they tell me their life stories and I just listen, waste time, feel forced to give my signature. Vicious cycle. Tiring, stressful. Yep, I guess it’s stressful because it’s not about my job, I need to do it anyway.” Respondent 12

Work-family conflicts

Work-family conflicts are also declared by the respondents as very frustrating. Those conflicts are, in the opinion of the investigated teachers, caused by their work overload and time pressures. As it has already been mentioned, the majority of the respondents claimed to be taking work home constantly, which is in line with conclusions drawn by Kyriacou (2000) and Travers and Cooper (1996). Those who have already set their own families claim usually that there is work-family conflict in their life which is very stressful. They claim not to have enough time to devote to their wives/husbands, children and households what entails engaging other people into their family life. Their work overload is difficult to accept by their family and leads to numerous conflicts. Some female respondents claim that their husbands accuse them of working too long and earning too little. Those husbands who earn a lot of money would like their wives to stay at home and focus on housekeeping rather than devoting so much time to an academic job that is, in their opinion, unprofitable. It leads to conflicts because women nowadays like being independent and they do not want to be sponsored by their husbands. They tend to be stressed because of the fact that their spouses do not appreciate their work. Some informants also claimed that they could not do research or write papers working at home because their family members do not understand that working home is an unavoidable part of their profession and that they need peace and silence to do it.

“My wife and children think that when I come back after work, my work has finished. What about correcting students’ work, cooperating with colleagues, writing articles and this is time-consuming and requires calm circumstances. Everyone enters my room, wants something, children scream. I get nervous then, I’m aggressive, I yell at my children, at my wife. This is the stress symptom [laughs].” Respondent 7

Role conflicts and work/family conflicts, called work/home interface by Travers and Cooper (1996), are not the only conflicts that academic teachers go through. There is also a serious conflict between teaching and research which received rich illustration in prior research (Fox, 1992; Colbeck, 1998).

Teaching/research conflicts

Academic teachers taking part in the study, reported conflicts between their teaching duties and research. They claim to devote too much time to teaching and doing other things relating to teaching, such as correcting students' work, marking, preparing classes, etc. To make the matters worse, scholars from post-communist European countries very often hold two positions to make ends meet (Wieczorek, 2014 b), so their teaching duties double. The scholars would like to develop themselves, do good research and disseminate it, but some of them simply cannot find time and are aware about the teaching/research conflict.

"I have over 500 contact hours with students this semester. I know it is like this because of two positions I hold, but my UK friend has only 150 contact hours per semester and earns much more than me, although he has just one position. He does prominent research, has a network of contacts, he attends conferences. I'm here teaching, I try hard to do my research, but it is at the cost of my family life." Respondent 11

As it can be seen, the lecturers are stressed at work and at home because they, hardly ever have a true rest from their work. The work matters are very present in their family life and cause their dissatisfaction with life. Conflicts are unavoidable and there are scholars who can cope effectively with them, there are, however, scholars, for whom coming into conflicts is very devastating. It especially seems to concern inhibited people who constantly question their own value and who feel that their self-image is affected when somebody does not agree with them and manifests it. It appears that people who work with other people on such scale as academic teachers, should be trained how to use and perfect their interpersonal skills, how to be more assertive, more self-confident. They should know how express their own opinion in such a way, so as not to cause conflicts.

In the whole study there were a lot of academic teacher stress factors identified. Some of them were interrelated and having the same roots. The study revealed that all the stresses connected with dealing with colleagues,

doing research and disseminating it, attending conferences, having to use English language, result from the necessity to collaborate with others. Collaboration understood not only as dealing with people, but as doing some things together (e.g. projects, papers, etc.) evokes strong stress of the academic teachers investigated. Since the issue of collaboration as a cause and source of teacher stress seemed so important in view of the current study results, there was a need to investigate it further. For that reason additional research was carried out, whose results are going to be elaborated on separately in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

COLLABORATION AS A STRESSOR AND A LEVERAGE FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The study carried out on factors evoking academic teacher stress revealed that all the stresses connected with dealing with colleagues, doing research and disseminating it, attending conferences, having to use English language, result from the necessity to collaborate with others. Collaboration understood not only as dealing with people, but as doing some things together (e.g. projects, papers, etc.) evokes strong stress of the academic teachers investigated. The informants claimed that working with other people on joint projects consumes a lot of their energy and stamina. It is due to the fact that interacting with others, in a group, entails some interpersonal skills which are not possessed by all the people. What is more, people from developing countries tend not to be as socially skilled as their Western colleagues since soft skills trainings have been incorporated into school schedule of Western learners for a long time already, and not yet given attention to by people from such countries as for instance post-soviet countries (Wieczorek, 2014 a). The informants generally claimed that they found doing projects, especially with foreign colleagues, very tiring for a reason that the group members consisted of people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and for that reasons communication breakdowns occurred from time to time. Those breakdowns concerned not understanding jokes, not being able to share work in a totally fair way. There were also conflicts connected with the leadership. Such conflicts resulting from collaboration and having a serious impact on scholars' well-being were reported by those scholars, who were very successful as scholars (namely had quite high h-index, good impact scores, a big number of publications). One of the respondents claimed:

"I work with a group of fantastic guys I would say. They are sociable, have sense of humour, can work really hard, but... they only listen to their leader.

I also respect him, he's achieved much, his impact scores are very high, but he's not always right when it comes to designing our research, preparing new projects. He's been involved in so many projects, with so many teams, that he cannot deepen each problem, it's a given team that knows it, but he is always the one to have the final say. It makes me irritated because they never listen to me...No, they actually listen, but don't do what I suggest, they just pretend a given issue wasn't raised. Then, after some time it turns out that in order to do B and C, we need to go to D and F (assuming D and F was what I had suggested earlier), and we do it, because at the time the guru says so. It makes me really frustrated." Respondent 8

It is visible, that one of the stressors concerning collaboration is connected with leadership – when people form groups there is always a threat that more than one person would like to be a leader, or that the actual leader may not listen to his team members, but he may blindly head towards the realization of his own vision which may not always be the best one.

Another issue referring to collaboration is the issue of joint paper writing and problems accompanying it, like, for instance, fair share of work to do and then fair distribution of the royalties/ order of surnames. It is very difficult to assess who should have priority, and some informants mentioned that it is a very stressful moment – talking it over with other members of the team.

English language skills also seem to play a crucial role in collaborating, especially in a multicultural environment. The respondents claimed during the interview that they not only must read and write in English in order to read and write papers, but they also must be fluent speakers of that language in order to attend conferences, give presentations there, to initiate new relations, to cooperate with foreigners while doing joint projects. Especially at the initial stages of their career, the informants found it difficult and had inhibitions connected with their spoken English.

"I remember that before my first conference presentation I wanted to run away because I was so stressed because I was to speak English and I was terribly afraid that a British or American person will either ask me a question which I wouldn't be able to understand, or will criticize my English. I was thinking about it all the time, I even cancelled one slide of my presentation by accident." Respondent 2

There were more issues raised in relation to collaboration being a source of academic stress, but the respondents were not unanimous when it comes to the nature of collaboration of scholars, some treated it as something positive, a leverage to one's career, whereas others as cause and source of

stress. It is apparent that some of the stressors elaborated on in this chapter are collaboration-related and that collaboration can be a blessing, or a curse, depending on its type, nature etc. For the reason that this issue was not totally exhausted, the researchers decided to carry out a focus group interview and focus only on collaboration, its nature and the issue whether it is a leverage to one's career, or something affecting scholar's well-being in a negative way. The scenario of the focus group interview was described and presented in chapter two.

In the focus group interview its participants revealed that they find co-working with other scholars very energy-consuming and, at times, stressful. As discovered while interviewing the informants individually, many of the scholars' stressors stemmed from informants' inability to communicate and co-work with others (e.g. other scholars, colleagues in the workplace, students, etc.) effectively. It does not, however, mean that collaboration is all bad and should be avoided in order to feel well and safe in academia. In contrast, many informants claimed they were aware of its benefits, like, for instance synergic effect while doing research and writing papers with colleagues, and they wanted to cooperate with foreign scholars and domestic ones in order to disseminate research more effectively. The stress concerning collaboration does not concern collaboration as a whole, but some aspects of this process only. All the focus group members and many of the informants interviewed individually emphasized that they found some aspects and stages of collaboration stressful. This means that we should understand which factors referring to collaboration are stressors and which ones are a leverage to scholars' success. In order to do so, we should at first explain what we understand as scholars' success and how it is manifested, and how we understand collaboration (with whom, on which circumstances, etc.).

The meaning of academic collaboration – what do we know so far?

Growing interest in academic collaboration as the research phenomenon

Research into the issue of teamwork in the academia has had a long tradition especially in works concerning scholars' productivity and its

determinants (Pelz & Andrews, 1966), but the earliest researches were devoted rather to collaboration as an element of research productivity model, rather than a separate notion. Works devoted solely to academic networking started to emerge much later (Landry, Traore & Godin, 1996). Within the last twenty years, however, we have witnessed a growing number of researches concerning academic collaboration which is probably connected with the popularization of the phenomenon itself and the emergence of various grant-getting governmental programs directed at interdisciplinary teams. Domestic research on collaboration does not seem to concentrate on the phenomenon itself, but rather illustrates underdevelopment in relation to productivity in Polish academia due to low funds allocated to science, relatively low wages of Polish scholars and their work overload (Wolszczak-Derlacz & Parteka, 2010).

The collaboration is still more perceived from the perspective of an institution, namely as inter-organizational relations and networks, rather than through the prism of interpersonal dimension, i.e. relations and networks built by individual academics (Leja, 2011). Additionally, the popularity of networking and joint research projects had concerned mainly technical sciences which generally demand very elaborate research infrastructure and only later on did it spread to social sciences as well (K yv ik, 2013). Together with the growing research internationalization, the networking started blossoming in academic practice. Wagner & Leydesdorff (2005) noticed that percentage of ISI scientific works that were co-authored by scholars from various countries grow dynamically from 8.7 percent in 1990 to 15.6 in 2000.

The number of publications about academic collaboration was growing very fast since the beginning of XXI century, however these studies were dominated by the bibliometric research, so the perspective of academics themselves remained under-investigated. Moreover, such bibliometric studies neglected less developed countries, because scholars based in such countries are heavily under-represented in scientific databases. Scholars from less-developed countries (e.g. post-communist Europe), tend to publish more on a local scale, in their native language and prestigious bases do not include these journals since basically the whole impact factor world is English (Wieczorek, 2016b). It was proved that researchers from some countries (e.g. from some countries in Africa and Asia) have highly developed social networks, but on a local scale only (usually concerning their domestic institution) and such networks are oriented more on personal promotion than productivity (Shrum & Campion, 2000). Research conducted by Mitreġa (2014) in Visegrad countries (Poland, Check Republic, Slovakia and Hungary), illustrates that academics from those countries have twice as many ties with domestic colleagues than with

colleagues from the most developed countries, what is more, these domestic ties are much more developed. It shows that scholars from developing countries network mainly locally, which, together with rather low English language competence (Wieczorek, 2014b), isolates them from world most recognizable research centers and hinders their access into current academic discourse. With some noticeable exceptions (Ynalvez & Shrum, 2011; Mitreğa et. al., 2014; Mitreğa, 2016), studies concerning on the interrelation between academic networks and academic productivity, have been carried out in most developed countries, e.g. USA, UK and Australia, which questions the universality of our knowledge on this phenomenon.

The multidimensional picture of networking in academia

The literature and, especially empirical research, discusses usually only unidimensional image of academic networking, because such networking is mainly measured through co-authorship (Abramo, D'Angelo & Di Costa, 2009). This is in contrast to other academic fields such as social networks (Burt, 2001), business networking (Mitreğa et.al., 2011), inter-organizational knowledge transfer (Kogut, 2008, Van Wijk, Jansen & Lyles, 2008), or network organizations (Czakon, 2012). Only recently there have emerged publications stressing the existence of various forms of cooperation between academic workers. Kyvik (2013) proposes conceptual distinction between academic networking and academic collaboration. The former has been identified as a communicative process which encompasses the exchange of ideas, research results and other type of information by means of various/diverse channels and which helps to break intellectual barriers within small research teams. The latter, in turn, is, according to Kyvik (2013) a natural consequence of such networking process and is often manifested by joint research and publishing.

While working on their success, scholars may focus rather on individual work (e.g. literature review and conducting field research), reducing their academic ties to collaboration with their supervisor, or they may consciously employ various efforts to engage in ongoing research collaboration with various actors, e.g. the supervisor's friends, peers, or established scholars met through conferences or social media (Mitreğa, 2014). In this sense academic networking goes far beyond co-writing papers or co-authorship. We follow Mitreğa et al (2016) assuming that academic networking comprises all the actions that a scholar employs in order to initiate and manage ties with other scholars and collaborate in research projects and publishing. The

terms collaboration and networking are often used interchangeably, there are, however slight differences worth paying attention to. Popular dictionaries often identify the very term networking with establishing personal ties and exchanging information between a given person and other people in order to gain mutual benefits. On the other hand, collaboration is understood as working together to create or achieve the common goal (www 1). Thus, the collaboration in such areas as research and publishing should be treated as the form of networking, but we need to remember that networking comprises also some other activities between loosely connected academic actors. For example, the scholar may engage in some interactions with other scholars from other countries through social media like Researchgate and, after discussing the current state of research in a given area, this scholars may come up with the idea for further research that will be conducted individually or as the teamwork including some other faculty ties.

The link between networking and the scholar's success

As mentioned earlier, scholars nowadays are facing institutional changes in the academia. These changes concern their professional development and career opportunities and are a result of the modification of procedures connected with obtaining scientific degrees. It is observable that criteria which are to be met in order to be promoted at the university are more and more unified across European Union and in other developed countries (Wieczorek, 2014a). Nowadays, in order to be promoted, a given scholar needs to be successful in few fields, one of which is research productivity, manifested by a number of good publications in prestigious journals. Bergeron & Liang (2007), together with research productivity, give three other components of scholar's success, which are: institutional recognition (salary, rank, tenure, and rate of promotions), teaching effectiveness (e.g. indicated by student evaluations), and professional visibility (awards, editorial board positions, citations, etc.). Among these few components the research productivity is the most important one, because it is easily countable, transparent and very popular across various academic cultures (Onder and Onder, 2010; Hicks, 2009). We may therefore assume, that the more publications per year and more publications in prestigious journals, the more successful an academic is.

The partners' knowledge exchange and its impact on productivity is well documented in various business contexts, e.g. supply chain management or joint product development (Dyer & Hatch, 2006; Mesquita, Anand,

& Brush, 2008). This is also the fundamental aspect of the social learning theory (Bandura & McClelland, 1977; Checkel, 2001), where new patterns of behaviour can be acquired by individuals through direct experience or by observing the behaviours of others. Prior research into the area of scholar productivity has rather not concentrated on networking as factor stimulating research productivity, however the general link between publishing with co-authors (rather than as single author) and publication rate is well documented (Maske, Durden, & Gaynor, 2003; Megel, Langston, & Creswell, 1988). The empirical evidence for the significant impact of academic collaboration on scholars' productivity illustrates that academic collaboration may increase productivity in both terms: quantity (e.g. publication number) and quality (e.g. citations, journal impact factor) of academic output. Table 1 presents the review of empirical studies on this topic, where one may compare various measures being used for collaboration and productivity and main conclusions coming from these studies being presented.

Table 1. Studies on the impact of networking/collaboration on scientific productivity

The study	Measure of networking	Measure of productivity	Method/ Sample	Main findings
(Pelz & Andrews, 1966)	Scientists' Communication (e.g. exchanging memos and meetings)	Number of publication and some related measures	Survey among American researchers	Communication enhances productivity, because it provides ideas and promotes competition and rewards.
(Wood, 1990)	N. A.	N. A.	Qualitative/Semi-structured interviews with Australian scholars	Colleague-ship can provide research stimulation, but its positive influence is limited by the competitive aspects.
(Bordons, Gomez, Fernandez, Zulueta, & Méndez, 1996)	Co-authorship team size and internationalization (international, domestic and local)	Publication number and publication quality.	Bibliometric approach among Spanish biomedical scholars	A positive correlation between productivity and international and domestic collaboration at the author level.
(Landry, Traore, & Godin, 1996)	Self-reported intensity of collaboration with various entities (i.e. with peers in Canada and other countries, with industry and with institutions).	Number of scientific output of various type (18 categories).	Survey among professors in Quebec universities (Canada).	The collaboration between researchers and industry had significantly more impact on productivity than collaboration between researchers and their peers or researchers and other institutions.

The study	Measure of networking	Measure of productivity	Method/ Sample	Main findings
(Van Raan, 1998)	Intensity of co-authorship of scientific publications.	Citation number, filtering the self-citations.	Bibliometric study of astronomical research in the Netherlands	The international collaborations has positive effects on the quality of the output in terms of citations.
(Braun, Glänzel, & Schubert, 2001)	Intensity of co-authorship of scientific publications.	Publication number	Bibliometric study of scholars publishing in neuroscience journals	Authors in the cooperativity range of 4-5 (i.e., contributing to papers with 5-6 authors, in average) have maximum productivity, while those in the cooperativity range of 10-12 have a minimum.
(Martín-Sempere, Rey-Rocha, & Garzón-García, 2002)	The number of various collaborations (e.g. domestic team, multinational team) and participation in formal network structures.	Publication number with regard to various types of academic output (e.g. journal articles, books, conference papers)	The combination of a mail survey among Spanish scholars (in geology) and a bibliometric study of their scientific output	The greater scientific productivity is achieved by scientists that belongs to a consolidated, well-established research team, opposite to those who do not.
(Maske, Durden, & Gaynor, 2003)	Intensity of co-authorship of scientific publications.	Total number of articles produced by individual.	The survey among American economists.	Collaboration increases the research productivity.
(Lee & Bozeman, 2005)	The number of collaborators and collaboration strategies based on collaboration motives.	Normal count and a fractional count of peer-reviewed journal papers for three years (201-203)	Survey; sample of American university researchers (various disciplines)	The number of collaborating researchers is relatively the strongest predictor of productivity. Additionally, "the tactician" is the most effective collaboration strategy.
(Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2005)	Self-reported quality of communication within home and external academic network.	Number of publications.	Survey of full-time faculty at the University of Minnesota Medical School.	Professional external network contributes to research productivity, but "home network" (within department) has a negative impact.
(Balconi & Laboranti, 2006)	Co-authorship of patents with various entities (e.g. other scholars and business practitioners)	Number of patents being signed by scholars	SNA applied to survey among Italian professors and patent database	Collaboration between professors and industry in microelectronics is associated with high scientific performance

The study	Measure of networking	Measure of productivity	Method/ Sample	Main findings
(Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Bachrach, 2008)	Editorial board membership	Total citations of author's work	Bibliometric approach towards management scholars.	Total citations of scholar's work are strongly connected with participation in editorial boards.
(Abramo, D'Angelo, & Di Costa, 2009)	Intensity of co-authorship of scientific publications (total, both with foreign and domestic organizations).	Publication number and publication quality.	Bibliometric approach among Italian scholars (without socio-economic and humanities disciplines)	The impact of collaboration intensity is not uniform, but rather depends on the specific scientific field considered. The quality of scientific production most often correlates positively with the collaboration intensity.
(Maritz, 2010)	Time that scholars spend in social interactions with their contacts such as colleagues and industry contacts.	Number of publications of various type (e.g. journal articles, books)	The survey among full time academic staff at universities in Melbourne (Australia)	There is positive association between networking and scholar productivity.
(Ynalvez & Shrum, 2011)	The number of collaborative projects and number of all professional contacts.	Self-reported number of papers published in foreign and in local journals.	Survey among agricultural scientists based in Philippines.	The informal and non-structured professional network ties, and not the formal and structured collaborative groups, matter for publication productivity of scholars from developing countries.
(Hedjazi & Behravan, 2011)	Quality of communication with academic colleagues.	Number of published books, papers, conference papers and research plans conducted.	Data from survey and internet profiles of agricultural scholars from Tehran (Iran).	Network of communication with colleagues specifies substantial portion of individual research productivity.
Mitręga et al. (2014, 2016)	Personal routines oriented at developing academic networks, number and quality of professional ties	Number of published books and publications in various scientific journals	Data from survey among business scholars in V4 countries (supported by secondary data)	Dynamic approach toward networking and foreign academic ties leverage productivity, while domestic network and business ties do not.

Bergeron & Liang (2007) suggested that social networks mediate the link between individual differences (e.g. personality, research skills) and career outcomes in academia. Bland et al. (2005) found an empirical link between having a well-developed network of academic colleagues and individual research productivity, but, interestingly, this link appeared to be positive only

with regard to an “external network” (other departments, other universities) and was found to be negative with regard to the “internal network” (scholars from the same department at the faculty). The study by Lee & Bozeman (2005) suggested that academic collaboration is an important predictor of research productivity; however, their study suggests that the collaboration strategy may be more important than just an increase in the number of personal academic ties. Specifically, implementing the so-called “tactician strategy”, based on selecting partners with complementary skills, has a meaningful impact on research productivity. In the same spirit, Melin’s study (2000) illustrates that successful academic teamwork takes many forms but is rather based on pragmatism than collegiality or supervisor-student relations. Even if the above studies were conducted in the context of so-called highly developed Western countries (e.g. US, UK, Sweden), the pressure to publish in top-tier journals is spreading around the globe and it is reasonable to assume that academic networking may have a major influence on the research productivity of scholars working in other countries. The recent study conducted among universities in Turkey (Önder & Kasapoġlu-Önder, 2011) illustrates that those Turkish universities that employ many researchers trained in North American or UK universities have the best publishing results in indexed journals.

The academic networking in post-communistic countries and its impact on scientific productivity was investigated by Mitreġa et al. (2014, 2016). This research included mainly scholars from so-called Visegrad Countries (V4) that comprise Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. In the first research project there were 415 young scholars surveyed from all V4 countries and the second survey comprised 392 scholars from various age groups employed at Polish universities. This research aimed at opening a so-called “black box” of academic collaboration and investigated the influence of various types of networking on research productivity in the context of transforming post-communist academia. Specifically, Mitreġa et al (2016) distinguish between professional ties oriented at different partners (i.e. academic vs. business, domestic vs. foreign). This study tested also the influence of the so-called dynamic networking on research productivity. Such dynamic networking refers to systematic enlargement of available academic connections and monitoring the quality of these network ties that were previously established. The studies by Mitreġa et al. (2014, 2016) suggest that scholars based in post-communist academia benefit from networking, but to maximize publication output, they should rather concentrate on collaboration with scholars from other countries (especially most developed ones) and apply dynamically manage portfolio of their existing and potential professional connections.

In conclusion, the literature provides the evidence for the link between collaboration and productivity in academia which seems to be valid across various countries and academic cultures. Although, this link seems to be stronger or weaker dependently on the approach toward networking, it is reasonable to assume networking as one of main leverages for maximizing scientific output. Similarly to the study by Mitreğa et al. (2014, 2016) scholars participating in the interviews conducted for the purpose of this monograph were all from post-communist countries. In line with this prior study, we also wanted to investigate how scholars perceive academic networking, including its benefits for scholars, however we also wanted to explore if such networking hinders the success or complicate scholars' live through its ambiguity and stressfulness. Next, we will present results of our field research that focus on these issues.

Academic collaboration as a stressor and a leverage to scholar's career – results of a focus group interview

In prior research by Mitreğa (2014b) and Wieczorek (2014b), a number of issues emerged in relation to the link between collaboration and scholar's success manifested mainly by high research productivity. All those issues were presented to the informants of our research, who were to assess which ones cause scholars' stress and which ones may be treated as leverage in academic success.

Aspects of academic collaboration causing stress of scholars

The process of academic collaboration must be initiated in order to occur, and its initial stages are perceived as stressful. The respondents were aware that in order to co-work with other scholars they had to, at first, identify those worth collaborating with, try to contact them and convince that joint work was likely to be fruitful. The easiest way is to collaborate with people already well-known, speaking the same language and having the same cultural background. This, however, is not necessarily a good leverage to productivity and for that reason scholars rather look for foreign colleagues.

I remember where I am from and I collaborate with everyone – people from my department, scholars from my country – these are colleagues I know well,

but when productivity is concerned, best results are when I do it with foreigners. They have ties, they are good at English, have access to software. Working with them brings immediate benefits, so for productivity one should cooperate on an international level. At home we do it for good climate. Respondent 4

The respondents admitted that they preferred working with foreigners in order to boost productivity, but they claimed that it is stressful due to a variety of reasons, which are connected with the necessity to use English language, write many e-mails with collaboration offers, present themselves at conferences in order to convince significant others (in this context scholars they would like to cooperate with) that they are worthy scholars, and identify who among other academics would be a good partner.

When I think about collaboration and its dark side, I think the beginning is the hardest part – you know what I mean – spending so much time on finding the right people and then thinking how to make them think about you in the right way, appreciate you. Getting to these people, usually using the language that isn't my language, trying to approach them. Many, many problems at the beginning, problems and dilemmas, much time, a lot of writing and then just one person interested [laughs]. Is it worth it, it rather is, I would say you cannot avoid this. Respondent 7

As far as English language is concerned, the informants concluded during the focus group interview that it is a key stress factor with relation to collaboration since it influences the whole initiation process. Good language skills are necessary to prepare a conference presentation, interact with other foreign scholars, write e-mails and browse through international academic fora, read impacted papers of other scholars, etc. The informants claimed that they in general did not have serious problems with language, but some of them felt uncomfortable speaking it in front of more experienced foreign colleagues, especially those from English-speaking countries.

I think I'm not bad at English – I mean speaking because I conduct some lectures in English, use it when I'm on holidays. I also write – papers, e-mails, the problem is I don't feel totally calm while giving conference speech abroad. If it's fear of speaking in front of Brits or Americans I don't know, but answering questions is stressful. Some English speakers tend to speak so fast – I actually think some may do it purposefully – that I don't understand what they mean. They comment my presentation and ask questions and it is sometimes hard to say if it is a comment only or a question and I try very hard to get the meaning and become nervous. Respondent 4

Writing e-mails was considered stressful because of the necessity to write in English and the conviction of respondents that they should take proper care to make the e-mails free of language mistakes and interesting enough so as to encourage others to cooperate with them. There were also some activities preceding e-mail writing and those entailed identifying worthwhile scholars by browsing through such portals as GoogleScholar, research gate, etc., taking a look at the publications of the potential partners, checking their impact scores and h-index. All these took a lot of time, and taking into consideration an already heavy workload of scholars, it added to their tension and stress.

Now I cooperate with a team of really good scholars, but it took a lot of time to find them. I remember that I had to write around few hundreds of e-mails. This is what I did. It took me three months to look for people I could cooperate with. Then I went to a translator and asked him to translate a letter for me. In that letter I tried to introduce myself and say which areas I found interesting in the field. I sent the e-mails and found few people. [...] I wanted to translate this letter because I was not very good at English at that time, I was anxious not to make them think I was bad English user because this would mean I'm not capable of paper writing in English." Respondent 2

Additionally, looking at the achievements of other scholars, made the informants constantly compare themselves to them and, as a result, stress. Analysing the achievements of colleagues was crucial at the stage of identifying potential networking partners – in majority of cases it entailed browsing through their papers, comparing impact factors and assessing where they are on the career ladder. Comparison is inevitable in such context and, taking into consideration the fact that scholars look for more advanced partners than they themselves are, they are likely to feel tension. The stress results from their own, lower position and a false conviction that all more advanced colleagues may refuse their collaboration offers due to their position.

Cooperating with other scholars, quite often more advanced, better known than you is stressful if you're ambitious. You think why you are not where they are, is it just because they had an easier start, or you are not as good. You need to overcome this, otherwise it is devastating for the collaboration and for your well-being, self-confidence as a scholar, a person... Respondent 7

For all the reasons elaborated on above, the process of initiating collaboration was considered stressful by the academics interviewed. Like all initial stages of various processes, it is stressful due to the unknown – scholars do not know at such stage what to expect from colleagues who are to collaborate with them, their roles within a team are shaped and negotiations are carried out. These

all lead to the feelings of uncertainty, anxiety and stress. On the other hand, for a collaboration to occur, the initiation process is necessary, so this stressor cannot be avoided if one wants to leverage their career.

Another issue revolved around problems occurring during collaboration that already started. Here mostly enumerated stressors referred to the negative atmosphere in the team/ conflicts in the team, cultural differences, informants' willingness to exploit the full potential of the relation, and work/ home conflicts resulting from academic networking.

Dealing with people is always stressful, if you do it with people similar to you, it's extremely stressful. Respondent 4

When it comes to conflicts in the team, the respondents reported that they occur from time to time and are a cause of a negative atmosphere and stress being a result of both. Most conflicts occur while dividing duties or setting authors' contribution in a paper authorship. The informants claimed that usually at that stage they were very stressed, nervous and anxious to be fairly treated, it was, however, not possible to be hundred percent fair while dividing work due to the fact that different paper parts have different length, various research stages entail different skills and various amounts of time, etc. For that reason some of the informants felt they had to do more than other team members and they were disappointed later on that they were not the first authors of the paper. This caused frustration and stress and, very often a bad atmosphere in the team again. Some of the informants claimed that they were not able to discuss such issues in a calm manner with team leader and other team members.

I really hate these guys, they are only interested in what is beneficial for them. In my country I need to have contribution statements when I have co-authored papers, I need to state how much I wrote in percentages. My team seem not to understand it and they don't know how important it is, so they take time to sing the statement, I need to ask and ask and I feel really stupid, frustrated. They answer my other questions asked in e-mails, but don't mention the contribution. It is frustrating, after some years of such cooperation I'm really sick of it, it's irritating. They of course claim they don't know what this whole fuss is about. Respondent 6

Another issue evoking scholars' stress was the issue of cultural differences and their relation to cooperation. These differences are connected with approaching conflicting situations, problem solving, punctuality when it comes to e.g. Skype conversations and keeping deadlines. The informants claimed that some foreign colleagues tend to have rather lousy attitudes as far

as meetings and Skype conversations are concerned and this causes conflicts hence other team members are very disciplined and have other duties to fulfil during the day. Those unpunctual ones are usually single and do not need to plan their daily routines as strictly as their mates having families. Italian scholars are said not to keep deadlines and, according to the informants, it is not a stereotype, but their real experience. One respondent also mentioned differences concerning sense of humour – in his opinion his colleagues from a Western country could not understand his jokes which he would tell from time to time in order to relieve various tensions. There is also the degree of social distance and openness that may differ from culture to culture (see also in Wieczorek, 2016 a). Misunderstandings, lack of punctuality and discipline usually lead to stress and much more serious issues like not keeping deadlines, even extreme stress, according to the views of some informants. They claim that it may also be culture-dependent, nevertheless it is considered to be a stressor connected with collaboration. It causes scholars' stress in such situations as, for instance, attaching the file with a paper into an electronic system just before the deadline, when many people try to do it, and servers may be overloaded what can result in not sending out an article.

There's one Italian girl, yeah I know you will laugh since it so stereotypical, but it's true. When she is the leading author and she is to work with an online submission system, we all stress. She always has time and then it's three hours to the deadline and the paper is not sent yet. I'm quite experienced when it comes to using such systems and I know that servers are rally overloaded at deadline times, so I stress a lot we may not make it, this means losing many months of hard work. We finally manage, but it's very... very, how to say it, evoking emotions. Respondent 1

Exploiting a full potential of a given professional relation seems to be important especially for scholars from developing countries. They report they try to do it and stress a lot if it does not work the way they would like it to. Respondents from developing countries would like to use their contacts and do as many projects as possible with a good team. Western colleagues, however, tend to be members of few teams simultaneously and simply do not have time/willingness to do so. This is a cause of stress for some scholars. They report, they feel the effort they had made to initiate and maintain the contacts was so great, that they should gain more than, for instance, one paper out of it.

I constantly try to monitor whether it brings me benefits – this working together – whether we do more projects, have more perspectives, whether my mates introduce me to other scholars. It's tiring, but I need to do it. I invest so much effort I need to make sure I have benefits. It's not easy to monitor it, I

do it by means of a number of papers written together at some specific period of time, I check if it's more or less, sorry, fewer, papers per year than usually.
Respondent 7

The informants also report they would like to collaborate with a given person/team with other, prospective projects, taking into consideration the effort made while initiating the cooperation. Unfortunately, western scholars usually cooperate with various teams and may have no time, or may want to focus on another research area, etc. The informants state that in such cases they feel very disenchanted and discouraged from looking for new partners/initiating new relations since they think it is not worth it. Then it turns out they need good papers, they want representative data, etc. and the easiest way leading to it is cooperation, so they again endeavour to initiate new relations, but stress more and more, knowing that the relation will probably cease before its full potential has been exhausted. This causes great tension and chronic stress hence scholars tend to think about it for a long time.

You need to do it all over again and it's mundane and stressful at the same time. Respondent 2

Last, but not least issue relating to cooperation as a stressor, is work/family conflict which leads to scholar's stress and which, according to the respondents, is strongly connected with the issue of collaboration. First of all, collaboration is time-consuming, not only because of the necessity to look for and then initiate relations with good scholars. It is time consuming mostly because paper writing in a team lasts long due to the fact that each member usually reads each paper part and then a discussion follows. Besides, Skype conversations, because of time difference, sometimes are organized at weird times when a subjects' families are already sleep, want to play with parents/ talk to a spouse, etc. The spouses of respondents manifested their dissatisfaction quite often while they were team collaborating on some international projects hence they (the informants) were at that time impatient, tense, aggressive and demanded that the family be silent, so as not to disturb the conversation. This, according to the respondents, disorganized their family life, made them delegate their household duties to other family members, and as a result, was a source of conflict.

My wife is angry that I spend time skyping my colleagues. She doesn't understand the importance of Impact Factor, citations, papers. I explain, but I sometimes think she thinks I'm doing it for fun, just to talk to other males – my team is masculine only – to comment on football. She's angry because if I speak to the team – sometimes even two, three hours, she needs to wash the kids and it is my main duty. Sometimes each Skype means my wife not speaking

to me. I want to be understood by my family. I do it for them, to work, be successful, bring money, but I don't get the respect I deserve. Everyone's angry with me. It's a cause of internal conflict – to be a family man, or to maintain the family. Respondent 2

The informants stated that, on the one hand, such conflicts occur because collaboration is time-, energy- and patience-consuming, on the other, it is partially the fault of their family members that cannot understand the nature of their job. Many people including the family members of the informants, think that scholar's job is to teach students and then, they have free time. Some respondents mentioned that this aspect of their work is the most stressful – they work really hard – at university – teaching, and later on at home – paper writing, preparing conference presentations, working on data, brainstorming with colleagues, etc., but most people tend to think they do nothing and still earn decent living. For that reason they report they feel extremely and chronically stressful because even at home they cannot find understanding and support, on the contrary, they face constant work-family conflicts, called by work/home interface by Travers and Cooper (1996). As shown above, working as a scholar and collaborating with others, may be a source of stress not only during professional interactions, but also at home, since scholars' partners have problems with understanding and accepting the nature of their work. Even if a given scholar happens to be involved in a relationship with another scholar, the relation is also not free of stress, it is, however, of a different nature, connected with dual-career couple stress (Travers and Cooper, 2014), which also can be destructive for the relation itself and for one's career as well.

Collaboration as a leverage to scholar's career

Although the informants enumerated various factors evoking collaboration-related stress, they unanimously admitted that it brings benefits as well and contemporary scholar cannot manage without that in view of recent institutional changes in academia which has become international (Wieczorek & Mitreęa, 2015; 2017). When asked if a collaboration is more positive, or negative to the well-being of scholars, the respondents are inclined to say it is destructive, but when asked whether it is more positive or negative in relation to leveraging their career and success, they say it is definitely positive.

Collaboration is not easy for sure, is stressful from time to time. I mean some of its aspects, like dealing with problems, leadership issues. We need to do it

anyway, but it certainly means leaving your comfort zone. It pays off in the long run though. Respondent 2

When asked about positive factors connected with collaboration, the respondents enumerate such issues, as boosted productivity, easier research dissemination, easier paper writing, well-being at foreign conferences, domestic academic success, travelling opportunities, fund raising abilities, gaining friends.

Well, there are really many advantages, like appreciation of your uni authorities for what you do – I mean more papers, some contacts, more projects, more funds as a result. Respondent 1

In my case collaboration with foreign colleagues is a good excuse to visit some places I find interesting. When I'm included in many projects and I get funding, I can choose where to go for a conference – I call it conference tourism. It's hard work, but also fun. I made some friends like that. It is definitely a positive experience. Respondent 7

When it comes to productivity boost, the informants claimed that they were able to write more papers when they collaborated with colleagues. Even though writing a co-paper takes time, writing itself is considered easier if more than one person does it. The respondents stated that in such a case each person wrote part they were best at – some scholars are very good at doing literature reviews, others at working on data, or describing research results. This refers to synergic effect of collaboration (Wieczorek, 2016 b). Faster paper writing influences on research productivity, since the more papers, the more productivity.

When there are more authors, the process of writing is more complicated, but easier at the same time. More complicated due to managing the writing, dividing duties, but easier when it comes to the length,... you have some internal reviews – what I mean is that your partners read what you write and give you feedback, correct it. Unfortunately, they often say you must make it shorter and more synthetic and it is a lot of work. Respondent 5

Collaboration also, in view of the respondents, affects the quality of papers on a positive way due to the fact that its synergic effect allows for better papers.

Much better papers are written by teams, than by individual authors. As a reviewer I'm worried if I see a one-author paper, I just cannot believe it is as good as a paper written by a few people, all of whom have different skills that are of use while writing. Respondent 2

Additional issue addressed by the informants was connected with the recognisability of some scholars – if a given surname is well-known

in international academia, a paper with this name on is more likely to be accepted, or, at least, not to be desk-rejected. Research dissemination is, as a result, easier and it also contributes to productivity boost.

We all know there are blind reviews, but the paper is sent by a given person, who may be recognizable, besides if a country is mentioned, or some self-citations included, it's quite easy to guess who the author is. And I don't try to imply that it is a favour to that known person. Simply, people associate some names with good quality. Respondent 7

Scholars from the eastern part of Europe claimed that going for conferences was easier when it comes to the affective aspect, because they did not feel alienated there if they were with their team. Especially in a situation if the team members are more recognizable – then the scholar may be introduced to other scholars and this way initiate new collaboration, feel more at ease while giving presentations, interact with others more easily at lunchtime/gala dinner, etc. It is visible, that a collaboration boosts productivity and conference attendance and these, in turn, contribute to domestic success of an academic since papers and presentations matter in their domestic institutions.

Thanks to my project leader I met a very important person in the field. Now I'm working on a project together with him. They knew each other well, I was introduced, after that I wrote an e-mail, I was of course fast because otherwise he would forget me. We started discussing some issues we both found interesting and we're on a joint project now. I need to do more, but he gives directions, helps with research design, writes some conclusions, and, and that's the most important for me, suggests where we could send it, how to tackle it. He really knows a lot of people. Respondent 2

If collaboration results in impact factor papers, the respondents claim, that it is then easier to raise funds for further research financing for the reason that in the ministry good papers are valued and many points are assigned in grant applications if the authors of the projects have IF papers already published. Grants, in turn, allow for further collaboration, conference attendance and further papers being a result of the financed research. Last, but not least, collaboration, due to the factors enumerated above, influences positively on travelling opportunities and friendship making because the scholars may sightsee interesting places when on conferences and make friends with team mates, other conference participants. It is not only perceived by the informants as an added private value, but a stress-releasing factor as well. If the respondents see positive aspects of collaboration, they are more willing to initiate and maintain it and as a result, are more productive and may become a part of international academia.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In conclusion, the initial purpose of the study was to investigate the factors evoking stress among academic scholars. The issue of teacher stress has already been researched due to the fact that we may nowadays witness a crisis in teaching and many teachers suffering occupational stress. There was, however, a gap to fill when it comes to academic stress. The study was done, and as its result, many stressors emerged. Some of them were the same as the ones connected with teaching in general, whereas others academic teacher-specific. When it comes to the general stressors, although they have already been described as general ones by other researchers, in this study it was revealed that we may interpret them through an academic perspective and see that some their aspects are connected with being a scholar. Many of the stressors that have emerged as a result of this study turned out to be academic collaboration-related.

The collaboration is nowadays a key issue in the life of a contemporary scholar. This is caused by the institutional changes that contemporary academia faces (Wieczorek, 2014b), and which set new standards when it comes to academic promotion system, especially in the context of transforming economies and transforming academic systems. Research productivity is what matters most nowadays in academia and to achieve this scholars usually decide to collaborate with others.

Collaboration is stressful, has a negative influence on private life of scholars, some of its aspects are more stressful than others. On the other hand, the informants enumerated a number of benefits of collaboration, and the final conclusion was that networking brings more benefit to the professional life of a scholar, but is very stressful at the same time. For that reason scholars should come up with stress handling strategies in order to boost the well-being of scholars and this is a suggestion for further research. Besides, it would be interesting to measure the actual stress levels of scholars and then to compare it to the general teacher stress. An assumption could be risked, that even

though collaboration is stressful, it dynamically leverages a scholar's career, so it should be encouraged by university authorities and central governments. If it is handled with care, academic networking brings fruitful productivity results and well-being, if not handled properly, it affects scholars in a negative way, i.e. destroying their satisfaction with professional life.

CONCLUSIONS

It has been argued that teacher stress is a source of great concern nowadays (Williams and Gersch, 2004; Lazarus, 2006) and a cause of the staffing crisis within the educational sector (Botwink, 2007) due to absenteeism of the stressed teachers, reduction in work performance, relocations to different schools, and, eventually, leaving the profession (Travers and Cooper, 1996; Van Der Linde, 2000). Teaching itself in general is a high stress occupation (Akinyele, 2014) due to constant interactions with people that teachers need to come into contact with every day. The work of scholars, however, entails even more interactions with other people hence academics not only teach others and this way interact with them, but they also give lectures to large groups of students, present their research results to international audiences and defend their research ideas against scientific peers. Besides, people who work in contemporary academia especially recently have faced a variety of challenges due to a constant rise of the work pressure concerning the globalization and internationalization of academia (Bell et.al. 2012), especially connected with a demand to publish in recognizable, international, preferably impact factor journals (Hicks, 2009). For all those above reasons the academic teachers are likely to suffer even greater stress than regular school teachers, especially in light of the fact that academic teachers are said to be experiencing higher level of strain than other occupational groups (Kinman and Jones, 2004) and their emotional well being should be managed at university (Lease, 1999).

There was a research gap as the rationale standing behind this book as so far there have been relatively few studies on job stress experiences at the university level, and prior research has been oriented mostly at most developed countries (Leung, 2000). This book was therefore devoted to academic teacher stress and academic collaboration as a stressor, and at the same time, a leverage to scholars' career. The main research objective was to identify factors evoking stress among academic teachers. The detailed objectives of the empirical research entailed identifying the causes the stress of academic teachers, the extent to which some stressors are unique to academic teachers and scholars as opposed to teachers in general. Another key focus concerned the issue of

academic collaboration as a prospective factor triggering stress of teachers and at the same time as the leverage to academic success.

The field research designed for this project was qualitative in nature, so there was no pre-defined set of hypotheses. Instead, some theoretical propositions about the topic under investigation were derived as the result of the qualitative data analysis (Pope, Ziebland, Mays, 2000). While interviewing the researchers were talking to scholars about their feelings and emotions towards their profession, job, work-family matters, etc. Some of the scholars were invited through snowball technique (e.g. via indirect contacts at social media), whereas others were met by researchers directly during conferences and workshops and encouraged there to participate in the project. The selection of subjects for this research was non-random – the researchers tried to choose academic teachers working in different types of universities (big or small, public versus private) and representing different positions (research assistants, assistant professors, associate professors, etc.) in order to make the informants' population diversified. The sample was composed of 15 participants and the interviewing was stopped when theoretical saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was experienced by researchers.

As a result of the qualitative study, various scholars' stressors were identified. These stressors were divided into groups referring to various aspects of job stress of scholars, as a result of interviews, fierce debates between the researchers during coding, and the results of focus group interview. In the research process a relatively big number of stressors emerged, many of them, however, were closely related to one another and for that reason they were grouped together. The grouped stressors referred to such larger categories, as: teaching, workplace, research, pressures, conflicts and collaboration. Stressors concerning teaching revolved mainly around dealing with discipline problems, lack of student motivation and marking. Similar teacher stressors were reported by Kyriacou (2000), who indicated that discipline problems are the most often reported stressor by all groups of teachers. What is surprising, is the fact that not only novice teachers find such problems stressful (Wieczorek, 2014c, 2016c), it is a concern of all academic teachers.

Workplace stressors refer especially to rat race in contemporary academia, coping with change, and the lack of support on the side of university administration. These aspects are in line with Hicks (2009), who concludes that contemporary academia is transforming and, as a result, there are new university-level expectations towards scholars which is stress-evoking. The so-called "publish or perish" reality (Clapham, 2005; McGrail, Rickard, & Jones, 2006) popularizes dynamically in academia all around the world and

such workplace brings not only positive effects in terms of increased research productivity, but also dysfunctions which demotivate scholars and may even cause some recruitment problems in a long-run (e.g. for PhD candidates). The prior research illustrates the negative correlation between occupation stress and job satisfaction in academia (Abouserie, 1996), so our research signal some future problems in academic profession, including widespread burnout and depression, difficulties in concentration at work, and, last but not the least, difficulties in conducting really creative research. Intuitively, the very stressful work environment that includes a lot of pressure and control is contradictory to heuristic processes which are vital in scientific discovery.

As far as research-related stressors are concerned, these concern research dissemination, using English for occupational purposes (i.e. reading and writing papers in English, performing at international conferences) and the lack of financing. The strong pressure to disseminate their work in cutting-edge journals is very problematic to scholars and it is larger problem for scholars from transforming countries than for scholars from highly developed Western countries (Mitreğa et al., 2016). Particularly, academics from post-communist countries suffer from the lack of adequate training that could help them overcome resource constraints through advanced methodological skills and academic writing proficiency (Wieczorek, 2014b). Although there are some positive effects of unifying standards and growing competitiveness in academia worldwide (e.g. more scholars from transforming countries become recognizable by publishing in top-tier journals), these global trends motivate working on some scientific novelties that are useless in practice and stimulate academic fundamentalism which promotes studies that look nice or fresh (e.g. through innovative labelling), instead of works that truly ground our knowledge or are contradictory to editors' ideas (Smith, 1990)

Pressures experienced by scholars mainly refer to heavy workloads, exams, and schedules, whereas conflicts entail role conflicts, teaching/research conflicts and work/home conflicts. Travers and Cooper (1996) also reported that teachers who are overloaded with work, are likely to manifest higher stress levels than their colleagues. Role conflicts in the work of teachers, in turn, are reported as extremely stressful with regard to all types of teachers (Kyriacou, 2000). All these stressor categories are interconnected since they result from and influence one another. While interviewing, it was found that the majority of academic stressors are connected with the interaction with other people – the necessity to co-work together, negotiate, resolve conflicts, design work and pass knowledge to them. It became evident, that collaboration is perceived as very stressful too.

The academic collaboration was perceived by informants as a highly stressful factor due to a variety of reasons; however nearly all the informants claimed that networking is a leverage to their career, especially while confronted with recently observable globalization of academia and strong pressure to publish in international, top-tier journals. Collaboration boosts research productivity and helps to disseminate research which is in line with recent work by Mitreġa et.al. (2016), however our research illustrates empirically that cooperating with other people, especially those who do not speak the same native language, is likely to trigger a scholars' stress. Therefore, our research emphasizes the complexity of networking as the phenomenon and it questions the unilateral approach towards academic collaboration which concentrates only its bright side and co-authorship. Thus, our research corresponds well with recent attempts to open the black box of academic networking which includes various stages, tactics and possible functions and dysfunctions as well (Kyvik, 2013; Ynalvez & Shrum, 2011; Mitreġa et al., 2014; 2016).

Our study is not without limitations and these limitations open some further research directions. The qualitative research design that we applied allowed us to acquire rather in-depth picture of scholars' experiences with regard to some uncomfortable aspects of their profession. However, this picture is context-specific: research participants were all embedded in post-communist academic systems and they represented only two academic disciplines: business studies and language studies. This context restricts some generalizations, e.g. with regard to situation to countries distant in terms of academic culture and other academic disciplines. Nevertheless, we assume that our findings are generalizable to all European post-communist universities which experience similar institutional transformations and they are probably quite relevant with regard to all developing resource-constrained academic institutions in other countries (Ynalvez & Shrum, 2011). Further studies can overcome these limitations through utilizing larger samples and applying quantitative research approach. Such studies would enable not only better generalizations but would also inform us about the relative importance of various academic stressors with regard to grouping that was proposed in this book. The last but not the least, in the future one could go a step further beyond identification of factors evoking scholars stress. As the occupational stress is probably inevitable in academia, further research could concentrate on various stress handling tactics that could be implemented at various levels, e.g. university authorities' decision making or individual scholars' activities as well.

APPENDIX:

AN EXEMPLARY TRANSCRIPT OF AN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

Transcript of an in-depth interview with a scholar

AW – Anna Wieczorek

R – Respondent

AW	I would like to talk to you about your job as a scholar and your feelings associating it. Of course I won't reveal any personal details, names, places, etc.
R	Of course, I already agreed, let's do it (smile).
AW	Can I use my recorder?
R	Yes, yes
AW	Describe your work at university
R	(laughter)... well it's a difficult question. My work at University. I generally like this job, probably because I don't need to go there every day (laughter). Generally I think it's a tough job because it entails dealing with people all the time, you know, students, administration. But it's also rewarding, I like being a scholar, doing research. In general I like working at my university.
AW	For how long have you been working there
R	11 years
AW	Which field and i sit a public university?
R	Business, yeah, public, public
AW	Did you always want to be a scholar
R	No, i never thought about it seriously, it just happened. I had a good supervisor, he liked my master thesis, wanted me to do research with him, yeah, and here I am (laughter)
AW	I see, and if you were to choose your profession again, would you do it ? I mean, would you like to be a scholar?
R	I don't know, I mean, I don't regret I'm a scholar, but as I said, it happened accidentally, if I weren't chosen by my supervisor, I would probably go into business. Now, though, I think it was better that I stayed at university.
AW	Why?
R	I don't need to go to work every day as I said (laughter). No, I'm joking, I just think it's safer job, more predictable although tough, entailing constant development, fighting for your position. Still, it's public sector and I appreciate it..
AW	I see. And which degree do you hold?
R	PhD

AW	And position?
R	Assistant professor.
AW	Would you like to change it? I mean getting promoted, becoming associate professor.
R	Of course, I wouldn't mind (laughter). Anyway, I need to do it, we all need, otherwise one day they may kick me out. It requires much effort, I feel I need to write many more papers to get promoted.
AW	Do you think it is necessary to be promoted in order to avoid getting sacked? Is it disturbing?
R	Of course it is, I sometimes think I would like to do what I do, but it's not possible. This is the way it is and it's a waste of time to think whether it is disturbing or not. I'm task-oriented person, so I know I need to produce papers, do other things, like attend conferences, have good student evaluations to stay there. And I just do what I can do. It sucks, yeah, but life sucks generally
AW	So, you say life sucks (laughter), I agree with you, but what exactly sucks about your job?.
R	There are days I think everything. Of course students, they are more and more demanding each year, but know and do less and less. The dean and the head of my department – you probably know, you are also a scholar, now we need to do more than in the past, I mean, we also had to teach, publish, but nowadays it is more difficult to get published and you are expected to publish in foreign journals as well. You need to write in English and I'm not that young to know this language very well. At the initial stages of my school I learnt Russian, then I was learning English, but now for a very long time. Besides, nowadays it's more difficult to finance research, you need to find the money yourself, I mean get funding from the ministry for example. And the competition is bigger and bigger. Yeah, it sucks (laughter)
AW	And do you consider quitting this job?
R	No, after so many years at University I cannot do anything else, and as I said, this job is rewarding even if difficult, stressful, tiring.
AW	Oh, stressful, tiring you say, and what is stressful particularly?
R	All those things I mentioned, contacts with students, administration, you probably know what you mean – all those ladies who are there officially to help you, but when you need them because you let's say organise a conference, it turns out you need to do all the things yourself. You are lucky if you do it with colleagues, but my experience taught me to do everything myself, otherwise nothing is done. This pressure to publish, parametrization, it is stressful. Because of it you constantly compare yourself to the people, scholars you know. They also do it, they envy you, you envy them and you are in trouble.
AW	You can do things together I mean writing papers together, give conference presentations together.
R	If you have good colleagues.
AW	You mean good people, good friends?
R	No, good scholars, established scholars. I have such team, they are, I mean some of them, the leader actually, very recognisable. It opens many doors – his surname, we are at least not desk rejected (laughter).
AW	Do you like working with them?
R	It brings benefits (laughter)
AW	Does it mean you like it?
R	Generally I do, I know I need to get published and I know it's easier with others than on my own. And not only because of the surname of the leader, I mean the total effect, we are more effective, faster, language is better because some of them are English.
AW	I see, and is there anything you don't like about this collaboration

R	Many things, I'm not the leader and I cannot exactly decide what to do in a project, what to research, which samples. They are US-oriented mainly and I'm also domestic-oriented, I cannot forget where I am from. I would like to have samples composed of domestic subjects as well. They are not interested, want to do things their way and it is very difficult to deal with such people. Besides I know they achieved more, I feel worse, especially if I cannot afford a conference they are going to attend and my university cannot pay for it. I'm frustrated when I'm to lose an opportunity.
AW	I see, you mentioned you are domestically-oriented while doing research, and what about collaboration. Do you also collaborate with domestic colleagues?
R	Not often. Not many of them are good enough, some of them are too good for me and I cannot get to them. Besides people in my country are jealous, I mean scholars from my environment. It is difficult, I'm nervous when I do it, I'm either rejected when I offer collaboration, or I need to do everything on my own and it's not a good business. These English fellows are different, when they see an opportunity, a reasonable person, they want them in the team – I mean you need to be good. In my country you also need to have friends, connections and then you are accepted by the environment.
AW	How do you feel about it?
R	I'm irritable, overreact on my family, I'm nervous and tense. I feel I need to control the situation all the time, otherwise my fellow colleagues may pull my leg, deceive me.
AW	I see. Is it your only position?
R	Currently yes because my dean did not agree for second position, but in the past I would work for two universities, one was private though..
AW	How do you feel about it?
R	Well, I have less work and less money.
AW	Are you satisfied with your salary?
R	Not when I compare it to these English folks. They have fewer contact hours with students per year and better money. On the other hand, they are much more focused on research. I cannot, as I said, I don't have funds. I also don't have time.
AW	And what does a job of a scholar entail in your country?
R	First of all teaching and I don't like it much. I don't find it unbearable, but as I said, students do less and less each year. It's publishing, but I also told you about it. It's about organizing things like seminars, conferences and the lack of help of administration is really frustrating. Just like lack of money for research, conferences, paper.
AW	Is it the dark side of the job?
R	Definitely, this and this inability to earn more or hold two positions.
AW	And the bright side?
R	You can develop yourself, you exercise your mind, cross some borders. You have long holidays (laughter). It would be a nice job if not for jealous people.
AW	Do they make your life difficult?
R	As I said, it's frustrating you cannot collaborate with them just because you are good. This approval of the environment is frustrating.
AW	And what about University authorities? Do they want you to develop, cooperate with others, publish.
R	Because of parametrisation they want me to publish, but they don't want to pay for it, or for the conferences where I can present my research or meet new people to write with. I hate the short termism of my people. It makes my life difficult and discourages me.
AW	And what about the atmosphere at your workplace, in the academia as well.

R	Tense and thick (laughter). They want a lot, but give a bit. I mean my university. They don't appreciate what I do and it is really difficult, sad. It shouldn't be like that. Colleagues think you pay for good publications and they are jealous when you are good.
AW	Are some colleagues you can depend on when in trouble?
R	Those who depend on me, but they are not real friends. No, I don't discuss with them things that worry me.
AW	Does this atmosphere have an influence on your well-being at work?
R	For sure, but it's not that bad. Everyone must watch their colleagues, not only scholars. But generally, atmosphere at work is important. I would be satisfied if I was evaluated just because of my achievements, and not connections. Then I would say it's, there's good atmosphere at work.
AW	What else influences the well-being of scholars?
R	Salary, opportunities of development, some after work activities like gym.
AW	I see, and is a job of a scholar easy or difficult?
R	Nowadays difficult when I need to publish more and more and don't have money for it. Easy when compared to working in a big company. There people are also jealous, tricky. In general working with people is tough and I work with people all the time, with students, scholars, administration. Then when I have holidays I need to be on my own for a while. Then I can write books, design my research.
AW	And what about students, what are their attitudes of students towards the university, learning, lecturers.
R	It depends on a student and on a lecturer. Universities admit all students and then these students expect to be treated well which means do nothing, get credits. If you are a good guy, they like you and don't make trouble. If bad guy, they may give you bad marks while evaluating you and then you may be in trouble. I don't have problems with them because I'm rather a good guy, I have always been so I never had serious problems with them.
AW	But do you encounter problems with students?
R	We all do, but these are not serious problems. Just students wanting me to correct their tests they day they sit for them. Students chatting at my lecture in stead of not appearing there at all if they want to chat. But in general I don't have such problems.
AW	And what is problematic in your job?
R	People, people and people. Colleagues who are jealous and don't respect your achievements, administration and the lack of their support. Neighbours saying you earn good money but are at home all the time and do nothing as they don't see you working in front of your computer.
AW	And which aspects of your scientific work are problematic?
R	As I said, the lack of money. Now we need to apply for external funding and I personally cannot get any help in the office. My foreign colleagues have some other people, I mean administration, who help them with the budget and such stuff. I need to do it on my own. Besides, I don't feel enough encouragement from the dean, head of department, to publish, discover phenomena, show my research to others. It is frustrating, I devote really a lot of time to it and I'm totally on my own.
AW	And what about doing research, what do you find difficult about it?
R	The same mainly, lack of money and inability to do it on larger scale – buy some software, have a larger sample, have a proofreader to correct my paper. I think I'm a good researcher, but I would appreciate some help, recognition from university authorities
AW	Which part of being a scholar is the most difficult one?
R	Combining research and teaching, private life with professional life, dealing with jealous people.
AW	Is it so difficult to combine research and teaching?

R	Extremely when you want to be a good researcher and a good teacher. Especially because each year I teach some new subjects, I need to prepare a syllabus, new tests. There's research to be done, papers to write.
AW	And you mentioned private life, do you experience work/home conflict?
R	Of course, I'm constantly accused at home not to spend there enough time. Even when at home, I work, I need to do it. My family think I prefer sitting with my computer to sitting with them. That's not true. I need to do it. I would like them to appreciate it, I do it for the family. They only see that I'm nervous frequently, I shout at them, I need silence while writing.
AW	Who do you mean exactly? What is your family situation?
R	Wife and children.
AW	Why do you think they don't appreciate your work?
R	They are complaining all the time. They either complaint that I'm not a part of family life, or that I try to make them behave in a certain way, like for instance not make noise when I work. My wife is angry when I'm away because she then needs to take care of children on her own and she works as well. She thinks it's holidays when I go somewhere for three days. And it is effort I make to do research, write a paper, prepare presentation. It's stress if I'm to present in front of important people in the field. Then all galas where I try to identify people who may potentially be my research partners. I need to get to them, make them interested. It's again being at work all the time.
AW	So can you say that your job influences your private life on a negative way?
R	Definitely.
AW	How do you feel about it?
R	I'm not happy. I'm frustrated, disappointed, nervous.
AW	Leaving private life and focusing back on the work of a scholar, is being evaluated as a scholar stressful.
R	Yes, yes because I feel I'm evaluated all the time. I told you I'm evaluated by students each semester. Each academic year I'm evaluated by the head, I need to present all my yearly achievements, I mean papers, projects, and so on. It is stressful, especially because you are officially evaluated by a person who you address by name on a daily basis. It is somehow humiliating and I stress about it.
AW	And what is easier, being a scholar, or being an academic teacher?
R	For me it's the same. When you are a scholar in my country, you need to teach students as well. I don't find teaching difficult, but I prefer doing research. This is what matters in the end. Without research I cannot get promoted and stay at university. This is stressful. Yeah, the lack of safety because I don't have enough publications yet to be promoted.
AW	You said that you find colleagues jealous, so I'm curious what you think about Staff meetings, are they stressful?
R	Sometimes. Depends what is subject of each meeting.
AW	Are they organised often?
R	Few Times a year, I mean academic year.
AW	Which ones are stressful? Give an example
R	When a conference is to be organised in my department. Then they look for people to organize it, find sponsors and partners, deal with abstracts and papers. I know it is tough work. Have done it few times. Believe me, it's a lot of work. Try to avoid this if you can.
AW	So is tough work stressful?
R	No, it's not that. I can work very hard, I do it actually. I just don't want to be used. There are fellows who avoid any involvement and then fellows like me need to do more. The negotiation part is difficult and stressful when we all fight not to take most difficult and time-consuming tasks.

R	Oh, and meetings concerning problems with small number of students when we all are made aware of the fact we may not have a job in few years' time.
AW	Is it a real danger in your opinion?
R	I work at a big university, so I think it's just motivating us to do more, you know, to be better than your colleagues and have a steady position. But it spoils the atmosphere and boosts competition between us. And the competition is already big. It's not good for our well-being, not good for helping each other, cooperating together.
AW	I see. Which part of an academic year is most stressful for you?
R	(laughter), you ask a lot of questions, how many more are left?
AW	Around 150 (laughter). I'm joking. Not many.
AW	So which part of the year?
R	The last month for sure.
AW	Which is? I mean which month.
R	June
AW	Why?
R	Because I already think about my holidays and can't wait to be there (laughter). No, actually June because then there are all the exams, evaluation schemes, Staff meetings. I'm already tired after so many months of hard work. Suddenly I have many mails from students who never attended my lectures, but want good marks.
AW	So why is it stressful?
R	Because I hate time pressure and then I need to do many tasks at a time. I don't like it. I'm also tired, less focused. June is a good time to think about holidays and not about correcting tests or being evaluated by your boss and students.
AW	So the beginning of an academic year is ok??
R	Difficult because I'm used to holidays and different way of spending my days, but I feel relaxed and ready to take a challenge.
AW	Ok, and how do you feel Monday morning?
R	Relaxed as hell (laughter) because it's my day off.
AW	I see, and the first teaching day of a week? How do you feel then?
R	It's hard to say which day is a first working day because I work some weekends and two days a week, but not day after day. I don't stress in the morning about going to work. There are just some situations that make me stressed..
AW	What kind of situations?
R	Like I said, lack of money for research or conferences, lack of support and encouragement. Presenting my paper in front of important people. Oh, and being asked questions after a presentation, if these questions are asked by people whose native language is English. Sometimes I don't know what they mean.
AW	Alright, I understand. And, if you already mentioned conferences, I'm curious if you find using multimedia and other technical devices problematic? I mean for instance using overhead projector during your conference presentation or while giving a lecture to students.
R	No, of course not. I like such devices, I would feel strange without them. Wow, but know some female colleagues who always ask male colleagues to help them with such equipment. They talk about it all the time, I mean how stressed they are to use it.
AW	And which organisational problems do you encounter at work?
R	As I said lack of support. Lack of paper.
AW	Who is to blame for such problems?
R	The office.

AW	What evokes your workplace stress?
R	I already told you, lack of money, lack of support, dealing with people, colleagues and so on, as I said. Constant interaction with people who all want something from me or complain about me, like wife (laughter).
AW	And at work, do you need to enter many roles at the same time?
R	I don't understand?
AW	I mean your being students' supervisor, examiner, or someone's superior and subordinate at the same time, in the same place.
R	No, rather not. All people enter many roles at the same time. I'm son and father, husband and brother, and so on. It's normal.
AW	So you don't think there's a conflict between some roles, I mean that they mutually exclude one another?
R	No, it's part of my life.
AW	And expectations of others towards you, aren't they contradictory?
R	Maybe, maybe, but I do one thing at a time. When I'm supervisor, I'm supervisor, when subordinate, I'm subordinate. The only conflict I see here is when I'm a scholar and a family man.
AW	I see and we already talked about it, I mean your work-family conflict.
R	Yes, exactly.
AW	What evokes your strong workplace stress?
R	Like generally? Because I told you in detail that it is about colleagues, administration, lack of financing, students.
AW	Yes, generally, if you were to answer just with one sentence.
R	Uhm, I think that it would be dealing with difficult people... No, actually dealing with people, no matter difficult or not. It's tiring in the long run..
AW	And what are the causes of workplace stress?
R	The same, mainly people. Their lack of engagement, jealousy, wrong management, lack of support.
AW	How do you generally tackle stress?
R	I'm impatient, tense, I think I cannot manage while doing simple things. But I never give up, I do whatever needs to be done.
AW	Do you know a scholar whose life was destroyed due to workplace stress??
R	No.
AW	And do you know what mobbing is??
R	Of course, but not personally, I never experienced it.
AW	And which situations make you feel helpless at work?
R	I don't know, hard to say, no, I know. When I want to attend a conference and I want my university to pay the fee, and they say they cannot do it this month, because they do not have such limits on their credit cards. And then I need to pay myself and then it is reimbursed. Or I shall quit, but I never do it.
AW	I see. And is there anything you would like to add?
R	Me? No, not.
AW	Ok, then I would like to thank you for your involvement, time, I'm really grateful.
R	It was my pleasure.
AW	Thank you.

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