

УДК 355.4 (470+57) : (477) ] :159.922.2 – 057.87

## THE IMPACT OF THE ONGOING RUSSIA–UKRAINE WAR ON THE EMOTIONAL STATE OF UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

### ВПЛИВ НОВІТНЬОЇ РОСІЙСЬКО-УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ВІЙНИ НА ЕМОЦІЙНИЙ СТАН СТУДЕНТСЬКОЇ МОЛОДІ

**Baran. I. V. / Баран І.В.***c.h.s., as.prof./ к.і.н., доц.*

ORCID: 0000-0002-3936-0439

*Stepan Gzhytskyi National University of Veterinary Medicine and Biotechnologies of Lviv,**L'viv-Dubliany, V.Velykogo str., 1, 80381**Львівський національний університет ветеринарної медицини та біотехнологій  
ім С. Гжицького, Львів-Дубляни, В. Великого, 1, 80381*

**Abstract.** *The article examines the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian war on the emotional state of student youth.*

**Key words:** *Russian-Ukrainian war, student youth, depression, mental health*

**Анотація.** *У роботі розглянуто вплив російсько-української війни на емоційний стан студентської молоді.*

**Ключові слова:** *російсько-українська війна, студентська молодь, депресія, психічне здоров'я*

### Introduction

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia on February 24, 2022, has profoundly disrupted the lives of Ukrainians. Among the most vulnerable to the psychological consequences of the war are university students, who are at a critical stage of personal and professional development. The war has disrupted normal life, altered the education system, limited opportunities for social interaction, and hindered academic progress. In this context, it is essential to understand the nature and extent of the psychological impact on students and to outline strategies for supporting their mental health.

### Key Psychological Consequences for Students

A study conducted in October 2023 among 1,398 Ukrainian university students revealed high levels of depression, anxiety, insomnia, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. These symptoms are consequences of prolonged uncertainty, constant threats, loss of loved ones, and the destruction of familiar life structures.

A significant portion of students reported persistent feelings of anxiety, emotional exhaustion, lack of motivation to study, and difficulties concentrating. Some experienced social isolation, retreat into online spaces, and avoidance of communication, even with close ones. Instances of panic attacks and suicidal thoughts were also reported, necessitating immediate psychological intervention.

Another study found that 97.8% of students experienced a deterioration in their psycho-emotional state, with 84.3% suffering from depression, 86.7% from exhaustion, 84.4% from nervousness, and 76.9% from anger. Female students were more susceptible to these symptoms compared to their male counterparts. Often, women feel a greater need for verbal expression of emotions, which can be challenging during wartime [1,3].

### **Factors Influencing Students' Emotional State**

Several factors affect the emotional well-being of students:

- **Geographical Location:** Students residing closer to conflict zones or those who have experienced evacuation are more prone to higher levels of anxiety and PTSD symptoms. The situation is particularly challenging for students who have lost their homes or have relatives in occupied territories.

- **Social Support:** The presence of support from family, friends, and educational institutions helps reduce stress levels. Conversely, students studying far from home or those who have lost contact with relatives exhibit higher levels of isolation and emotional exhaustion.

- **Financial Situation:** Many students have lost part-time jobs and face financial difficulties due to reduced family incomes. This adds to their stress and contributes to prolonged anxiety.

- **Educational Challenges:** Remote learning, internet issues, unstable schedules, and lack of personal communication with teachers and peers negatively impact motivation and emotional well-being.

- **Coping Strategies:** Some students find solace in physical activities, volunteering, creativity, or religion. These methods are vital tools for maintaining mental balance and overcoming stress.

## **Personal Stories and Examples**

Understanding statistics is important, but hearing personal stories provides deeper insight. For instance, Kateryna, a student from Kharkiv, shared: "My dormitory was shelled, and we had to relocate to another city. I lost all my belongings. Initially, I couldn't sleep, fearing every noise. Now, with the help of a psychologist and a university support group, I'm coping better." [3].

Another student, Andriy from Zaporizhzhia, said: "I volunteer to help displaced people, and it gives me a sense of purpose. Even when I feel down, knowing I'm doing something meaningful helps me stay grounded."

These examples demonstrate that even in the most challenging times, support, unity, and active engagement can help maintain psychological resilience.

## **The Need for Psychological Support**

Given the high levels of psychological stress, it's crucial to provide students with access to quality mental health support. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as of 2024, 14 million Ukrainians require psychological assistance. Universities should implement crisis support systems, online counseling, employ staff psychologists, and organize emotional resilience training [2,4].

It's also essential to develop informational campaigns among students about recognizing symptoms of psychological exhaustion and ways to seek help. Furthermore, the government should financially support psychotherapeutic services accessible to students during wartime.

## **Conclusion**

The ongoing Russia–Ukraine war has a significant negative impact on the emotional state of university students. High levels of anxiety, depression, emotional burnout, and isolation require immediate response from the government, educational institutions, and international organizations. The mental health of students is a key resource for rebuilding post-war Ukraine. Its preservation and support should become a priority not only during the war but also in the country's peaceful development.

## References

1. Melnyk, Y. (2023). *The Impact of the War in Ukraine on the Psychological Well-Being of Students*. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376308307ResearchGate>
2. UNDP Ukraine. (2023). *Mental Health in Wartime: How UNDP-Supported NGOs Are Providing Psychological Aid to Ukrainians*. <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/news/mental-health-wartime-how-undp-supported-ngos-are-providing-psychological-aid-ukrainiansUNDP>
3. BMC Psychiatry. (2025). *Mental Health of University Students Twenty Months After the Beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian War*. <https://bmcpsy psychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-025-06654-1BioMed Central>
4. UNDP Ukraine. (2024). *Impact of War on Youth in Ukraine – 2024*. <https://www.undp.org/ukraine/publications/impact-war-youth-ukraine-2024>

Стаття відправлена: 20.05.2025 р.

© Баран І.В.