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Commissioned educational and scientific works as a freelance activity: socio-economic aspects

Abstract. Nowadays, a large segment of shadow economy is related to educational and scientific works to order. It is characterized by significant demand. Special types of social and economic entities, their practices and interactions are formed in the structure of this market. However, meaningful characteristics of such employment are virtually unexplored. It can be noted that the place of this employment in the general context of freelance is not sufficiently studied. Its professional structure, its specifics and financial and economic characteristics, as well as social values and attitudes of performers of commissioned works, are not sufficiently studied. This paper is aimed at filling these gaps.

The purpose of the paper is a socio-economic analysis of employment in preparing commissioned educational and scientific works. The results of the author's sociological study (an expert survey of work performers, $N=48$), as well as statistical and secondary sociological data are given.

Social and economic parameters of preparing commissioned educational and scientific works are considered. An analysis of economic characteristics of commissioned educational and scientific works was carried out; a typology of motivations of this employment is given.

The author concludes that preparation of commissioned works has social and economic attractiveness for performers in the general context of informal employment.

Mechanisms for professionalization and continuation of this activity are being formed, which has an impact on market and educational institutions.

Keywords: Service Market for Execution of Commissioned Educational and Scientific Works; Ghost-writers; Commissioned Work Factory; Academic Fraud; Freelance

JEL Classification: J21; J23; J40; J44; O17

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Виконання навчальних і наукових робіт на замовлення як прояв фрілансу: соціально-економічні аспекти

Анотація. Сьогодні ринок послуг з виконання навчальних і наукових робіт на замовлення є великим сегментом тіньової економіки. У структурі даного ринку формуються особливі типи соціальних й економічних суб'єктів, їх практик і взаємодії. Разом із тим залишаються практично невивченими змістовні характеристики такої діяльності. Так, можна відзначити, що недостатньо

дослідженням є місце, яке посідає така діяльність у загальному контексті фрілансу, її професійна структура й специфіка, фінансово-економічні характеристики, а також соціальні цінності та настанови виконавців замовних робіт.

Метою статті є соціально-економічний аналіз зайнятості, спрямованої на виконання навчальних і наукових робіт на замовлення. У роботі наведено результати авторського соціологічного дослідження (експертне опитування виконавців робіт, $N = 48$), а також статистичні та вторинні соціологічні дані. Розглянуто соціальні й економічні параметри виконання навчальних і наукових робіт на замовлення. Здійснено аналіз економічних характеристик виконання таких робіт, а також наведено типологію мотивації даної зайнятості.

Автором зроблено висновок, що виконання замовних робіт у загальному контексті неформальної зайнятості є соціально та економічно привабливим. Формуються механізми професіоналізації та відтворення даної діяльності, що впливає на ринок праці й освітні інституції.

Ключові слова: ринок послуг з виконання навчальних і наукових робіт на замовлення; гост-райтер; фабрика замовних робіт; академічне шахрайство; фріланс.

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Выполнение учебных и научных работ на заказ как проявление фриланса: социально-экономические аспекты

Аннотация. В настоящее время рынок услуг по выполнению на заказ учебных и научных работ является крупным сегментом теневой экономики и характеризуется значительными объёмами. В структуре данного рынка формируются особые типы социальных и экономических субъектов, их практик и взаимодействий. Однако остаются практически неизученными содержательные характеристики подобной занятости. Так, можно отметить, что недостаточно изучено место данной занятости в общем контексте фриланса, её профессиональная структура и специфика, финансово-экономические характеристики, а также социальные ценности и установки исполнителей заказных работ.

Целью статьи является социально-экономический анализ занятости по выполнению на заказ учебных и научных работ. Приводятся результаты авторского социологического исследования (экспертный опрос исполнителей работ, $N = 48$), а также статистические и вторичные социологические данные. Рассмотрены социальные и экономические параметры выполнения учебных и научных работ на заказ. Осуществлён анализ экономических характеристик выполнения заказных учебных и научных работ, приводится типология мотиваций данной занятости.

Автором статьи сделан вывод о том, что выполнение заказных работ в общем контексте неформальной занятости обладает для исполнителей социальной и экономической привлекательностью. Формируются механизмы профессионализации и воспроизводства данной деятельности, что оказывает влияние на рынок труда и образовательные институты.

Ключевые слова: рынок услуг по выполнению на заказ учебных и научных работ; гост-райтер; фабрика заказных работ; академическое мошенничество; фриланс.

1. Introduction

The problem of academic dishonesty is one of the topical problems of modern education. It also has considerable economic importance. Plagiarism, falsification of scientific research, the use of cheats, corruption and several other phenomena are academic fraud. However, a special place among them is the use by students on their own behalf of commissioned educational and scientific works made by a third party.

This phenomenon is widespread throughout the world and is called contract cheating. This term was introduced by T. Lancaster. He is one of the leading researchers of the phenomenon of commissioned educational and scientific works. In their paper Lancaster and Clarke note that «Contract cheating occurs when students employ or use a third party to undertake their assessed work for them, and these third parties may include:

- essay writing services;
- friends, family or other students;
- private tutors;
- copyediting services;
- agency websites or reverse classifieds» (Lancaster & Clarke, 2016).

The industry of commissioned work has reached an unprecedented scale with the development of the Internet. Its total world volume is hundreds of millions of US dollars (Lancaster, 2020a). Today, there are thousands of factories of commissioned educational and scientific

works (paper mills or essay mills), which offer students to do any work or task for a certain fee. Thus, we can talk about the formation of a whole service market to perform commissioned educational and scientific work. There are two key groups of actors in the structure of this market: customers and performers (or the so-called «ghost writers»). As a rule, they communicate via online platforms of factories of commissioned works. It is also possible to distinguish the position of a manager or intermediary between customers and performers in this market structure. This can be if communication on the site between them is not carried out directly. Each order is paid via an online platform. The factory of commissioned works withholds a certain monetary commission from the order price for intermediary services and the provision of guarantees to both parties.

The functioning of such factories of commissioned works and the activities of ghost-writers in performing such works is a significant phenomenon and serves as an object of scientific research within such sciences as sociology, economics, law, and ethics. Socio-economic research on academic fraud usually focuses on general mechanisms of the market and corresponding economic indicators. However, one of the significant research aspects is the integration of activities to perform commissioned works into the general structure of informal employment and freelance related to socio-cultural values of freedom, creative labour, convenient work schedule and independent formation of employment. In this regard, it is especially important to consider socio-economic characteristics of employment in the performance of commissioned works as freelance. This aspect has not yet been fully described in scientific literature.

2. Brief Literature Review

Boev, Kamenskiy, Podgorny, Aseeva and Budanov describe a broad context of modern economic and technological development in the post-industrial or information society, as well as certain aspects describing markets, employment and economic institutions (Boev & Kamenskiy, 2015; Podgorny, 2014; Aseeva & Budanov, 2019). The phenomena of the market of commissioned works, factories of commissioned works and academic fraud in general are sufficiently described in scientific literature. Legal aspects of the use of commissioned works, methods and technologies for their detection and control are described by Byrne & Christopher, 2020; Ison, 2020; Birks, Mills, Allen, & Tee, 2020; Johnson & Davies, 2020; Shala, Hyseni-Spahiu, & Selimaj, 2020; Awdry & Newton, 2019. Several publications are devoted to various aspects of the market of commissioned works. Wallace and Newton describe the study of market capacity and temporary parameters for performing commissioned work (Wallace & Newton, 2014). Foltýnek and Králíková (2018) show the analysis of the demand for commissioned work services among Czech students. Amigud and Lancaster (2020) analyze demand and pricing dynamics for such kind of services. Medway, Roper and Gillooly describe empirical research of demand in the market of commissioned works. They also describe modeling of various communicative scenarios for ordering via the site (Medway, Roper, & Gillooly, 2018). Lancaster (2020b) describes the market of commissioned works and its development technologies. Matviychuk-Soskina (2016) describes the study of Eastern European performers of scientific works on economic topics. Thus, we see that research on the market of commissioned works covers various problematic aspects within different academic disciplines. Considerable attention is given to market functioning mechanisms of this activity. However, these studies mainly focus on the problem of demand, while the study of direct performers (ghost-writers), as well as their motives and general characteristics of their activities are not many. This is because of their closeness and difficulty of detection and identification (Kalimullin, 2006); (Sivasubramaniam, Kostelidou, & Ramachandran, 2016). At the same time, the results presented in these papers are based on studies conducted by interviews with authors of commissioned works on a small sample. And they do not fully affect immediate aspects of employment in performing commissioned works as a form of freelance, i.e. those which are found precisely in large factories of commissioned works.

3. The purpose of this paper is to analyze social and economic characteristics of preparing commissioned educational and scientific works as a form of freelance. This paper is intended to fill gaps in studies of the market of commissioned works, focusing mainly on customers of work and general characteristics of demand. It is also necessary to determine the essence and content

of values, motivation, features of ghost-writers' behaviour in the market of commissioned works, as well as socio-economic and financial indicators of their employment. Achieving the goal will not only promote scientific interests, but also solve practical problems related to the need in finding ways to minimize destructive social consequences of the functioning of the market of commissioned works. We also note that the study is designed to outline the directions of further empirical study of academic fraud. This study is a pilot study because of its limited sample size.

4. Empirical basis of the research

The empirical basis of this paper is an expert online survey of commissioned work performers on Author24 (<https://author24.ru>) site of commissioned works ($N = 48$). This source is based on direct interaction between customers and performers without intermediation of managers, which allows the author of the article to contact ghost-writers as customers. Standard tasks were created (orders for essays, tests, course and thesis papers), posted by the author of this paper on the site in free access evenly for ghost-writers specializing in fulfillment of orders in various fields of scientific knowledge. Forty-eight people replied. The online survey was carried out with the participation of those people who can be considered experts of the market of commissioned works. The experts are practicing authors. The survey was conducted by means of the communicative service which is built on the Author24 platform. Thus, all available cases were the samples. The study was performed in September 2020.

5. Results

The list of services that can be ordered at commissioned work factories is large. These are essays, answers to questions, tests and homework, online exam assistance, drawings and program codes, improving text originality, course and semester works, reports, scientific articles, bachelor's and master's theses and many others. There is also an unusually wide list of disciplines in which an order can be made - it includes all kinds of educational subjects and scientific disciplines. Several researchers note that the most common disciplines for ordering are business, engineering disciplines, natural sciences (including pre-medical medicine and health sciences), social science, education sciences (Curtis & Clare, 2017; Brimble & Stevenson-Clarke, 2005; Eaton, 2019).

Commissioned work factories have two the most common operating models. In the first, the interaction between the customer and the contractor is not direct, but through the mediation of the manager (moderator). The manager becomes another important figure in commissioned work market under such conditions. Such a person is in charge of the selection of ghost-writers for ordered works, as well as coordinates their work and performs intermediary functions in financial transactions by the customer and the executor.

In the second model, the interaction between the customer and the author of the work is direct. The factory itself has the form of an exchange or, more precisely, an auction, where each contractor, seeing placed order, leaves an application for the execution of the order and indicates conditions that are further agreed with the customer (the deadline for the execution of the order, its cost, plagiarism, the number of possible improvements, etc.). The author who will be selected by the customer will eventually be the executor of the order. An example of such a commissioned work factory is the Russian-language resource Author24. The empirical study of this paper is based on the information from this site.

It is necessary to note that the choice of a specific factory of commissioned works (in addition to the general level of the factory and its popularity in the academic fraud market) is determined, in this case, by two ideas given below.

1. Exceptional closeness of the ghost-writers' community. One of the opportunities was the choice of a site with potentially direct interaction with ghost-writers in conditions of total anonymity on such resources. Sites of factories with an intermediary role of the manager exclude this possibility.
2. The personal profile (a web-page or an account) of the ghost-writer plays an important role on the analyzed resource. You can attract more attention and trust of customers by placing more detailed information on it. Authors' accounts on Author24 also accumulate information about the number of orders completed, feedback left by customers and reflect the reputation accumulated by ghost-writers unlike commissioned works factories that use managers' mediation. Such rating is an important source of information in empirical research.

As part of the empirical study, 48 performers of educational and scientific works with experience from part-year (emerging authors) to 20 years were interviewed. An average work experience on order is 4 years. The experience of ghost-writers on Author24 platform ranges from an incomplete year to 12 years, an average length of respondents' service on this site is more than 2 years. Thus, both performers with great experience and emerging authors with little experience were interviewed, which allows us to get a more objective picture.

The work of performing commissioned educational and scientific works is one of the most popular freelance activities and can be the only type of informal employment of a person. It can be combined with several other activities and/or official employment. Thus, more than one half of the respondents (56.25%) have official employment and combine it with making commissioned works educational and scientific works. At the same time, making of commissioned works is the only type of freelance for three quarters of respondents (75%). Also, it should be noted that 70.4% is among those officially employed for whom this is the only type of informal employment, 81.0% is among those who are not officially employed. This can probably be explained by the fact that unemployed people are specialized in informal employment, while for those who are officially employed, the performance of work on order is more random and often combined with other part-time jobs.

Work on the fulfillment of orders as a form of freelance is largely determined by the frequency of work and the factors that determine it. Hence, according to respondents' answers, 50% fulfill orders regularly. This fact allows us to say that they can be a certain group specializing in commissioned works, regardless of official employment. Thus, the regularity of fulfillment of orders is one of the factors of professionalization of ghost-writers. The frequency of fulfillment of orders is associated with other factors: almost every fourth respondent (22.9%) performs commissioned work seasonally, with a certain frequency (the most likely period is an examination session and defence of final qualification work in educational institutions); 16.7% of ghost-writers do the work when they see that this is a profitable and/or interesting order; only 6.3% take up the order when they lack money.

Another important indicator is an average number of orders done per year. On a scale with cumulative percentage up to 30 orders per year (inclusive) are fulfilled by 37.5% of respondents; 37.5% fulfill from 31 to 100 orders per year and 25% fulfill more than 100 orders per year. According to this criterion, the performers of the work are quite different. However, from the point of view of professionalization of ghost-writers, the total amount of earnings and the type of work performed are no less important. They ultimately determine the amount of time spent. The answers to the open question about the types of orders to be executed make it possible to conclude that the main types of orders are orders of small and medium capacity (tests, essays, presentations); at the same time, large orders (course projects, theses, diplomas, large scientific articles) are rare. 25% of authors have a large number of orders being executed. This indicates a significant orientation towards ghost-writers and achieving certain goals in it.

We identified a median value of minimum, average and maximum order price on Author24 website (ghost-writers were required to indicate minimum and maximum price of orders that they had ever fulfilled, as well as an average cost of orders performed for all time). The median minimum price of the order (among the prices indicated by all the authors) is RUB 150 (EUR 1.65 as of 02 October 2020), and the median maximum price is RUB 2000 (EUR 22.04 as of 02 October 2020). The median value of an average order is RUB 575 (EUR 6.33 as of 02 October 2020). Consequently, the median values are relatively low and approximately correspond to the cost of the most common types of work ordered (essays, tests, presentations, etc.).

Comparing the median prices for orders on Author24 with the prices of commissioned work factories in other countries faces several restrictions. Firstly, ghost-writers who work in commissioned work factories and use managers' mediation most often receive no more than 50-60% of an order price. The only exception is on platforms where customers and performers interact directly (as on Author24). The size of the commission held by the site can be 15-50%. In general, the size of withheld commission is unique for each case, which is why the prices of educational and scientific works can only be in an absolute ratio, but not as an indicator of the authors' direct income. Secondly, even a preliminary analysis of the cost of commissioned work services in European countries reveals different prices, different classification systems for commissioned work by level of education. This reduces the value of comparative research, limits itself and has common conclusions.

It is possible to say that A4 is a standard calculation unit on many sites of European factories of commissioned works. The cost per page of finished work (for example essays) in different countries is:

- the British factory of commissioned works ukwritings (<https://ukwritings.com>) offers the writing of one page of essays, which will be ready in 2 weeks, for GBP 10.27 (approximately EUR 11.26) as of 02 October 2020;
- the British-American factory of commissioned works frenchwritingservice (<https://frenchwritingservice.com>), making essays in French, offers one page of an essay for USD 10, 150 words (approximately EUR 8.51) as of 02 October 2020;
- one page of a college essay, written in 10 days, costs EUR 16.70 on the English-language website BestEssays (<https://www.bestessays.com>);
- the price per page of an essay starts from EUR 15 on the website of one of the French factories of commissioned works (<https://zaochnik.com/fr>);
- an average cost of one page is EUR 8 on the German resource ghostwritergesucht24 (<https://ghostwritergesucht24.de>), yet their prices depend on the level of training and the total number of pages ordered;
- an average cost of a diploma, that is, graduation qualification work, at Russian factories of commissioned works varies in the range of between RUB 10,000 and RUB 15,000 (between EUR 110 and EUR 165 as of 02 October 2019) (<https://prostudenta.ru/post-591.html>).

Lancaster writes that the cost of commissioned works can differ very significantly at various factories of commissioned works. It can be only GBP 3 (approximately EUR 3.28 as of 02 October 2020) per page at factories of commissioned works in India (Lancaster, 2019).

We can conclude that an average price per page of a dissertation or a master's thesis is EUR 8-15, based on the analysis. It is possible to say that these rates significantly exceed the cost of a similar service on Author24.

We found that the average monthly earnings from fulfilling orders vary greatly among different groups. Most performers (31.3%) receive from RUB 5,001 to RUB 10,000 (from EUR 55.12 to EUR 110.22 as of 02 October 2020); 27.1% of authors receive from RUB 2,001 to RUB 5,000 rubles (from EUR 22.05 to EUR 55.11 as of 02 October 2020); 18.8% of authors earn from RUB 10,001 to RUB 20,000 (from EUR 110.23 to EUR 220.45 as of 02 October 2020); almost every sixth author (14.6%) receives less than RUB 2,000 per month (less than EUR 22.04 as of 02 October 2020); some authors receive larger amounts: from RUB 20,001 to RUB 30,000 (from EUR 220.46 to EUR 330.67 as of 02 October 2020) and from RUB 30,001 to RUB 50,000 (from EUR 330.68 to EUR 551.12 as of 02 October 2020), which accounts for 2.1% and 6.3% of ghost-writers, respectively. It is necessary to note that such options as income of more than RUB 50,001 per month (more than EUR 551.13 as of 02 October 2020) were not indicated by any respondent.

The next step was to compare authors' income from fulfilling orders with the average income in Russia. In 2019, an average monthly salary in Russia was RUB 47,867 (EUR 527.61 as of 02 October 2020) (Consultant, 2020). More valid data can be given by the median salary calculated after taxes. According to 2020 data, the amount was RUB 35,000 (Ria.ru, 2020) (EUR 385.78 as of 02 October 2020). Hence, the income of most ghost-writers is even lower than the median salary. It can be concluded that only few authors have relatively high income. We can say that these authors are highly qualified or specialized exclusively in fulfilling orders. In this regard, it is interesting to compare the income from commissioned work with an average income of freelancers. According to the freelance exchange FL.ru (Rb, 2019), their average earnings in the year 2019 were RUB 50,000 per month (EUR 551.12 as of 02 October 2020). Assuming the probability that this study can be biased and have elements of self-promotion, we conclude that performing commissioned works is mainly inferior in perspective and potential earnings to many other classes in the freelance market, which requires direct skills and high qualifications (web developers, designers, programmers, etc.)

We also compare the income from fulfilling orders with an average income of freelancers in the world. According to a research conducted by ain.ua (Ain, 2020), freelancers get USD 21 per hour (EUR 17.88 as of 02 October 2020). Their income is USD 3,612 (about EUR 3,076 as of 02 October 2020). Obviously, this income is quite high even by the average world standards. According to the same study, freelancers mainly work less time and are largely dependent on the availability of orders. Sometimes they have no work at all.

We have found that the income from the fulfillment of orders is a significant share of monthly income (more than 50%) for exactly one third of the authors (33.3%). At the same time, this income exceeds 90% of a total monthly income for 20.8% of freelancers. Consequently, it is possible to say that professionalization and concentration on the fulfillment of orders relate to every fifth author (20.8%) (Table 1).

However, it is also important for ghost-writers to evaluate the place of this employment in the structure of their total employment and income in addition to the formal share of income from the performance of commissioned works in the general structure of income.

Most of the authors (31.3%) note that the income from fulfilling orders is their usual part-time work, which they have been steadily engaged in (or plan to do) for some time; 27.1% consider this income to be seasonal part-time work, to which they periodically apply (for example, during a student session); 14.6% of the authors indicate that this is the main but not the only source of their income, which, at the same time, they regard as an important part of their employment and are not going to quit. Only 12.5% of the respondents say that this is temporary part-time work, which allows them to earn a little in difficult financial conditions; for 10.4% such an activity is the only source of income. Only 4.2% of the ghost-writers consider the fulfillment of orders an opportunity for self-realization and a chance not to lose professional skill. However, the income from orders is not a significant factor for them.

We can summarize that more than one half of the authors (56.3%) consider order fulfillment as a significant element of employment, a source of stable and systematic income.

Also, we have identified the significance of the main employment characteristics for performing commissioned works by ghost-writers on Author24 website. It was proposed to rate each of the variants basing on a 10-point scale, where 1 is a completely non-important characteristic, and 10 is important. The average values of the importance of employment characteristics on the site are as follows (Table 2).

Table 2 shows that the most significant characteristics are those that are related to income from work, its regularity, as well as predictability of interaction with the customer. Interestingly, the status characteristics associated with the promoted image of a freelancer as a modern creative and independent specialist with prestigious work are the lowest in rank. We also note that order performers are more focused on achieving short-term momentary success and are not interested in career growth and long-term prospects for work on the site. We think that this can be explained by the fact that their work is quite flexible, and they may not be tied to only one Internet platform, improving their network capital on other resources.

Factor analysis makes it possible to identify four key groups of values called motivations when working on the site, each of which is described by the corresponding characteristics.

Motivation 1 (creative and social). Important characteristics: creative nature of work, convenient work schedule, social status of a freelancer, general policy of site administration, interesting works, trusting communication with the customer. The key aspect of this group is the social status of employment, its creativity and prestige. Social characteristics and consequences of the status that the author acquires by performing commissioned work are important.

Motivation 2 (communicational and labor). Important characteristics: ease of work, a small number of reworks and trusting communication with the customer. The key aspect of this group, around which motivational intentions are localized, is the conditions for interaction with the customer during the work.

Motivation 3 (financial). Important characteristics: frequency of orders, the amount of earnings, regularity and stability of earnings. The key aspect of this value group is income from fulfilling orders. The financial component of the work is important for the author.

Table 1:

The distribution of answers to the question: What share of your personal total income is the income from commissioned work? (calculated per month)

| Answer variant | Respondents, % | Accumulative percent |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Less than 10% | 16.7 | 16.7 |
| 11-20% | 27.1 | 43.8 |
| 21-30% | 14.6 | 58.3 |
| 31-50% | 8.3 | 66.7 |
| 51-75% | 10.4 | 77.1 |
| 76-90% | 2.1 | 79.2 |
| More than 90% | 20.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | |

Source: Compiled by the author

Table 2:
Importance of individual employment characteristics on the ghost-writers' site

| Employment characteristics | Average value | Final rank (importance) |
|---|---------------|-------------------------|
| Earnings | 8.92 | 1-2 |
| Site-held fee size | 8.92 | 1-2 |
| Convenient work schedule | 8.38 | 3 |
| Order frequency | 8.31 | 4 |
| Small number of rework required by the customer | 8.06 | 5 |
| Regular and stable earnings | 8.04 | 6 |
| Human, trusting communication with the customer | 7.85 | 7 |
| General site administration policy | 7.67 | 8 |
| Ease of work | 7.65 | 9 |
| Technological support of communication | 7.48 | 10 |
| Interesting work to be ordered | 7.46 | 11 |
| Prospects for further earnings and career development on the site | 7.13 | 12 |
| Creative nature of work | 6.88 | 13 |
| Social status of freelancer | 5.19 | 14 |

Source: Compiled by the author

Motivation 4 (adaptive and infrastructural). Important characteristics: career prospects, the size of retained commission, trusting communication with the customer, technological support for communication. The key aspect of this group is comfort and reliability of the environment in which the ghost-writer works (infrastructure characteristics, social and technological conditions of the Internet platform). Stable comfortable conditions in which he fulfills orders are important to the author. Personal adaptability to them is also important.

Limited sample size of the study does not allow making unambiguous conclusions about statistical regularities of these motivations' prevalence. You can study their prevalence level in subsequent studies.

6. Conclusions

According to the results of the study, performing commissioned educational and scientific works is a fairly common form of freelance, which tends to be professionalized. Professionalization of ghost-writers is determined by a relatively high level of regularity of fulfillment of orders. It has been determined that 50% of ghost-writers regularly fulfill orders; for 75% of performers, such an activity is the only type of freelance; for every fifth ghost-writer, the income from the performance of commissioned works is more than 90% of the total monthly income; more than one half of authors (56.3%) consider the fulfillment of orders as a significant element of employment and a source of stable and systematic income.

However, the general low level of income prevents from professionalization of services in the commissioned work market. Being important in the general structure of authors' income, such service is at the same time small in absolute terms and inferior to income from other types of freelance which require direct skills and high qualifications. In general, the market of commissioned educational and scientific works is characterized by significant differentiation both in authors' income, specialization of their services and motivation of such employment.

Further research of the problem presented in the article should be related to:

- finding adequate methodological tools and tools for conducting mass surveys of ghost-writers;
- studying direct professional structure of the market of commissioned works;
- empirical verification of the detected typology of ghost-writers' motivation.

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