

International Journal of Health Science

THE HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHER AND THE ACCELERATED THINKING SYNDROME (SPA): THE SEARCH FOR A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Gicele Santos da Silva

Senior Lecturer and Researcher. UFRGS-
`Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do
Sul` -RS. UFSM-`Universidade Federal
de Santa Maria` -RS. UNINTER -`Centro
Universitário Internacional` -PR

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



Abstract: The study presents Accelerated Thinking Syndrome (SPA) as its central theme, with an investigation of the way in which SPA affects Senior Teachers and their pedagogical practices. Depression, exhaustion, tension, discouragement, impatience, agitation. These are some symptoms that have emerged with the 21st century. New technologies are being introduced all the time. Users receive a load of information, minds are stimulated daily and a brain overload affects humanity, stealing the energy that must be used to keep the body in perfect functioning. The Senior Lecturer (Professor) requires intense intellectual effort, they need to remain attentive, productive and most of the time they carry out their work under great pressure, favoring the possibility of being affected by SPA, damaging their practice and their health. The methodology adopted consists of exploratory and descriptive research through a bibliographic survey with an emphasis on the theme and responding to the question object of the study: How must the Senior Lecturer establish a prevention process against Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS), aiming to improve their quality of life and avoid harm to their pedagogical practices? The general objective of the study is to present Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) and the importance of prevention, for a better quality of life and pedagogical practices, for Senior Teachers. Two specific objectives: Understanding Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA); Identify the causes, symptoms and harm of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS), together with the teaching environment. As a result, obtain an overview of the Syndrome and be able to assist Senior Teachers in identifying, understanding, raising awareness in the search for prevention, in the search for a better quality of physical and mental health. Have a better quality of life.

Keywords: Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA); Excess; Stress; Pedagogical practices; Health.

INTRODUCTION

“But what worries me most about SPA, as well as hyperactivity, is the retraction of two vital functions for social, professional and emotional success: think before acting and put yourself in someone else’s shoes (empathy)”.

Augusto Cury.

The relevance of this Study lies in the fact that we understand emotions as essential in the Teacher’s Pedagogical Practice. For this understanding, we refer to studies already carried out that discuss the idea that emotional education is of great relevance for Teachers to reflect, understand and regulate their emotions. These factors are essential to face the challenges of everyday school life, in addition to making it possible to listen to the emotions of educators and students.

A reality that we currently encounter is that Teachers are experiencing important difficulties, whether in society, in the profession and, mainly, in their personal universe.

Anxiety, depression, exhaustion, tension, discouragement, impatience, insomnia, agitation, apathy, among others, are evils of the 21st century.

According to the W.H.O. - World Health Organization (WHO, 1993), anxiety is one of the biggest and most serious problems associated with contemporary times.

New technologies emerge all the time, users suffer from an avalanche of information, minds are stimulated daily and brain overload affects humanity, stealing the energy that must be used to keep the body functioning perfectly.

A great elaboration of thoughts, at such a high speed that it consumes and stresses the brain. Social stimuli, excessive activities, the need to remain constantly attentive and productive, prevent the Teacher from

reflecting before reacting, exposing and not imposing, empathy and apathy. Symptoms such as headaches, muscle pain, irritability, memory deficit, insomnia and fatigue arise, and this state, according to Brazilian Psychiatrist, Professor and Writer Augusto Cury (2014) has a name. This is Accelerated Thought Syndrome, also known as SPA.

Affecting mainly adults and people who work in places that require constant concentration, or where it is necessary to deal with goals, deadlines and a series of responsibilities, SPA can disturb the individual's good night's sleep, haunting their mind, making them unable to manage to disconnect and stop worrying, waking up several times thinking about the activities to be carried out the next day and these thoughts are replaced by the next ones, until you get up, without resting physically and mentally.

In the conception of Cury (2014), who emphasizes that people who have excessive intellectual work, such as Teachers, Psychologists, Psychopedagogues, Judges, Prosecutors, Lawyers, among others, will be more likely to develop PAS. This does not rule out that other professionals and even children may, at some point, develop Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS). Everything will depend on the quality of life the individual is leading.

With the knowledge of SPA's potential target audiences, this Study will be dedicated to Senior Teachers (emphasis added).

The study has the general objective investigate how Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) can affect Senior Teachers and its Pedagogical Practices and their influence on student behavior, causing indiscipline.

Two specific objectives: Understanding Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA); Identify the causes, symptoms of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA), and the losses among Senior Teachers and in the undisciplined behavior of

Students; Analyze the possibilities of preventing Accelerated Thought Syndrome (PAS) in the Teaching Community. With this analysis and knowledge, answer the question under study: How must the Senior Lecturer establish a prevention process against Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS), aiming to improve their quality of life, physical and mental, so that there is no harm to their pedagogical practices?

Exposing that the relationships established in Higher Education Institutions have currently aggravated the physical and mental exhaustion among Higher Education Teachers to the point of causing dropouts from the profession, discouragement and impatience, causing a lack of skill in teaching and learning, in addition to serious losses on your mental health.

METHODOLOGY

To develop the research problem, a methodological process was used, including the carrying out of exploratory and descriptive research, based on what is recommended by the bibliographic review, aiming to level knowledge. With this leveling, it is possible to extract a critical view, of the guiding aspects, with the aim of promoting greater knowledge in the area of study.

The question that guided the search for research materials was: How must the Senior Lecturer establish a prevention process against Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS), aiming at their quality of life, physical and mental, so that no harm occurs in your pedagogical practices?

The bibliographic searches were carried out between December 2023 and February 2024. The nature of the research approach was highlighted by the bibliographic survey in books and articles by authors focused on the topic addressed and their contribution, in addition to publications in periodicals and academic directories, such as Scielo:

Scientific Electronic Library Online, and by Google Scholar - Online Research Platform. The descriptors were chosen in order to fully represent the theme addressed and developed in the study.

As Gil (2002) explains:

Bibliographical research is developed based on already prepared material, consisting mainly of books and scientific articles. Although almost all studies require some type of work of this nature, there is research developed exclusively from bibliographic sources. Much of the exploratory studies can be defined as bibliographical research (Gil, 2002, p.44).

Texts in which the focus did not align with the research context were disregarded. Concluding the reading of the researched materials, and relating them to the research objective, the subject was explained.

ACCELERATED THOUGHT SYNDROME (SPA) AND THE REALITY OF SUPERIOR TEACHING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The term, Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS), proposed by Psychiatrist Augusto Cury (2014), describes one of the main triggers of anxiety: The addiction to thinking (emphasis added). SPA is not a disease, but a symptom associated with anxiety, which causes mental hyperactivity with a non-genetic background. Agitated or apathetic behavior in the classroom interferes with both the student's concentration, the quality of the class and the emotional state of the Senior Teacher.

In Cury's (2014) conception, the "excess of thoughts" and the "accumulation of information", with the feeling that the hours of the day are insufficient to carry out daily activities, and without realizing it, society becomes increasingly faster and more stressed, typical characteristics of the SPA, what they disrupt creativity, reasoning and, more

profoundly, the ability to live in the present.

Currently, Senior Professors multiply their functions, demand high productivity and disperse themselves across countless communication channels. As a result, they always feel one step behind, racing against time, which is slipping away, indifferent to their ambitions to handle everything, and in this frenetic pace, reflection becomes forgotten. The mind is overloaded, and shows signs of exhaustion, and losses soon appear, affecting health, relationships and professional performance. If the Senior Lecturer feels overwhelmed by a whirlwind of ideas, commitments and concerns, he understands, in practice, what Augusto Cury (2014) called the "evil of the century" (emphasis added).

When we talk about SPA, we talk about a personal difficulty in relaxing, calming and organizing the mind and an incessant search for information and stimuli, that is, there is a flood of racing thoughts all the time, which makes concentration difficult, and wears on physical and mental health.

From the point of view of Cury (2014), who defines the concept of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) as:

SPA is characterized by low concentration, difficulty dealing with daily routine stimuli, irritability, forgetfulness, and intense anxiety. It turns out that people think about more and more things and think more and more quickly, which requires intense psychic tension so that the brain can respond to what we demand of it (Cury, 2014, p.03).

As Kanaame (1999) explains, the breakneck pace of large cities causes the production of an excessive amount of information, which creates a hyperthinking, agitated, impatient mind, with difficulties in the creative field and a low level of tolerance. The main targets of this condition are professionals who are constantly evaluated, with a fast pace of work, without being able to relax, to avoid compromising their performance. Individuals who think a

lot, who are dedicated to continually learning, are able to create new things, revolutionary solutions and surprising ideas. Thanks to curiosity and the search for knowledge, we survive and evolve, that is, success depends on dedication to thought.

So why is overthinking seen as harmful? We need to understand that there are differences between quantity and quality. Concentration is the premise for us to be able to assimilate information or develop ideas. When there is a clear objective, a focus for interest, we are able to make unusual connections, remember references and exercise critical sense, and the sense of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) is the opposite of this, as there is a quantity of thoughts, not quality.

As Scott and Davenport (2018) explain: “[...] your constant internal dialogue distracts you from what is happening around you, here and now. It causes you to miss out on valuable experiences and sabotages the joy of the present moment.” Concentration leaks, which impoverishes reasoning and, consequently, its products.

Accelerated Thinking, unlike Deep and Reflective Thinking, takes away the capacity for dialogue (with oneself and with others). Instead of concentration, distraction prevails. Instead of constructive dialogues, the mind screams a confusion of authoritarian voices, which impose demands.

From Cury’s (2014) point of view, it is at this point that the brain becomes worn out and stressed. Thus, paradoxically, excess thoughts end up inhibiting intelligence, both in its logical and emotional aspects:

Overthinking can lead to worry, which leads to anxiety. Anxiety can sometimes be paralyzing, leaving people frozen and unable to act. Overthinking can also lead to depression. Any of these can leave you unable to concentrate, feeling hopeless and irritable (Cury, 2014).

According to Cury (2014), some of the causes of Accelerated Thinking Syndrome are: “[...] I - Excess of information; II - Excessive activities; III - Excessive intellectual work; IV - Excessive worry; V - Excessive charging; VI - Excessive use of cell phones, VII - Excessive use of computers”.

Technology plays a central role in the development of SPA. Or rather, not the Technology itself, but the use we make of it. The use of computers is the main villain causing Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) in this generation. Increasingly, individuals find themselves in front of a computer, viewing several screens open at the same time. Causing an excess of information, associated with everyday worries and tasks. Symptoms such as: Excessive worry; Emotional Instability; Frustration Intolerance; Concentration deficit, tiredness upon waking up; These are common complaints from Education Professionals.

From the point of view of Scott and Davenport (2018):

If you add up the time spent on every digital device every day, you probably have a closer relationship with the virtual world than you do with your spouse, children or friends. You know there’s something wrong with that balance, but you still find yourself looking at your iPhone whenever you have a moment to spare — or even when you don’t. Is this really how you want to live your life? (Scott; Davenport, 2018).

As it was explained by Cury (2014), who records his understanding regarding the harmful use we make of technological devices and warns that it is essential for the individual to allow themselves a broader and more honest analysis, to find, in their daily lives, the “villains of existing energy.

In Cury’s conception (2017):

One of the great discoveries of the Theory of Multifocal Intelligence is that excessive speed of thinking causes an important syndrome: Accelerated Thinking Syndrome.

We can accelerate everything in the outside world with advantages: transport, industrial automation, the speed of information on computers, but we must never accelerate the construction of thoughts (Cury, 2017, p. 53).

In SPA, the causes can also be caused by some Mental Disorders, such as: Anxiety, Bipolarity, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Generalized Anxiety Disorder (TAG), Borderline Syndrome (BS), Burnout Syndrome (BS) - with the main agent being professional stress, in addition to being a consequence of drug use. In SPA, symptoms of restlessness increase gradually over the years, which means the possibility of an intense difference in the individual's behavior (Cury, 2017).

THE SYMPTOMS OF ACCELERATED THOUGHT SYNDROME (SPA)

People with Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) produce a super-construction of thoughts at such a high speed that it ends up stressing and wearing out the brain. In fact, it has to do with the intensity and volume of thoughts and ideas, that is, the acceleration of thought increases anxiety and interferes with physical and mental health, worsening several problems.

The individual with SPA feels trapped inside themselves. He cannot manage his fears, tasks and emotions, he thinks about several things at once, without being able to control his thoughts. Individuals who are unable to relax when they are supposed to be leisure time, such as vacation time from work or university, and even then, can only think about their tasks and do not have time to rest. In the individual's agitated mind, there are millions of thoughts, causing anticipated suffering for something that may or may not happen, but, in their mind, an entire scenario has already been created and always in a negative way.

Another characteristic is exaggerated and inexplicable physical fatigue. This is because people with SPA, when thinking too much, tend to steal energy from the cerebral cortex, which is the most evolved layer of the brain, energy that must be used to maintain the body's organs, causing the body to respond with significant fatigue.

Suffering in anticipation is also an unnecessary mental strain. For not being able to turn off the mind and having difficulty slowing down thoughts, the individual ends up suffering in anticipation. How they expose Cury (2003), more than 90% of concerns about the future will not materialize. And the 10% will occur differently than it was designed. It is necessary to develop strategies to overcome challenges and difficulties.

For broad knowledge, the typical symptoms of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA) include: Memory Deficit (common forgetfulness); Difficulty concentrating; Irritability; Abrupt mood swings; Low Resilience; Tendency to Suffer in Anticipation; Anxiety; Tendency to Distressing Obsessive Thoughts; Restlessness or Mental Agitation; Fatigue; Constant dissatisfaction or boredom; Impatience; Sleep Disorders (insomnia, or frequently waking up tired) and Difficulty Relaxing.

Other symptoms, considered psychosomatic, are: Headaches, Muscle Pain, Gastritis, High blood pressure, episodes of tachycardia and even hair loss may appear (Cury, 2017). Seeing that each disorder needs to be treated specifically, the diagnosis depends on the accurate analysis of each individual's reports.

One of the main reports is that of difficulties in "switching off", especially at bedtime. Thoughts are so accelerated that the brain is unable to initiate the sleep cycle. This difficulty can lead to memory problems in the short and medium term.

For a correct diagnosis, it is necessary and essential to be evaluated by a Psychology or Psychiatry Professional, who will evaluate the symptoms presented, as well as the context in which they are inserted, as SPA symptoms can be confused with other problems and may be associated with other disorders.

THE SUPERIOR TEACHER: ACCELERATED THOUGHT SYNDROME (SPA) AND ITS PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Situations in which it is necessary to interrupt the class, increase the tone of voice, think about how to motivate students, cause, over time, a situation of stress and demotivation to take over the Higher Education Teacher. This work overload is linked to the intensity of having to carry out several activities at the same time, such as: planning, studying, correcting tests and assignments, giving feedback to students and also having to participate in activities and requirements of the Institution, in addition to the need for a continuous improvement through Courses, Seminars, Postgraduate courses, among others. The accumulation of so many responsibilities ends up causing great physical and emotional fatigue.

The undisciplined and alienating disposition of academics in the classroom, as exposed by Eisenstein and Bestefenon (2011), also has a considerable contribution to this wear and tear. Most of the time, indiscipline, the excessive use of cell phones in the consumption of information that is unrelated to the moment, become largely responsible for a possible feeling of disappointment and even demotivation on the part of the Senior Lecturer, who prepared for that learning and knowledge sharing. The fault for these reactions, however, does not always lie with the student. The Student may also be carrying the symptoms of SPA, which will further

harm the interaction and connection between the Teacher and the Student.

From the point of view of Oliveira (2009), who adds that demotivating classes can cause restlessness among students/academics in their chairs, parallel conversations, manipulation of electronic devices, heavy eyes, wandering minds and total dispersion. Some practices of Senior Teachers contribute to the class not flowing in harmony and becoming uninteresting, which may have an influence on the SPA itself, or due to the need for continuous improvement.

When exercising the activity of Higher Education Teacher, the Teacher assumes a dimension of training that goes beyond the classroom and that will last throughout the student's life. Remembering that the teaching and learning process developed at the University aims to seek the evolution of the human being both professionally and socially.

In relation to Technology, the competition between Senior Teachers becomes dishonest, with the unregulated use of Television, the Internet, Digital Games, cell phones, among others. These powerful means of communication enchant young people and adults and, with their "powerful machines", take over minds, creating incorrect social models. The result of all this is the great difficulty for Higher Education Teachers in penetrating the mentality of their students/apprentices, in educating within a standard of correctness and quality.

In the conception and analysis of Cury (2014):

The biggest consequence of excessive TV stimuli is contributing to the generation of Accelerated Thought Syndrome, PAS. We must never have touched the black box of intelligence, which is the construction of thoughts, but, unfortunately, we did. The speed of thoughts could not be increased chronically. Otherwise, there would be a decrease in concentration and an increase in

anxiety. This is exactly what is happening to young people (Cury, 2014, p.58).

From the point of view of Cury (2003, p.19), who records: “Teachers complain that students are increasingly agitated, anxious and alienated. But every mind is a safe; There are no impenetrable minds, but only wrong keys.” Faced with this reality, the Senior Lecturer must be prepared to deal with these new technologies and use them in the classroom.

The fact, in Apple’s view (1995, p.169), adds: “[...] they are there, and they will not go away [...]”. Therefore, attitudes and behaviors must be rethought and modified. A long time ago, the teacher and the textbook stopped being the only sources of knowledge, students learn from multiple and varied situations.

As Scott and Davenport (2018) explain, regarding the reduction in Internet access:

You may hyperventilate when considering this idea, but one of the best ways to gain mental clarity in your life is to often take ‘digital sabbaticals’ where you don’t have access to your cell phone, tablet, computer or any device that connects you to the Internet. (Scott; Davenport, 2018).

Despite the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Professional Practice, Higher Education Teachers need to understand when it is time to relax. It is important: Establish limits for yourself and know your responsibilities; Know when to relax and when it’s time to act; Allow yourself to undergo Therapy - the Psychologist will help you organize your thoughts and feelings, as well as knowing how to worry and take ownership of what really matters; Practice sports, yoga and physical activities in general.

In the conception of Scott and Davenport (2018), referring to the inclusion of physical activities, as a tool to combat SPA:

Everyone needs to take care of their mental health, as well as their physical health.

Seeing a professional for your brain is no different than any other part of your body, so let’s stop stigmatizing it and mental “illness.” Carry out tests, explore possibilities, accept suggestions. Everything is a matter of trying, until you find the solutions that best suit your needs (Scott and Davenport, 2018).

Taking care of your mind and body is essential, as is controlling access to technology and information, which is currently within everyone’s reach. It’s easy to overindulge, especially when we’re tired.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA), more than an individual malaise, it suggests itself as a symptom of our time, an important and worrying symptom of the 21st Century.

The Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) identified by Psychiatrist Augusto Cury influences the lives of Higher Education Teachers and their students/academics. It is necessary to slow down. Eat correctly and slowly, little by little, open your eyes in the morning and allow yourself a few minutes to get up and not live at the mercy of the accumulation of daily tasks and demands.

The study demonstrated that many problems caused by SPA relate to the stress level of Senior Teachers, including: Double and sometimes triple working hours; Constant tiredness; Problems with memory; Physical and emotional exhaustion, among others. In addition to the difficulty in using new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), in order to make your classes more productive and enjoyable, improving your Pedagogical Practices.

That Higher Education Teacher, who has the possibility of achieving and allowing himself to know himself and understand the situation in which he finds himself, in a rational and conscious way, will enjoy the benefits of a better quality of life, with physical and emotional well-being, as the teaching

process, being more attractive and innovative, causes greater integration and connection, reducing the symptoms of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (SPA). The Senior Lecturer must talk personally, with family and friends and expose their feelings, talk about their victories and defeats because this humanizes relationships and makes them stronger and more resistant, being more appreciated than virtual reality, which can imprison the mind.

AND it is important to point out that when we talk about mental health, we are not talking about a cure. Yes, it can be treated and managed. Treatment varies from case to case, as it is necessary to make adaptations to each individual's personal and daily habits. And each individual is unique and deserves to be kind to themselves.

Awareness, adaptation and changing habits do not exempt the Senior Teacher from developing the symptoms of Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS), but it will certainly be a new beginning.

The study made it possible to conclude that many problems raised relate to the stress level

of Senior Teachers. Among these, the following stand out: The double and sometimes triple journey; constant tiredness; problems with memory; physical and emotional exhaustion in addition to the difficulty in using new technologies in order to make their classes more productive and enjoyable, improving their Pedagogical Practices.

Accelerated Thought Syndrome (APS) is not an established destiny, even though the everyday context so often suggests otherwise. This is not about giving up facilitating resources or neglecting access to information. The key is to consciously choose your uses.

An addendum, for Superior Teachers: From Greek wisdom, we inherited a very well-known and repeated phrase, translated as "know yourself". However, at the Oracle of Delphi, where this motto is inscribed, there is another, less popular one, which proclaims: "nothing in excess". Both pieces of advice sound more current and necessary than ever, and remain indisputable bases for wisdom, health and the pleasure of living.

REFERENCES

APPLE, Michael. **Trabalho Docente e Textos: Economia e Políticas das Relações de Classe e de Gênero em Educação**. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas, 1995.

CURY, Augusto Jorge. **Pais brilhantes - Professores Fascinantes**. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Sextante, 2003.

_____. **Ansiedade, Como Enfrentar o Mal do Século: A Síndrome do Pensamento Acelerado: Como e Porque a Humanidade Adoeceu Coletivamente, das Crianças aos Adultos**. 1ª. Ed. São Paulo: Editora Saraiva, 2014.

_____. **ANSIEDADE 2: Autocontrole, Como Controlar o Estresse e Manter o Equilíbrio**. 1ª. Ed. São Paulo: Saraiva, 2017.

EISENSTEIN, Evelyn, BESTEFENON Susana B. **Geração Digital: Riscos das Novas Tecnologias para Crianças e Adolescentes**. Revista Hospital Universitário Pedro Ernesto. Rio de Janeiro, v. 10, n. 2, p42-52, 2011. Disponível em: http://revista.hupe.uerj.br/detalhe_artigo.asp?id=105#citar Acesso em 12/12/2023.

GIL, Antônio Carlos. **Como Elaborar Projetos de Pesquisa**. 4ª. Ed. São Paulo: Editora Atlas, 2002. Disponível em: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:2f05d02b-2caf-4c0c-94ec-c3f9f97757c8> Acesso em: 05/02/2024.

KANAAME, Roberto. **Comportamento Humano nas Organizações: O Homem Rumo ao Século XXI**. 2ª. Ed. São Paulo: ATLAS, p.36-55, 1999.

OMS. ORGANIZAÇÃO MUNDIAL DE SAÚDE (OMS). **Classificação de Transtornos Mentais e de Comportamento da CID-10. Descrições Clínicas e Diretrizes Diagnósticas**. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas, 1993.

OLIVEIRA, Sidnei. **Geração Y: Era das Conexões, Tempo de Relacionamentos**. São Paulo: Clube de Autores, 2009.

SCOTT, Steve J.; DAVENPORT, Barrie. **Organize Sua Mente. Como parara de Pensar, Aliviar a Ansiedade e Eliminar os Pensamentos Negativos**. Rio de Janeiro: Alta Books, 2018.