

Professional resilience of medical university lecturers as a resource for overcoming stress and burnout

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Annotation. The article provides a theoretical discussion of the phenomenon of professional resilience of a medical university teacher as a valuable personal and professional resource of modern medical education. Higher medical education transformation, growing academic pressure, the digitalization process, and the integration of teaching, clinical, and research work contribute to the psycho-emotional burden on the faculty and high risks of job burnout. In this regard, the ability of teachers to balance the inner world, remain stable with performance, and remain in positive intercourse with learners is a critical requirement of quality education.

The paper formalizes psychological, pedagogical and acmeological conceptualizations of resilience and provides support to the integrative aspect of resilience. This trait is viewed as a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional regulation, motivational orientation, reflective ability, and value-based attitudes that collectively encourage but not obstruct steadfast professional functioning. The focus is especially placed on the correlation between resilience and teaching excellence because resilience assists in maintaining teaching effectiveness, moral acuity, and learner-focused interaction in stressful situations.

Preventive potential of this construct as far as occupational burnout is concerned is highlighted. Sturdy teachers are more adaptive, even-handed occupational participation, and retention of quality involvement in teaching. This makes one less susceptible to chronic stress and emotional exhaustion. The article states that the further empowerment of this personal resource can be considered one of the significant trends of faculty development and wellbeing in medical universities. More empirical studies of diagnostic tools and development programs

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are proposed to improve the ability of educators to perform sustainable professional functioning.

Keywords: psycho-emotional self-regulation; resilience; pedagogical reflection; professional health; emotional exhaustion.

Професійна стійкість викладачів медичних університетів як ресурс для подолання стресу та вигорання

Анотація. Проведено дослідження питання професійної стійкості викладача медичного закладу вищої освіти як складової педагогічної майстерності та чинника запобігання професійному вигоранню. Узагальнено психологічний, педагогічний та акмеологічний підходи. Професійну стійкість визначено як інтегративну особистісно-професійну якість, що має емоційний, мотиваційний, рефлексивний і ціннісний виміри. Виявлено її зв'язок зі стабільністю педагогічної діяльності, збереженням професійної мотивації та психоемоційної рівноваги викладача. Розглянуто доцільність розвитку професійної стійкості як наряду підтримки професійного здоров'я та якості підготовки майбутніх лікарів.

Ключові слова: психоемоційна саморегуляція; резильєнтність; педагогічна рефлексія; професійне здоров'я; емоційне виснаження.

Introduction

Problem statement.

The recent phase in the development of medical education is marked by the dramatic shifts due to the integration into the European and global educational space, introduction of a competence-based approach, the digitisation of the educational process, increased demands on the quality of the training future doctors, and the increase of the social responsibility of higher medical education institutions [1, 2]. Under such circumstances, the professional work of an educator of a medical university is not only complicated in the context of the subject matter and the types of training, but also the degree of the interpersonal interaction, emotional pressure and the necessity to be always adapted to the changes in the educational environment. Thus, the issue concerning the preservation of professional efficiency of teachers, their psychological equilibrium and efficiency of pedagogy becomes especially topical [3, 4].

The peculiarity of pedagogical activity in medical education is the synthesis of educational, clinical, scientific and educational activity, which objectively enhances the degree of professional stress [5, 6]. Medical educators also perform the functions of carriers of professional knowledge, clinical reasoning, professional values, and ethics, which is what constitute not only the competence but also professional identity of future physicians in students. In that case, the prolonged working in the regime of high responsibility, deficit of time and emotional stress lead to the establishment of the antecedents of the emergence of professional burnout syndrome, which adversely influences both personal well-being of the teacher and the quality of the educational process in general.

The issue concerning professional burnout among educators is conventionally discussed in scientific and practical speech in the frames of psychological or organisational characteristics. Meanwhile, in medical education, this effect has several peculiarities associated with a high degree of emotional engagement, ethical liability to the outcomes of the preparation of doctors, and the necessity of professional development at all times [7, 8]. In these regards, the idea of professional resilience of a teacher as the potential to preserve the worthiness of the professional stance, internal stability, and pedagogical efficacy in the face of a long-lasting influence of stressors is getting more and more significant.

Professional resilience is a psychological trait, but a significant aspect of pedagogical competence, which guarantees the consistency and stability of the professional activity of a

teacher [9]. It is more or less related to the degree of pedagogical reflection, professional self-awareness, emotional self-regulation and value orientations which predetermine the opportunities of the teacher to react positively to the problems of the educational environment. A lack of professional resilience as a result of inadequate level, in turn, results in reduction of motivation to teach, formalisation of pedagogical interaction and loss of professional development interest [10, 11].

The current demands of the modern medical education are satisfied by the scientific knowledge of the resilience of the teacher as the part of his or her professional skills and the preventive factor of professional burnout. The necessity of the holistic pedagogical analysis is predetermined by the necessity to work out the theoretical basis and practical methods of following the professional health of the medical worker, which will eventually lead to the enhancement of the quality of training of new medical experts.

Review of the existing literature.

Academic pressure and clinical responsibility combined with the particular burden of martial law have made the question of professional resiliency development and emotional burnout prevention in higher medical school teachers a pressing issue in recent years. According to an analysis of the scientific literature, the majority of modern studies revolve around the fact that the level of burnout among the medical workers and teachers is high.

The importance of the psychological state of the employees in the quality of the medical care is substantiated by L. Hall et al. (2016) in their article [12]. The authors discovered in their analysis of 46 empirical studies that low conditions of well-being (depression, anxiety, stress) and high conditions of professional burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation) are statistically related to the increase in medical errors and the decline in patient safety. Specifically, it was discovered that burnout and mental health disorders may make errors on their own, and their juxtaposition leads to an even more significant threat to clinical outcomes. The authors underline the fact that to be effective in enhancing patient safety, healthcare organisations need to have systematic measures aimed at ensuring that the mental health of the staff is facilitated along with the technical advancements in the working environment.

In one of the studies, Maria Jose Alban Guijarro et al. (2025) explored not only the prevalence of burnout syndrome in teachers at the University of Guayaquil (Ecuador) but also the protective effect of the resilience factor [13]. The researchers, who conducted the study in 2023-2024 among 334 teachers, discovered that over fifty percent of the study participants were experiencing moderate to high rates of emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. Burnout is significantly correlated with a number of somatic symptoms, the most common ones being nausea, dyspnea, insomnia, muscular tension, and arthralgia. Empirical evidence suggests a more susceptibility to stress in younger educators, and the prevalence of burnout levels off after the age of 50. The main finding is that high psychological resilience is negatively related to burnout; adaptive flexibility and self-efficacy act as strong defensive mechanisms to emotional exhaustion. The authors highlight the importance of the need to set up organisational policies that enhance mental well-being, frequent physical activities, and reward mechanisms of the educators, which in turn maintain the quality of education and overall welfare.

The article by Belinda Agyapong et al. (2024) reflects on the prevalence and variables of burnout in primary and secondary school teachers in three Canadian provinces based on a survey of 780 teachers in 2022-2023 [14]. The research concentrates on three burnout dimensions, including emotional exhaustion (present among 76.9% of the participants), depersonalisation (23.2) and the feeling of professional achievement deprivation (30.8). High levels of stress and low levels of psychological resilience were the key predictors of issues: high stress levels led to emotional exhaustion in the teachers seven times as much. There were also interesting patterns, men and physical education teachers were more likely to depersonalise in comparison with women and English teachers. The authors end by stating that to effectively

combat the crisis of burnout, there is need to have systemic interventions to lower stress and programmes to facilitate the psychological resilience of teachers.

Darshana T Shah et al. (2018) devote the scientific work to the issue of teacher burnout in the academic medicine system [15]. Professional burnout amongst teachers, doctors and researchers is also linked to a high workload, healthcare reforms, competition, in terms of funding and the need to raise productivity. The paper presents a conceptual model of faculty vitality, which illustrates how three blocks interact, the personality of the teacher, the institution and leadership. The only way that sustainable professional vitality can occur is when these three blocks are always in balance and mutually reinforce one another especially when organisational change is taking place. The authors stress the fact that the prevention of burnout is to be systemic and organisational, rather than individual.

The aim of the article is to present a theoretical examination of the concept of professional resilience of a teacher at a higher medical learning institution as a part of pedagogical mastery and to identify its role in discouraging the occurrence of the professional burnout syndrome in the situation of contemporary medical education.

Results

The professional resilience concept is also interdisciplinary in nature and is understood in the context of other scientific fields, the major ones being psychological, pedagogical and acmeological. It is due to the lack of a single, generally accepted definition that there is a wide range of interpretations, which also implies the complexity and the multidimensionality of this phenomenon [16, 17].

In the context of the psychological approach, professional resilience is perceived as more of an integrative personality trait that guarantees the presence of psycho-emotional balance, positive performance and positive behaviour in the stress and work overload situations [18, 19]. Researchers underline the importance of self-regulation mechanisms, coping strategies, emotional stability and resilience as the conditions of stable functioning of a specialist. Professional resilience in this respect is a resource feature of personality which guarantees the accommodation to the dynamism of the professional environment and eliminates maladaptive responses. The capacity to monitor and manage own emotional conditions also plays an important role by reducing the effect of stressors on the professional activity. [20, 21].

Professional resilience in the pedagogical approach is viewed as a personality attribute of the teacher that makes the pedagogical job secure, the uniformity of professional activity and the maintenance of the effectiveness of the educational process despite external or internal complicating conditions. In this case, it is not only the focus on personal psychological features, but also on professional values, pedagogical orientation, reflective capacity and conscious professional development. Professional stability in pedagogical dimension is associated with pedagogical skill closely because it is the ability to stay in a productive contact with students, make informed pedagogical choices and remain humanistic in challenging educational circumstances.

The acmeological approach views professional resilience as a part of professional development, self-realisation and accomplishment of professional excellence [22]. However, in this point of view it is understood as a condition of a high level of professional productivity in the long term and the self-improvement potential. The acmeological view lays stress on the value-semantic sphere and professional identity and internal motivation as the tools of development. Professional resilience can remain not only the mechanism of functional reliability, but also the aspect of professional development, the ability to keep the personal maturity of the person and professional competence in harmonic combination.

Emotional component is the capacity of the teacher to control their emotions, sustain inner balance and manage their emotional response in professional matters of concern [23]. Its development is reflected in patience to frustration, resistance to stress and the opportunity to avoid emotional exhaustion and a cordial character of pedagogic communication. For medical

university lecturers, this component is particularly important given the high intensity of interpersonal communication, the need to combine teaching and clinical activities, and the responsibility for the professional development of future doctors.

The motivational component describes the professional activity of an individual, as well as the stability of professional intentions and the existence of inner motives to teach and train him/herself [24, 25]. This does not mean just the interest in teaching, but the understanding of its social importance, the approval of professional objective and readiness to make efforts to fulfill it. The developed motivational factor guarantees the further working in the professional activity even under the circumstances of overloading and scarce resources.

The reflective aspect is associated with the quality of understanding the teacher to self-monitor, analyse their own actions and their outcomes, and the understanding of challenges and professional success [26]. Pedagogical reflection is a conscious self-regulative and a professional development mechanism that makes it possible to correct pedagogical actions in time, reconsider the experience, and identify constructive solutions to the problematic situations. Reflectiveness is also involved in the development of realistic professional self-assessment and professional deformation is avoided.

The value element indicates the system of professional values, meaning and attitudes that identifies the attitude of the teacher towards their work, students and the medical profession as a whole [27]. These value orientations are what predetermine the humanistic orientation of the pedagogical activity, which helps to uphold ethical norms of interaction and help to retain professional identity. This element is especially significant in the sphere of medical education since it has got a connection with passing professional and moral norms to the future doctors.

The concept of pedagogical mastery is considered in the modern scientific and pedagogical discourse as an integrative feature of the professional activity of a teacher, including a high degree of competence in a subject, training as a methodology, pedagogical technique, communicative culture, and personal maturity. Simultaneously, it is increasingly recognized that the success of these elements hinges in large part on whether the teacher can ensure an inner stability and productivity in the fluctuating and demanding circumstances of the professional life. In this respect, professional resilience appears to be one of the main resources, and, simultaneously, a condition of the competence to acquire pedagogical skills [28, 29].

The resilience of professionals guarantees the functionality of pedagogical activity, such that the teacher is able to preserve the quality of teaching, objectivity of the assessment and constructiveness of pedagogical interaction under the influence of external complicating factors. It helps preserve the integrity of the pedagogical stance, the stability of professional activities and the possibility to perform in response to the pedagogical principles even in the conditions of a higher emotional load or time pressure. Therefore, professional resilience fulfils a stabilising role in terms of the demonstrations of pedagogical skills [30, 31]. Meanwhile, pedagogical proficiency and professional strength are mutually dependent. On the one hand, the growth of pedagogical skill increases the range of professional actions of a teacher, his/her confidence in his/her competence and minimized the stress level, positively influencing the ability to resist stress factors. Conversely, professional resilience is what sets the stage of continuous enhancement of pedagogical skills since it helps to encourage the motivation to develop professionally, to be receptive to innovation and to see feedback constructively.

This connection is especially relevant to medical education, when teaching is intertwined with clinical and scientific practice, and the implications of learning are social in far-reaching effects. Pedagogical skills of a teacher cannot be fixed under such circumstances unless he or she has the requisite level of professional resilience, which will guarantee the maintenance of a humanistic orientation, ethical balance and professional responsibility. Professional resilience is that aspect that enables teachers to stay the holders of professional

values and professional behavioural examples to the students. Professional stability is to be considered not as a secondary feature, but as a resource of pedagogical skills, which presupposes its stability, reliability and permanence [33, 34]. It serves as a sort of self-regulating system, which ensures the most desirable state of professional activity of the teacher and preconditions his/her further professional development. Consciousness of this interconnection creates the opportunities of the targeted development of professional resilience as a component of the system in relation to the enhancement of the pedagogical competence of scientific and pedagogical workers in higher medical institutions.

In the last several decades, the issue of professional burnout in the education, especially in medicine, became one of the main risk factors of the quality of the professional activity and the professional longevity of teachers. The peculiarities of work of the medical institution of higher learning under consideration that combines intensive pedagogical work, clinical duty and scientific practice, predisposes the conditions of chronic psycho-emotional stress, which, when deprived of sufficient personal resources, may result in exhaustion and decreased professional performance. Professional resilience in this case is regarded as one of the most significant internal resources that has a preventive effect in the development of professional burnout. It is most valuable in so far as it is guaranteed to provide balanced self-regulation, keep the level of professional involvement optimal and avoids excessive emotional spending on the pedagogical process. A strong teacher can distinguish between work and personal life, which can minimize the danger of chronic overload and also allow using the internal resources [35, 36, 37].

The development of adaptive approaches to overcoming the problems is also linked to professional resilience and enables the positive reaction to the organisational, communicative and methodological problems in the educational process [38, 39, 40, 41]. Highly professional resilient teachers are more flexible in their decision-making, tolerant to uncertainty, and can maintain a productive professional posture in the face of change [42]. This will trim the chances of long-term frustration with work-related activity, which is among the significant predictors of burnout. The value-semantic dimension of professional resilience is also a very important factor. Consciousness of the social importance of the teaching profession, belonging to the profession and the existence of the long-term professional meaning help to maintain the internal motivation despite the high workload conditions. Meaningfulness of professional activity is what serves as a factor of psychological defense against exhaustion and professional deformation [43, 44, 45].

Professional resilience does not remove the effects of stressors, but intermediates the effect of the stressors on personality of the teacher. It is an internal controller that helps to have an adequate distribution of emotional and cognitive funds, realistic self-evaluation of professional abilities, and helps restore psycho-emotional balance timely. Professional resilience needs to be regarded as a relevant variable in the process of preventing professional burnout in teachers working in the higher medical education institutions. Its evolution within the system of higher training and professional help to scientific and pedagogical employee could become a valid guideline to its professional health and the stability of the teaching process. Having the understanding of the preventive quality of professional resilience, one will have a platform to develop specific pedagogical and organisational approaches helping to maintain the professional resources of teachers.

Conclusions

Professional resilience of the teacher in a higher medical education institution is an integrative personal and professional characteristic that adds stability to the pedagogical activity, maintenance of psycho-emotional balance and stability of the professional functions considering the heightened demands of the medical education. It is multi-component (emotional, motivational, reflective and value dimensions) and is an internal means of pedagogical mastery. Developing professional resilience enhances the susceptibility to

professional burnout, aids professional inspiration, humanistic orientation as well as quality of the education process. The emergence of professional resilience must also be regarded as the significant trend in terms of the promotion of the professional health of teachers and enhancement of the efficiency of the training of future doctors. It is promising to continue with empirical studies on the factors and pedagogical conditions of the development of professional resilience in teachers of medical higher education institutions.

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