ПСИХОЛОГІЯ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ В ОСОБЛИВИХ УМОВАХ

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RESILIENCE AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL RESOURCE FOR QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION STAFF

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Abstract. *The article presents an empirical analysis of quality of life and resilience among employees of Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University. The study aimed to describe the domain structure of quality of life and to examine the association between resilience and quality of life under conditions of considerable professional, educational, organizational and social pressure. Data were collected through the REDCap platform using the World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire and the 10-item Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale. The statistical analysis included 146 complete questionnaires completed by university employees; student questionnaires were not included in the analytical dataset. The highest mean score was found in the social relationships domain (M = 62.16), and the lowest in the environment domain (M = 57.54). The mean resilience score was M = 26.03 out of 40. Resilience showed statistically significant positive associations with all quality-of-life domains, most strongly with the psychological domain (rho = 0.581; p < 0.001) and with the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index (rho = 0.572; p < 0.001). Regression analysis showed that resilience remained significantly associated with quality of life after controlling for age, sex and affiliation with the educational support staff category.*

The findings indicate that resilience is an important personal resource for university employees; however, the cross-sectional design does not support causal conclusions and does not allow resilience to be interpreted as a resource that compensates for deficiencies in the external conditions of the educational and organizational environment.

Keywords: *quality of life, resilience, World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire, Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale, university employees, higher education staff, psychological audit, higher education.*

Problem Statement. The psychological well-being of higher education staff has become particularly important amid the prolonged war, forced changes in work formats, multitasking and increased emotional pressure. For a university, employees' quality of life is not only an individual indicator of well-being. It is also a resource that supports organizational resilience, professional effectiveness and the continuity of the educational process.

Quality of life should be understood as a multidimensional construct that includes physical well-being, psychological state, social relationships and characteristics of the environment. Resilience, in turn, reflects a person's ability to adapt to stress, recover from difficulties and remain functional in situations of uncertainty. In the university context, these indicators are related, but they are not interchangeable: individual resilience may support quality of life, yet it does not remove the need for a safe, predictable and supportive work environment.

This article therefore focuses not on burnout as a final negative outcome, but on earlier and more resource-oriented indicators: employees' quality of life and resilience. Such an approach makes it possible to move from merely identifying exhaustion to understanding the conditions under which

university staff preserve or lose psychological stability.

Analysis of Recent Research and Publications. The theoretical basis of the study rests on three interconnected areas: multidimensional assessment of quality of life, resilience as a resource for adaptation, and the professional and organizational context of higher education staff working under wartime conditions. This framework helps avoid reducing the problem either to individual "stress resistance" alone or to external organizational difficulties alone.

In contemporary psychology and related fields, quality of life is viewed as a subjective, culturally and contextually shaped assessment of one's own life situation, health, opportunities, social ties, safety and the extent to which life corresponds to personal expectations. The World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire follows this logic by distinguishing physical, psychological, social and environmental domains [1]. For Ukrainian research, it is important to consider the availability of the Ukrainian version of this instrument and its testing in the national university context [2; 3].

Studies of quality of life in universities have more often focused on students [4; 5], which leaves a noticeable gap regarding higher education staff. For university employees, quality of life includes not only individual satisfaction but also physical health, psychological balance, social support, perceived safety, financial security, opportunities for rest, clarity of information and manageable workload. For this reason, the environmental domain of the questionnaire is especially important when analyzing university personnel.

Resilience is described in psychological literature as the ability to preserve or restore functioning under stress, uncertainty and loss. The original Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale

was developed to measure individual capacity to cope with difficulties [6], while the 10-item version is suitable for screening and large-scale studies [7]. Its Ukrainian-language version has been adapted and validated, which allows it to be used in Ukrainian samples as a concise indicator of psychological resilience [8].

In higher education, employees' resilience should be seen as a dynamic resource associated with self-regulation, professional identity, the meaning of work, social support, quality of communication and access to institutional assistance. Studies of students' academic resilience show its association with emotional intelligence and perceived stress [9]. For university staff, however, this construct has an additional professional dimension: employees must maintain the educational process, perform administrative and research tasks, interact with students and colleagues, and at the same time cope with the personal consequences of wartime stress.

The wartime context makes both constructs even more significant. Research on the reactions of students from different countries to the war in Ukraine has documented emotional tension, anxiety about military and macroeconomic consequences, and the activation of various coping strategies [10]. For Ukrainian universities, the war is not a distant information event but a condition of everyday functioning. In this situation, education itself may provide structure, connection, support and emotional stabilization [11; 12].

Ukrainian studies of student well-being during the full-scale war are important for the present study as evidence of the broader psychological burden experienced within the university environment [13–19]. At the same time, higher education staff remain less visible in empirical research, although the capacity of a university to sustain teaching,

research, administration and student support depends directly on employees' psychological stability, work capacity and quality of life.

In this article, university employees are understood as respondents belonging to one or several professional categories of Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University staff: academic staff, research staff, administrative personnel, technical personnel and educational support staff. For them, the war means not only personal stress but also additional professional demands: sustaining the educational process, adapting to digital work formats, working amid danger, loss of resources, displacement and uncertainty. Research on the impact of war on Ukrainian universities has recorded losses in funding, student enrollment, staff stability and academic productivity, especially in institutions connected with severely affected regions [20–23].

International evidence from war-affected populations suggests that resilience may mitigate the relationship between wartime stress, anxiety and depressive symptoms, but its effect depends on social and existential resources [24; 25]. Therefore, a high level of resilience should not be interpreted as a reason to place responsibility for well-being solely on the employee. The most relevant studies of higher education staff also show that prevention of exhaustion requires a combination of social support, development of self-regulation skills and changes in the work environment [26–28]. This gap justifies an empirical psychological audit of employees at Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University.

Previously Unresolved Aspects of the Problem. Despite the growing body of research on well-being in higher education, the quality of life of university employees remains insufficiently examined, especially in the Ukrainian wartime context. Most available studies focus

on students, while staff are often described indirectly, as part of the institutional environment rather than as a separate professional group with their own risks and resources.

Another unresolved issue is the relationship between individual resilience and external conditions of work. Resilience may support psychological functioning, but it cannot replace safety, rest, fair workload distribution, clear communication and institutional support. For this reason, it is important to study resilience together with separate domains of quality of life rather than treat it as an isolated personal trait.

The present study addresses this gap by analyzing both resilience and quality-of-life domains among employees of one university that functions under the pressure of war and organizational uncertainty.

Aim of the Article. The aim of the article is to empirically analyze quality of life and resilience among employees of Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University and to determine the statistical relationship between resilience and the domains of quality of life.

The objectives of the study are as follows: 1) to describe employees' quality of life across the domains of the World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire; 2) to assess resilience using the 10-item Connor–Davidson scale; 3) to examine statistical associations between resilience and quality of life; 4) to compare the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index across groups of employees with different levels of resilience; 5) to formulate practical recommendations for psychological support of university staff.

Based on the theoretical review, the following research assumptions were formulated: resilience is positively associated with all quality-of-life domains; the strongest association is expected

between resilience and the psychological domain; employees with higher resilience have a higher auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index; after controlling for age, sex and affiliation with the largest professional category, resilience remains significantly associated with quality of life.

Main Research Material. The study was conducted as a psychological audit of employees of Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University. Data were collected through the REDCap platform, which provides standardized collection, storage and export of research data [29; 30]. Invitations were sent via the university corporate email system to employees from different professional categories. The invitation briefly explained the aim of the audit, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality of responses and included a link to the online form. Respondents provided informed consent before completing the questionnaires. This recruitment procedure was consistent with the purpose of an internal university audit, although it also involved a risk of self-selection.

The analytical dataset consisted of complete questionnaires from employees who gave informed consent, completed the quality-of-life and resilience blocks, had valid values for the quality-of-life domains and the total resilience score, and indicated at least one professional category of university staff. The final analytical sample included N = 146 respondents. Professional affiliation was recorded as a multiple-choice variable: one person could belong to more than one category, so the categories were not interpreted as mutually exclusive groups.

Quality of life was measured using the World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Questionnaire [1–3]. Four domains were used in the article and transformed to a 0–100 scale:

physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environment. In addition, an auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index was calculated as the arithmetic mean of the four domains. This index was used for compact group comparison and regression analysis of the general association. It does not replace domain-level interpretation, is not an official global score of the instrument and is not treated as an independent psychometric scale. Resilience was assessed using the 10-item Connor–Davidson scale with a total score ranging from 0 to 40 [6–8].

The internal consistency of the scales in the sample was acceptable to high: Cronbach's alpha was 0.900 for the full quality-of-life questionnaire items, 0.790 for the four domains and 0.841 for the resilience scale.

The statistical protocol included preparation of the analytical dataset, descriptive statistics, assessment of internal consistency, distribution checks, correlation analysis, group comparison and regression testing of the stability of the association between resilience and quality of life. For quantitative indicators, the article reports the number of observations, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, 95% confidence interval, median, quartiles, and minimum and maximum values. For categorical variables, absolute and relative frequencies are presented.

Normality of distribution was preliminarily assessed using the Shapiro–Wilk test. Since some indicators did not meet the assumption of normality, the key associations between resilience and the quality-of-life domains were examined using Spearman rank correlation. Resilience groups were formed according to the empirical quartiles of the scale in this sample: low resilience – values of 22 or lower; medium resilience – values from 23 to 29; high resilience – values of 30 or

higher. Differences in the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index across the three groups were tested using the Kruskal–Wallis test with the effect size ε^2. Separate conclusions about pairwise differences were not made because post hoc comparisons were not used as an independent basis for interpretation.

For the regression analysis, the dependent variable was the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index. The main predictor was the total resilience score; the control variables were age, sex and affiliation with the educational support staff category. Sex was coded as a dichotomous variable, and educational support staff status was coded as affiliation or non-affiliation. This category was included because it was the largest group in the sample and may reflect a specific organizational workload. Other professional categories were not entered simultaneously because of their smaller size, multiple-choice status and the risk of unstable coefficients. The regression model was used as an additional test of statistical association, not as a tool for individual prediction; therefore, interpretation was limited to the direction, size and statistical significance of coefficients. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

In the full analytical sample, women predominated: 118 respondents (80.82%); men accounted for 27 respondents (18.49%). Age was described for 141 respondents with valid age data: M = 34.86, SD = 14.68, median = 33.00, interquartile range = 20.00–48.00, range = 18–69 years. Professional categories are presented as characteristics of employees' participation in university work.

Table 1. Respondents' professional categories

Category	n	% of N

Educational support staff	63	43.15
Academic staff	49	33.56
Research staff	6	4.11
Laboratory / technical personnel	15	10.27
Administrative personnel	27	18.49
Other	6	4.11

Note. Professional status was recorded as a multiple-choice variable; therefore, percentages may exceed 100%. All categories in the table refer to university employees involved in educational, research, administrative, technical or support work.

The results first describe the main indicators of quality of life and resilience.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the main indicators

Ind.	**n**	**M**	**SD**	**Me**	**Min–Max**
Phys.	146	60.37	14.81	64.30	14.30–89.30
Psych.	146	61.08	15.36	62.50	12.50–87.50
Soc.	146	62.16	18.73	66.70	8.30–100.00
Env.	146	57.54	14.76	59.40	9.40–87.50
QoL	146	60.29	12.53	61.85	18.15–85.65
Res.	146	26.03	6.16	26.00	6.00–40.00

Note. Phys. – physical domain; Psych. – psychological domain; Soc. – social relationships; Env. – environment domain; QoL – auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index; Res. – total score on the 10-item Connor–Davidson scale.

The quality-of-life domains were located in the middle range. The highest mean score was observed for social relationships (M = 62.16), which may indicate that supportive interpersonal ties among employees have been preserved. The lowest score was observed for the environment domain (M = 57.54), which includes financial resources, safety, opportunities for rest, access to information and living conditions. This profile suggests that social resources are relatively better preserved than the external conditions needed for recovery.

The mean resilience score was M = 26.03 out of 40, with a median of 26.00. This value tends toward the middle-to-upper part of the scale, but it should be interpreted cautiously because there is no specific normative threshold for this professional group. The variability of the score (SD = 6.16) indicates the presence of respondents with a substantially lower level of psychological resilience.

Table 3. Spearman correlations between resilience and quality of life

Quality-of-life indicator	**n**	**Spearman rho**	**p**
Physical	146	0.475	<0.001
Psychological	146	0.581	<0.001
Social	146	0.374	<0.001
Environment	146	0.401	<0.001
QoL index	146	0.572	<0.001

Correlation analysis confirmed statistically significant positive associations between resilience and all quality-of-life domains. The strongest

association was found with the psychological domain (rho = 0.581; p < 0.001) and with the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index (rho = 0.572; p < 0.001). Since the index is only a research composite, substantive interpretation should rely primarily on separate domains. The associations indicate that a higher capacity for adaptation and recovery is accompanied by better self-assessments of quality of life, but they do not support causal conclusions.

Table 4. Auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index across resilience groups

Group	n	M resilience	M quality of life	SD	Median
Low (≤22)	35	18.06	48.73	12.32	51.45
Medium (23–29)	74	26.08	61.62	10.59	62.12
High (≥30)	37	33.49	68.55	7.58	68.80

Comparison of the three groups showed statistically significant differences in the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index depending on resilience level: H = 47.02, p < 0.001, epsilon-squared = 0.315. In the low-resilience group, the mean quality-of-life index was 48.73, whereas in the high-resilience group it was 68.55. A difference of almost 20 points on a 0–100 scale is practically meaningful for psychological support of university employees, but it should not be interpreted as a normative cut-off or as evidence of a causal effect. Descriptive indicators show a consistent increase in quality of life from the low-resilience group to the high-resilience group.

Table 5. Linear regression model for the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index

Predictor	**B**	**95% CI B**	**β**	**p**
Resilience	1.25	0.97–1.53	0.611	<0.001
Age	-0.01	-0.20–0.17	-0.016	0.883
Sex	-1.18	-5.71–3.35	-0.094	0.606
Educational support staff	2.88	-2.55–8.31	0.229	0.296

Note. In the sex row, men were compared with women. The intercept is not reported because it has no substantive meaning for the interpretation of this research model and should be added only after verification against the original statistical output.

The model explained 37.20% of the variance in the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index ($R^2 = 0.372$; N = 141). Resilience remained the only statistically significant variable after controlling for age, sex and affiliation with the educational support staff category: each additional point on the resilience scale corresponded to an average 1.25-point increase in the integrated quality-of-life index. The model has an auxiliary analytical purpose and was used to test the stability of the association, not to predict individual outcomes. The findings are therefore interpreted cautiously, without causal claims and without extending them beyond the studied sample.

The obtained results are consistent with the assumption that resilience functions as a resource within the psychological well-being of university employees. Higher resilience scores were statistically associated not only with the psychological domain but also with physical well-being, social relationships and perception

of the environment. The strongest association with the psychological domain is theoretically expected, since resilience directly concerns adaptation, emotional regulation, the ability to endure difficult experiences and the capacity to remain functional under stress [6–9; 24]. At the same time, the cross-sectional design does not allow the direction of this relationship to be established. Higher resilience may support quality of life, but better living conditions, stronger social support and lower workload may also be associated with higher resilience.

The lowest mean score in the environment domain shows that employees' quality of life is limited not only by individual characteristics but also by external resources. If social relationships remain a relatively strong buffer, then conditions for recovery, financial security, opportunities for rest and a sense of safety require separate attention. The relatively high social domain may reflect horizontal support and corporate cohesion, but it may also be linked to the self-selection of more engaged employees. This result should be verified in further studies.

The difference in quality of life between groups with low, medium and high resilience has practical relevance. Participants with low resilience had a substantially lower auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index. This allows resilience to be considered a possible screening indicator of potential psychological risk, but not a reason to place responsibility for well-being solely on the individual. Low resilience may signal the need for support, workload reduction and a more predictable environment.

For Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University, the results may serve as an evidence base for planning programs of psychological support for staff: self-regulation training, peer support groups, consultation pathways, recovery policies after peak workloads, flexible

communication rules and measures aimed at improving the environmental domain of quality of life.

The practical implications of the study can be summarized in several directions.

1. Introduce regular confidential monitoring of quality of life and resilience among university employees as early indicators of psychological risk. A reasonable frequency is at least once per academic year and additionally after periods of peak workload. Results should be analyzed only in aggregated form and must not be used for personnel evaluation.

2. Define responsibility for monitoring and response. Data collection should be conducted by an authorized research or psychological team, while the administration should receive only aggregated reports that do not allow identification of respondents.

3. Develop short modular resilience programs consisting of four to six meetings. Such programs may include emotional regulation, cognitive reframing, planning of recovery, micro-break techniques, self-help during peak workloads and maintaining boundaries between work and personal time.

4. Strengthen the environmental domain of quality of life through organizational decisions: clear communication channels, realistic deadlines, advance notice of urgent tasks, the right to disconnect from work messages outside working hours, substitution procedures during illness or overload, and accessible information about psychological support pathways.

5. Use social relationships as a preserved resource by developing peer support formats, mentoring for new employees, small mutual-support groups, supervision meetings for

employees with high emotional load and communities of practice between departments.

6. For groups with low resilience, provide supportive rather than stigmatizing routes: individual consultations, psychoeducation, adaptation support, temporary workload review where possible and a clear referral algorithm in cases of high psychological risk.

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. Employees of Vasyl` Stus Donetsk National University demonstrated a middle-range quality-of-life profile. The highest score was observed in the social relationships domain, while the lowest score was observed in the environment domain.

The mean resilience score in the sample was M = 26.03 out of 40 and tended toward the middle-to-upper part of the scale. However, its level interpretation should remain cautious because there is no normative threshold for this professional group.

Resilience was statistically significantly associated with all domains of quality of life. The strongest associations were found with the psychological domain and with the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index.

Groups with different levels of resilience differed significantly in the auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index. High resilience was associated with an average index almost 20 points higher than low resilience. This result should be understood as an association, not as evidence of a causal effect.

To improve the well-being of university employees, individual resilience-building programs should be combined with organizational changes aimed at improving recovery conditions, safety, workload balance and support.

The study has several limitations. Its cross-sectional design does not allow causal conclusions. The data are based on self-report and may be influenced by social desirability. The sample is not

probabilistic, and recruitment through corporate email creates a risk of self-selection: more motivated or psychologically engaged employees may have been more likely to respond. Professional categories were recorded as multiple-choice, which limits direct comparison between groups. The division into resilience groups was based on empirical quartiles in this sample and should be treated as research-based rather than normative. The auxiliary integrated quality-of-life index is an analytical composite and does not replace domain-level interpretation. The regression model was used as an additional tool for checking association, not as a predictive model. Future research should use longitudinal designs, qualitative interviews, analysis of organizational factors and verification of the stability of findings in different subgroups of university employees.

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ПСИХОЛОГІЯ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ В ОСОБЛИВИХ УМОВАХ

РЕЗИЛІЄНТНІСТЬ ЯК ПСИХОЛОГІЧНИЙ РЕСУРС ЯКОСТІ ЖИТТЯ ПРАЦІВНИКІВ ЗАКЛАДУ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

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Анотація. *У статті подано результати емпіричного аналізу якості життя та резилієнтності працівників Донецького національного університету імені Василя Стуса. Мета дослідження полягала в тому, щоб описати доменну структуру якості життя працівників університету та з'ясувати, як вона пов'язана з резилієнтністю в умовах високого професійного, організаційного й соціального навантаження. До аналізу включено 146 повних анкет працівників університету; студентські анкети до цього масиву не входили. Якість життя оцінювалася за чотирма доменами: фізичним, психологічним, соціальним і середовищним. Резилієнтність вимірювалася за 10-пунктовою шкалою Коннора–Девідсона. Найвищий середній показник зафіксовано у домені соціальних відносин, найнижчий – у домені навколишнього середовища. Резилієнтність мала статистично значущі позитивні зв'язки з усіма доменами якості життя, найсильніше – з психологічним доменом і допоміжним інтегральним індексом якості життя. Регресійний аналіз показав, що резилієнтність залишається значущо пов'язаною з якістю життя після контролю віку, статі та належності до категорії навчально-допоміжного персоналу. Зроблено висновок, що резилієнтність є важливим особистісним*

ресурсом працівників університету, однак її не можна розглядати як заміну безпечних, передбачуваних і підтримувальних умов освітньо-організаційного середовища.

Ключові слова: *якість життя, резилієнтність, працівники університету, персонал закладу вищої освіти, психологічний аудит, психологічне благополуччя, вища освіта.*

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