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Estrés laboral: cómo las exigencias laborales afectan el bienestar del empleado

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Resumen. El objetivo de este estudio fue comprobar empíricamente la naturaleza de la relación entre las exigencias laborales, el estrés laboral y el bienestar ocupacional de los empleados. Métodos. Para lograr el objetivo de la investigación se aplicó un método transversal utilizando el Cuestionario de Satisfacción Laboral Spector, el Cuestionario de Satisfacción de Necesidades Porter, la Encuesta Diagnóstica de Estrés y la Escala de Inseguridad Laboral. El análisis estadístico incluyó análisis de mediación y análisis de correlación. La encuesta se realizó entre 163 profesores universitarios. Resultados. El estudio encontró que las exigencias del trabajo crean presión psicológica y estrés que reducen el bienestar profesional de los empleados al amenazar la realización de sus aspiraciones personales. La relación entre el estrés y el bienestar profesional de los empleados está mediada por la discrepancia entre el estado deseado de satisfacción de necesidades y el estado real, así como por la importancia de determinados aspectos de la actividad profesional para el empleado, lo que representa su característica de valor. Los efectos mediadores identificados amplían las ideas existentes sobre los mecanismos de formación del bienestar de los empleados y nos permiten determinar las

direcciones de su apoyo psicológico en la práctica organizacional. El desarrollo de recomendaciones prácticas para garantizar psicológicamente el bienestar de los empleados de una organización debería ser una dirección para futuras investigaciones.

Palabras clave: bienestar del empleado, estrés, exigencias laborales, inseguridad laboral, análisis de mediación.

Stress at work: how job demands affect employee well-being

Abstract. The aim of this study is to empirically test the nature of the relationship between job demands, job stress, and employee well-being. To achieve the research goal, a cross-sectional method was used using the Porter Satisfaction Questionnaire, the Diagnostic Stress Survey, and the Employment Insecurity Scale. Statistical analysis included mediation analysis and correlation analysis. The survey participants were 163 university teachers. The study found that work demands create psychological pressure and stress that reduce employees' professional well-being by threatening the realization of their personal aspirations. The relationship between stress and employee well-being is mediated by the discrepancy between the desired state of need satisfaction and the actual state, as well as the importance of certain aspects of professional activity for the employee, which represents their value characteristic. The identified mediating effects expand existing ideas about the mechanisms of forming employee well-being and allow us to determine the directions of its psychological support in organizational practice. Developing practical recommendations for psychological ensuring the well-being of employees in an organization should be a direction for further research.

Keywords: professional well-being, academic staff, stress, job demands, needs, mediation analysis.

INTRODUCTION

General background information

Stress-related mental health disorders have reached record highs today, resulting in significant economic costs, having a significant negative impact on work quality, employee productivity and overall morale in organizations around the world. According to estimates by the World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization (United Nations News 2022), 12 billion working days are lost annually due to stress and anxiety, costing the global economy almost \$1 trillion. These impressive figures emphasize the relevance of research into the problem of professional well-being of employees, which, despite the constantly growing number of scientific publications on this topic, remains open in both Ukrainian and Western psychology. The complexity of the phenomenon of professional well-being, as well as the diversity of scientific approaches to its understanding, make it impossible to unify the psychological mechanism for the formation and preservation of professional well-being of employees. Therefore, there is currently an urgent need for a deep understanding of the psychological determinants of occupational well-being of employees in organizations, particularly in educational institutions, which have been classified as the third most affected work environment in terms of symptoms of stress, depression and anxiety (Health and Safety Executive, 2022).

Job demands, which are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of professional activities that require constant physical and psychological effort and create strain, have been identified as one of the most common sources of work-related stress (Bakker, & Demerouti, 2017). It is widely believed in scientific literature that job demands become stressors if their fulfillment requires employees to use a level of skills, motivation, and energy that exceeds their capabilities. Excessive workload (Andriani, & Disman, 2023; Pace et al., 2019), emotionally stressful interactions (Korolchuk et al., 2017), role ambiguity and role conflicts (Soltani et al., 2013) indeed pose a high risk of provoking stress and long-term negative consequences. In the field of education, factors contributing to job imbalance include insufficient funding amid ever-increasing job demands (Ford and Jin, 2015), insufficient recognition (Gillespie et al., 2001), and lack of job security (Green, 2020). The highlighted aspects of professional activity correspond to the universal hierarchical model of needs of A. Maslow (Maslow, 1970): they limit the realization of employees' aspirations for security and stability; become an obstacle to the effective performance of professional duties and self-esteem; and hinder the realization of professional qualifications. Thus, work demands become stressors, threatening the satisfaction of employees' actualized needs, which, in turn, can negatively affect their professional well-being. According to the motivational and value model (Voitenko, 2024), the professional well-being of academic staff is an integrated state that is formed in connection with the extent to which the needs of the individual are realized in professional activity, considering individual values and meanings. Therefore, it can be assumed that work demands become stressors and affect employees' professional well-being to the extent that they interfere with the realization of their aspirations in a professional context. Therefore, the aim of this study is to empirically test the nature of the relationship between job demands, job stress, and professional well-being of academic staff.

Specific background information

Motivational-value model of professional well-being

According to the motivational-value model of professional well-being, assessments of work-related well-being are assessments of the contribution of work to the realization of employees' individual needs, goals, and values (Voitenko, 2024). Needs are the basis of professional activity, its internal motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The state of stay at work serves to be achieved by the academic staff of personal aspirations, such as career, growth, autonomy, competence and positive relationships, which can compensate for work demands and the associated physical and psychological costs, so well-being in a professional context has different aspects. One dimension of professional well-being is working conditions, which affect the efficiency, motivation, and even stress levels of employees (Hermansyah et al., 2023). An important aspect of the professional well-being of academic staff is positive relationships in the team, the attitude of colleagues towards the employee as a professional. Positive interaction between employees and cohesion provides them with social support, which mitigates the impact of stressors on health and psychological well-being (Parr et al., 2020). Academic staff need recognition for their achievements and respect; teaching-related self-esteem and self-efficacy are known to predict job satisfaction and well-being (Granziera, Perera, 2019), and conversely, insufficient recognition causes stress (Gillespie, et al., 2001). Many previous studies have emphasized self-actualization and personal expression as components of employee well-being (Taris & Schaufeli, 2015). Therefore, summarizing these findings, it can be stated that academic staff are satisfied with their professional lives to the extent that their personal aspirations are satisfied.

Job demands and professional well-being

Theoretical analysis of potential psychological determinants of professional well-being showed that the causes of its violations should be sought in the structure of work organization and in the organizational resources allocated to employees to meet work requirements. Among the organizational conditions that significantly affect employee well-being in the workplace, scientists often draw attention to role conflict (conflicting, inconsistent job requirements) and role ambiguity (lack of information necessary for adequate job performance), which can reduce job satisfaction. Studies generally confirm the relationship between role conflict, role ambiguity, workplace anxiety, and job satisfaction (Soltani et al., 2013), but there are also mixed results that need clarification. Role ambiguity is known to be negatively correlated with higher-level need satisfaction (eg, autonomy and self-actualization needs), but not with lower-level needs (eg, safety and social needs) (Teas et al., 1979). This fact is explained, firstly, by the fact that the needs of lower levels play a much smaller role in the motivation of a modern employee, the needs of higher levels have a predominant influence (Fürstenberg, 2021). Second, role ambiguity occurs when employees lack clear understanding of their goals, expectations from their colleagues, and the responsibilities and scope of their work, or when they are forced to do things, they don't really want to do or don't consider as a part of their job. These organizational constraints become an obstacle to effective performance of work tasks and a sense of competence, preventing employees from realizing their skills, qualifications, and relevant needs, which ultimately reduces job satisfaction.

The current trend towards restructuring and downsizing in many organizations, particularly universities, has contributed to an increase in perceived job insecurity, increased working hours and workload. Employees of educational organizations with reduced staff take on an increased workload and are forced to work longer hours to comply with additional requirements. Studies have shown that excessive workload and forced overtime cause emotional stress (Pace et al., 2019), general anxiety and depressive symptoms (Ford, Jin, 2015), and poor health associated with work stress (Korolchuk et al, 2017). The highlighted aspects of professional activity are primarily related to the need for security, limiting the desire for order, stability, and freedom from stress, which can have widespread negative consequences for both employees and their organizations, in particular, a decrease in job satisfaction (Green, 2020).

Among the factors that significantly affect the well-being of academic employees in the workplace, the opportunity for growth and the realization of employees' abilities, which is associated with the need for self-actualization, is very noticeable. In the current scientific literature, there is conflicting data regarding the nature of the relationship between self-actualization, occupational stress, and employee well-being. On the one hand, self-actualization is characterized by productivity and satisfaction, increased mental and personal activity, and a transition to a qualitatively new level of activity (Yakymchuk B.A., Ryzhkova, 2020). On the other hand, there is evidence that personal ambitions can be determinants of professional stress and burnout, as they require changes in lifestyle, worldview, etc., which sometimes situationally deprives a person of resources (Voitenko, 2021). However, a person who is unable to realize their aspirations is doomed to chronic destructive stress.

Description of the gap in our knowledge that the study was designed to fill

Therefore, the relevance of the problem of professional well-being, the search for its psychological determinants and the identification of ways to preserve it, as well as the contradictions identified in the scientific literature indicate the need for empirical verification of the nature of the

relationship between work requirements, stress, employees' needs and their professional well-being. Our research will help clarify the understanding of the essence of professional well-being and its organizational determinants.

The program of this stage of the research is built on a few hypotheses:

H1: Job demands are related to employees' professional well-being

H2: Low levels of professional well-being are associated with high levels of job stress

H3: Job stress is related to employees' professional well-being through the mediation of satisfaction of needs

H4: Job stress mediates the effect of job demands on professional well-being

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the research goal, a cross-sectional method was used using the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Spector, 2022), the Needs Satisfaction Questionnaire (Porter, 1961), the Diagnostic Stress Survey (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1980), and the Employment Insecurity Scale (Vander Elst et al., 2014). The original scales were translated from English into Ukrainian using the back translation method. For statistical data processing, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression (MLR) using the Enter method without including a constant in the equation were used. The original data was checked for compliance with a normal distribution. The strength and direction of the relationship between variables were assessed by the parametric linear correlation coefficient *r*-Pearson. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis) were calculated to characterize the observations. To study the indicated mediation effects, the appropriate mediation analysis procedure was applied with preliminary diagnostics of all variables. Mediation hypotheses were tested using established mediation criteria (Baron, & Kenny, 1986). Calculations were performed in SPSS Statistics 23.0. The survey was conducted online using Google Forms.

To assess the level of satisfaction of employees' needs, the Needs Satisfaction Questionnaire (NSQ) by L. Porter (1961) was used. The questionnaire allows you to calculate the perceived deficit in needs satisfaction (discrepancy score (DS) between organizational resources and personal needs) by determining the absolute difference between the indicators of the current and desired state of needs satisfaction and determines the importance score (IS) of various aspects of professional activity for the employee. The Need Satisfaction Index (NSI) is obtained by dividing the total discrepancy score by the total importance score. The nomological validity of the scale has been proven by a number of researchers (Cohen et al., 1997).

Paul Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (Spector, 2022) was used to assess professional well-being. The scale allows you to assess employee satisfaction with various aspects of professional activity. Satisfaction is determined on a six-point scale ranging from "completely disagree" to "completely agree". The scale is designed for different types of organizations. The author reports high psychometric properties of the scale (Spector, 2022).

The Stress Diagnostic Survey (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1980) was used to measure stress. The scale consists of 30 items and diagnoses employee stress due to role ambiguity (5 items), role conflict (5 items), quantitative role overload (5 items), qualitative role overload (5 items), concern for career growth (5 items), and responsibility for people (5 items). Respondents' responses are

rated on a seven-point scale from 1 – “never” to 7 – “always”, which determines how often the described condition is a source of stress for them. There is evidence in the scientific literature of empirical verification of the reliability of the scale: The Cronbach’s alpha value for a comprehensive study of stress was 0.93 (Nelson & Sutton, 1990).

The Job Insecurity Scale (JIS) was used to quantify academic staff job insecurity (i.e., vulnerability to job loss). The JIS is a short, unidimensional scale that assesses the perceived threat of job loss, and the anxiety associated with these risks. The scale consists of four items. Respondents are asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statements on a five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Empirical studies have confirmed the validity and reliability of the scale’s psychometric properties (Vander Elst et al., 2014). In this stage of the study, a convenient sample of volunteers was used. The survey participants were 163 academic staff of universities. The most important socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample.

Age	N	%	Gender	N	%	Position	N	%
25-35	24	14,7	Male	15	9,2	Head of Department	36	22,1
36-45	48	29,4				Lecturer	74	45,4
46-55	60	36,8	Female	148	90,8	Senior Lecturer	20	12,3
> 56	31	19,0				Associate Professor	28	17,2
						Professor	5	3,1
Total	163	163		163	100		163	100

The survey participants were academics from various universities and different educational fields. According to the table, all age categories and academic positions are represented among the study participants, as well as a fairly large number of respondents, which, taken together, are signs of the representativeness of the studied sample.

RESULTS

A strong negative correlation was found between work stress and professional well-being, as well as the presence of statistically significant negative correlations between work demands and professional well-being of employees, except for the factor of responsibility for the work of others ($p > .05$), which will be excluded from further analysis, as well as (Table 2).

The relationship between stress indicators, need satisfaction, and professional well-being

To test the hypothesis that the relationship between stress and professional well-being operates through the mediation of individual need satisfaction indicators, an analysis of three regression equations was carried out: first, regression of the mediator (need satisfaction indicators) on the independent variable (stress), second, regression of the dependent variable (professional well-being) on the independent variable (stress), third, regression of the dependent variable (professional well-being) on both the independent variable (stress) and the mediator (need satisfaction indicators).

TABLE 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations between job demands, professional well-being and work stress (N=163).

Variables	M	SD	S	K	Professional well-being	Stress
Role conflict	11,52	5,45	,730	-,142	-,697**	,817**
Role ambiguity	13,09	5,36	,274	-,892	-,634**	,873**
Quantitative overload	17,18	6,61	,281	-,631	-,644**	,852**
Qualitative overload	13,61	5,24	,404	-,332	-,575**	,867**
Career growth	13,05	6,62	,763	-,061	-,750**	,764**
Responsibility	18,75	6,65	,174	-,160	-,027	,492**
Employment insecurity	9,04	3,45	,860	,720	-,473**	,409**
Professional well-being	138,54	22,35	-,128	-,635	1	-,710**
Stress	87,20	27,88	,218	-,198	-,710**	1

Note: M – mean; SD – standard deviation; S – skewness; K – kurtosis.

** – correlation statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-sided).

* – correlation statistically significant at the 0.05 level (2-sided).

Linear regression was applied using the Enter method without including a constant in the equation. Statistical significance tests were performed using F-tests, t-tests, and adjusted R^2 . The ANOVA test confirmed the reliability of the constructed regression models; therefore, these models can be meaningfully interpreted.

Regression of the mediator (need satisfaction indicators) on the independent variable (stress)

In the first step, the regression of the mediator on the independent variable was estimated (Table 3). Regression analysis confirmed a statistically significant effect of stress (SDS) on all indicators of need satisfaction according to Porter's Need Satisfaction Questionnaire (NSQ): need satisfaction index (NSI) ($F=4.704$; $df=1$; $p<0.05$; $R^2=.028$), total indicator of discrepancy between desired and actual state of need satisfaction (DS) ($F=82.106$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.336$), total indicator of importance of various aspects of work (IS) ($F=807.606$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.833$).

Regression of the dependent variable (occupational well-being) on the independent variable (stress)

In the second step, the regression of the dependent variable on the independent variable was estimated (Table 3). A statistically significant effect of stress (SDS) on professional well-being (PWB) was confirmed ($F=745.923$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.822$).

Regression of the dependent variable (professional well-being) on both the independent variable (stress) and the mediator (needs)

In the third step, to confirm the mediator's effect on the dependent variable while controlling for the independent variable, the stress indicator was included in the regression analysis, in addition to the need satisfaction indicators, to predict professional well-being (Table 3). The model of the joint influence of the predictor and mediator on the dependent variable is statistically significant ($F=756.709$; $df=4$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.950$) and therefore can be meaningfully interpreted.

TABLE 3. Mediating role of need satisfaction in the relationship between stress and professional well-being*.

Models			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
			B	Std. Error	β		
1	Need Satisfaction Index (NSI)	SDS	,001	,001	,168	2,169	,032
	Overall Discrepancy Score (DS)	SDS	,011	,001	,580	9,061	,000
	Overall Importance Score (IS)	SDS	,061	,002	,913	28,418	,000
2	Professional Well-Being (PWB)	SDS	1,390	,051	,906	27,312	,000
3	Professional Well-Being (PWB)	SDS	,364	,070	,237	5,197	,000
		DS	-16,054	2,560	-,203	-6,272	,000
		IS	-16,054	2,560	-,203	-6,272	,000
		NSI	-3,591	6,279	-,015	-,572	,568

* Linear Regression through the Origin.

The relationship between job demands, stress, and professional well-being

To test the hypothesis that the relationship between job demands and occupational well-being is mediated by stress levels, three regression equations were analyzed: first, regression of the mediator (stress) on the independent variable (job demands), second, regression of the dependent variable (occupational well-being) on the independent variable (job demands), and third, regression of the dependent variable (occupational well-being) on both the independent variable (job demands) and the mediator (stress). Linear regression was applied using the Enter method without including a constant in the equation. Significance tests were performed using F-tests, t-tests, and adjusted R^2 . The ANOVA test confirmed the reliability of the constructed regression models; therefore, these models can be meaningfully interpreted.

In the first stage, the regression of the mediator (stress) on the independent variable (job demands) was estimated (Table 4). The analysis confirmed a statistically significant relationship between job demands and stress: role conflict (RC) ($F=2377.515$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.936$), role ambiguity (RA) ($F=4443.774$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.965$), quantitative overload (QO) ($F=4058.157$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.962$), qualitative overload (QOv) ($F=4868.788$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.968$), career growth (CG) ($F=1669.851$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.912$), job insecurity (JI) ($F=1109.924$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.873$).

In the second stage, the regression of the dependent variable (occupational well-being) on the independent variable (job demands) was estimated (Table 5). A statistically significant effect of job demands on the professional well-being of employees was confirmed: role conflict (RC) ($F=407.662$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.716$), role uncertainty (RA) ($F=534.440$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.767$), quantitative overload (QO) ($F=547.632$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.772$), qualitative overload (QOv) ($F=609.903$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.790$), career growth (CG) ($F=350.524$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.684$), job insecurity (JI) ($F=652.757$; $df=1$; $p<0.001$; $R^2=.802$).

TABLE 4. Regression effect of job demands on stress*.

Regression models		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	β		
1	Role Conflict (RC)	6,953	,143	,968	48,760	,000
2	Role Ambiguity (RA)	6,360	,095	,982	66,662	,000
3	Quantitative Overload (QO)	4,848	,076	,981	63,704	,000
4	Qualitative Overload (QOv)	6,176	,089	,984	69,777	,000
5	Career Growth (CG)	5,974	,146	,955	40,864	,000
6	Job Insecurity (JI)	8,849	,266	,935	33,316	,000

*Linear Regression through the Origin.

TABLE 5. Regression effect of job demands on occupational well-being*.

Regression models		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	β		
1	Role Conflict (RC)	9,320	,462	,846	20,191	,000
2	Role Ambiguity (RA)	8,697	,376	,876	23,118	,000
3	Quantitative Overload (QO)	6,659	,285	,878	23,402	,000
4	Qualitative Overload (QOv)	8,557	,346	,889	24,696	,000
5	Career Growth (CG)	7,934	,424	,827	18,722	,000
6	Job Insecurity (JI)	13,000	,509	,896	25,549	,000

*Linear Regression through the Origin.

In the third stage, to confirm the influence of the mediator (stress) on the dependent variable (occupational well-being) while controlling for the independent variable (job demands), in addition to stress, job demands were included in the regression models to predict employees' occupational well-being (Table 6). The ANOVA test confirmed the reliability of the constructed regression models; therefore, these models can be meaningfully interpreted. The joint effect of stress (SDS) and role conflict (RC) ($R^2=.837$; $F=412.482$; $df=2$; $p<0.001$), stress (SDS) and role ambiguity (RA) ($R^2=.827$; $F=385.887$; $df=2$; $p<0.001$), stress (SDS) and quantitative overload (QO) ($R^2=.824$; $F=377.850$; $df=2$; $p<0.001$), stress (SDS) and qualitative overload (QOv) ($R^2=.822$; $F=371.275$; $df=2$; $p<0.001$), stress (SDS) and career growth (CG) ($R^2=.838$; $F=417.181$; $df=2$; $p<0.001$), stress (SDS) and employment insecurity (JI) ($R^2=.840$; $F=418.787$; $df=2$; $p<0.001$) was statistically confirmed.

TABLE 6. Regression effect of stress and job demands on professional well-being*.

Regression models		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	β		
1	Role Conflict (RC)	-5,367	1,389	-,487	-3,863	,000
	Stress (SDS)	2,112	,193	1,378	10,926	,000
2	Role Ambiguity (RA)	-4,041	1,733	-,407	-2,331	,021
	Stress (SDS)	2,003	,268	1,306	7,482	,000
3	Quantitative Overload (QO)	-2,047	1,278	-,270	-1,602	,111
	Stress (SDS)	1,796	,258	1,171	6,948	,000
4	Qualitative Overload (QOv)	-,837	1,785	-,087	-,469	,640
	Stress (SDS)	1,521	,284	,992	5,351	,000
5	Career Growth (CG)	-4,166	1,023	-,434	-4,075	,000
	Stress (SDS)	2,026	,163	1,321	12,394	,000
6	Job Insecurity (JI)	5,624	1,291	,387	4,356	,000
	Stress (SDS)	,834	,136	,544	6,113	,000

*Linear Regression through the Origin.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to empirically test the nature of the relationship between job demands, job stress, and employees' professional well-being. Correlation analysis revealed significant negative correlations between job demands and occupational well-being, except for the indicator of responsibility for others; a significant negative correlation was also found between occupational well-being and stress, which confirms our assumptions. Our results are consistent with previous studies that have also confirmed the direct negative impact of role conflict and role ambiguity on employee productivity and job satisfaction (Unguren et al., 2021); the negative relationship between role overload, quality of life, and psychological health of employees (Alnazly et al., 2023); interactive relationships between work, career development, mental health, and employee well-being (Redekopp, & Huston, 2018); and the relationship of job insecurity with stress and the impact on the health and well-being of employees worldwide (Graham et al., 2024). The above facts also indicate the non-random nature of the connections we identified.

To test the mediation hypotheses, the mediator analysis procedure described by Baron and Kenny (1986) was applied. The analysis confirmed that work stress is related to employees' professional well-being through the mediation of need satisfaction. As can be seen from Table 3, the regression coefficient, which demonstrates the contribution of the need satisfaction index to the variability of professional well-being, lost statistical significance ($p > 0.05$) after its introduction into the study as a mediator, therefore it can be excluded from the model. The relationship between stress and professional well-being remained statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) when the indicator of the discrepancy between the desired state of need satisfaction and the actual state (DS) and the indicator of the importance of certain aspects of professional activity (IS) were introduced into the study as mediators.

Therefore, it can be noted that these indicators of need satisfaction partially mediate the relationship between stress and professional well-being, but the share of the variation in professional well-being is explained by the variation in the level of stress and indicators of need satisfaction by 95% ($R^2=.950$) and only 5% is explained by other factors. A comparison of regression coefficients shows that the effect of stress on occupational well-being was significantly reduced in the third equation ($\beta=.237$), in contrast to the second ($\beta=.906$), after need satisfaction measures were added as a mediator. A significant reduction in the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable proves that the mediator is indeed powerful (Baron, & Kenny, 1986). Thus, we can conclude that the relationship between stress and the professional well-being of employees is mediated by the discrepancy between the desired state of need satisfaction and the real state, as well as the importance of certain aspects of professional activity for the employee, which represents their value characteristic.

Mediation analysis also supported the hypothesis that stress mediates the effect of job demands on employees' occupational well-being. As can be seen from the data in Table 6, the full mediation of the influence of quantitative and qualitative overload on professional well-being by work stress is statistically confirmed. Regression coefficients demonstrating the contribution of quantitative ($\beta=-.270$) and qualitative overload ($\beta=-.087$) indicators to the variability of professional well-being lost statistical significance ($p>0.05$) after introducing the stress indicator into the study as a mediator, which indicates the existence of a single dominant mediator (Baron, & Kenny, 1986). This result is in good agreement with the results of previous studies, which also confirmed the mediating role of stress in the relationship between employee work overload and various aspects of professional well-being: work productivity (Andriani, & Disman, 2023); physical health (Wong et al., 2019). Work overload is the performance of too much work in each amount of time or the performance of work that is too difficult for employees, thus contributing to physical and mental exhaustion, and therefore is a stressor that threatens the realization of employees' need for safety.

Mediation analysis revealed that stress partially mediates the impact of several work demands on employees' professional well-being. The joint impact of stress and indicators of role conflict and role ambiguity on professional well-being has been statistically confirmed. The results showed that the relationship between these variables and occupational well-being remained statistically significant when job stress indicators were entered into the study as a mediator. The proportion of variation in professional well-being is explained by variation in stress levels and role conflict indicators by almost 84% ($R^2=.837$), and by role ambiguity indicators by 83% ($R^2=.827$). Comparison of regression coefficients shows that the effect of role conflict on professional well-being significantly decreased in the third equation ($\beta=-.487$), in contrast to the second ($\beta=.846$); the effect of role ambiguity also decreased in the third equation ($\beta=-.407$) compared to the second ($\beta=.876$) after stress indicators were added to the study as a mediator. Role conflict, which arises when employees face inconsistent or incompatible demands, and role ambiguity as a lack of clarity and predictability at work (Soltani et al., 2013), are well-known stressors that disrupt employee well-being. The identified connections are expected in the context of the value-motivational model of professional well-being, because conflicting demands, lack of stability and predictability make it impossible to satisfy the individual needs of employees, primarily the need for safety, the realization of their desire for consistency, as well as the needs for respect and self-realization.

The scientific literature also provides empirical evidence of negative correlations between role conflict and such components of professional well-being as professional self-acceptance, as well as between role uncertainty and professional growth (Duygulu et al., 2013), which are considered risks to employee well-being.

The results of the mediator analysis revealed partial mediation by work stress of the impact of the career growth indicator on the professional well-being of employees. As can be seen from the data in Table 6, the relationship between this variable and professional well-being remained statistically significant when work stress indicators were introduced into the study as a mediator. Almost 84% of the variation in professional well-being is explained by the variation in stress levels and career growth index ($R^2=.838$). Comparison of regression coefficients shows that the impact of career growth on professional well-being significantly decreased in the third equation ($\beta=-.434$), unlike the second ($\beta=.827$); after adding the work stress indicator to the study as a mediator. Career development belongs to the process that an employee can go through to change their professional status (Hartati, & Mustika, 2021), and is obviously related to prestige needs, so the lack of progress in professional life is a stressor that threatens professional well-being due to the frustration of these needs. Conversely, it is a well-known fact that career resilience contributes to employee well-being and is positively associated with overall life satisfaction, with stress and career success mediating this relationship (Han et al., 2021).

Mediation analysis also allowed us to establish partial mediation of the impact of job insecurity on employees' professional well-being by work stress. As can be seen from Table 6, the joint effect of job stress and job insecurity indicators on occupational well-being was statistically confirmed. The results showed that the relationship between these variables and professional well-being remained statistically significant when job stress indicators were added to the study as a mediator. The proportion of variation in professional well-being explained by variation in stress levels and indicators of job insecurity is 84% ($R^2=.840$). Job insecurity is primarily associated with the fear of losing one's job (Green, 2020), but it can also be associated with the risk of downgrading without actual dismissal, which provokes stress by threatening the employee's need for security and stability, in particular financial security; as well as by threatening the realization of the desire for respect and competence, and therefore affects professional well-being. A comparison of the regression coefficients shows that the effect of job insecurity significantly decreased in the third equation ($\beta=.387$) compared to the second ($\beta=.896$) after the job stress indicator was added to the study as a mediator. From a theoretical perspective, a significant reduction in the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable proves the strength of the mediator (Baron, & Kenny, 1986). The obtained result is in good agreement with the findings of modern authors regarding the mediating effect of stress in the relationship between job insecurity and occupational health of employees (Green, 2020), which also indicates the non-random nature of the identified relationships.

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that work demands, including role conflict and role ambiguity, quantitative and qualitative overload, career limitations, and job insecurity for academic staff, create psychological pressure and stress that reduce their professional well-being. The obtained result confirmed the expected negative correlation between the studied job demands (except for responsibility for oth-

ers) and the professional well-being of employees, as well as between the general indicator of work stress and the professional well-being of employees.

It has been confirmed that work demands become stressors and affect employees' professional well-being to the extent that they interfere with the realization of their aspirations in a professional context. Work stress is related to employees' occupational well-being through the mediation of need satisfaction. The relationship between stress and the professional well-being of employees is mediated by the discrepancy between the desired state of need satisfaction and the real state, as well as the importance of certain aspects of professional activity for the employee, which represents their value characteristic.

Work demands, including role conflict and role ambiguity, quantitative and qualitative overload of employees, career limitations, and employment insecurity, are significant determinants of occupational well-being due to the work stress they create. Mediation analysis confirmed that the relationship between job demands, and professional well-being is mediated by job stress. The results of the study statistically confirmed the full mediation of the impact of quantitative and qualitative overload on the professional well-being of employees by the total stress indicator. Full mediation means the power of stress as a mediator and demonstrates its significant role in disrupting professional well-being under certain working conditions. Mediation analysis also revealed that stress partially mediates the impact of several job demands on employees' professional well-being, including role conflict and role ambiguity, career growth, and employment insecurity.

Given that employee well-being is an important condition for their productivity, our contribution to the study of this problem acquires important practical significance. The mediating effects we identified in the relationship between the studied variables and professional well-being complement the existing body of knowledge about the psychological mechanisms of forming professional well-being of employees and open new prospects for increasing its level in academic employees and effectively preventing its violations. However, despite its academic contribution, our study has some limitations. Conducting the survey online made it impossible to control the voluntariness of respondents' participation, which could have led to a formality of responses and in some way influenced the results. The prospect of further research should be to find ways to psychologically ensure the professional well-being of academic staff.

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