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RECONSTRUCTING PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT: EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION AND RESILIENCE OF UNIVERSITY LECTURERS UNDER ACADEMIC STRAIN

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Abstract : *The professional commitment of lecturers in higher education is increasingly under pressure due to publication demands, administrative burdens, and continuous performance-based evaluations. This condition triggers emotional exhaustion, not only in physical exhaustion but also in the depletion of psychological energy and a reduction in the depth of work's meaning. This research aims to understand the experience of emotional fatigue and the role of psychological well-being as a resilience mechanism in maintaining professional commitment. Using the qualitative Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation of lecturers from various universities. The results show that emotional exhaustion shifts professional involvement toward a more mechanistic, defensive stance. In contrast, psychological well-being, through self-acceptance, life goals, autonomy, personal growth, and positive relationships, can reconstruct the profession's meaning and maintain commitment. This research contributes by presenting a resilience model based on psychological well-being in an academic context. So that means universities need to develop policies that not only reduce workload but also strengthen lecturers' psychological foundations.*

Keywords : *Professional Commitment; Emotional Exhaustion; Resilience.*

Abstrak : *Komitmen profesional dosen dalam pendidikan tinggi semakin menghadapi tekanan akibat tuntutan publikasi, beban administratif, dan evaluasi berbasis kinerja yang berkelanjutan. Kondisi ini memicu kelelahan emosional yang tidak hanya berupa keletihan fisik, tetapi juga terkurasnya energi psikologis dan berkurangnya kedalaman makna kerja. Penelitian ini bertujuan memahami pengalaman kelelahan emosional serta peran kesejahteraan psikologis sebagai mekanisme resiliensi dalam mempertahankan komitmen profesional. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi terhadap dosen dari berbagai perguruan tinggi. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa kelelahan emosional menggeser keterlibatan profesional menjadi lebih mekanistik dan defensif, namun kesejahteraan psikologis melalui penerimaan diri, tujuan hidup, otonomi, pertumbuhan pribadi, dan relasi positif mampu merekonstruksi makna profesi dan menjaga komitmen. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan menghadirkan model resiliensi berbasis kesejahteraan psikologis dalam konteks akademik. Maka itu berarti perguruan tinggi perlu mengembangkan kebijakan yang tidak hanya menekan beban kerja, tetapi juga memperkuat fondasi psikologis dosen.*

Kata Kunci : *Komitmen Profesional; Kelelahan Emosional; Ketangguhan.*

INTRODUCTION

The quality and professional commitment of lecturers highly determine the quality of higher education. In practice, lecturers serve not only as teachers but also as researchers, academic advisors, scientific developers, and agents of social change, contributing to the progress of institutions and society (Mohallem et al., 2023; Winoto, 2022). The professionalism of lecturers is not measured solely by publications or quantitative performance indicators, but also by dedication, loyalty to the profession, and attachment to the academic tasks they carry out (Romi et al., 2020). However, the increasingly competitive dynamics of contemporary higher education, characterised by the demands of reputable publications, increased administrative burdens, strict accreditation standards, and performance-based evaluation systems, often place lecturers under intense, sustained work pressure (Sari & Adeoye, 2025; Kusumawati, 2025).

This reality shows that lecturers are a group of professionals who are prone to emotional exhaustion, the main dimension of burnout. Emotional fatigue is not only related to physical exhaustion but also reflects the depletion of psychological energy due to the constant demands of work without adequate recovery (Chaika, 2025; Schwartz et al., 2025). In various situations, this pressure arises when lecturers must simultaneously balance the obligations of the tridharma, publication deadlines, administrative demands, and the expectations of students and institutions (Khoiroh et al., 2025). When this condition persists, professional commitment can disintegrate, which is characterised by decreased attachment to the profession, weakened intrinsic motivation, and reduced dedication to long-term academic development (Staniscuaski et al., 2021; Syafika & Marwa, 2024).

Previous research has extensively examined the relationships among burnout and commitment, as well as between psychological well-being and performance or job satisfaction. The integration of the three variables of emotional exhaustion, Psychological Well-Being as a Source of Resilience, and professional commitment in one comprehensive conceptual framework is still relatively limited (Yang et al., 2024; Yiming et al., 2024). Studies by Li et al. (2022), Çollaku et al. (2023), and Hameli et al. (2024) confirm that emotional exhaustion tends to reduce professional and organisational commitment, while research grounded in the perspectives of Chong et al. (2023) and Ilyas et al. (2023) shows that psychological well-being strengthens engagement and positive work attitudes. In higher education contexts, Hemanthakumara (2024), Hameli et al. (2024), and Wang et al. (2022) Highlight the increasing academic pressures affecting lecturers' professional lives. However, most of these studies examine the variables in a partially linear manner, positioning psychological well-being merely as an outcome or predictor, rather than as a resilience-based protective mechanism that buffers the negative impact of emotional

exhaustion on professional commitment, leaving the integration of these three constructs within a comprehensive conceptual framework still relatively underdeveloped.

This gap becomes increasingly significant amid the ongoing transformation of higher education, where lecturers face persistent demands for publication, performance evaluation, digital adaptation, and administrative accountability. Such pressures are structural and often unavoidable, making emotional exhaustion a recurring professional risk (Velando-Soriano et al., 2020). Therefore, scholarly inquiry should move beyond identifying the negative consequences of burnout toward examining protective factors that enable lecturers to sustain their professional commitment. In this context, professional commitment should not be viewed merely as a structural outcome of organisational systems, but as the product of a dynamic interaction between external job demands and internal psychological resources (Lee et al., 2023). Psychological well-being plays a crucial role in shaping how lecturers interpret stress, construct meaning, regulate emotions, and maintain resilience, thereby helping them remain professionally engaged despite continuous institutional pressures.

From a positive psychology perspective, the individual is seen not only as someone prone to stress but also as someone with the psychological strength to live and thrive. One such resource is psychological well-being as a Source of Resilience, which includes self-acceptance, life goals, autonomy, personal growth, positive relationships with others, and mastery of the environment (Clarence et al., 2021; Pollock et al., 2020). Psychological well-being goes beyond the absence of mental disorders; it reflects the meaning of life and optimal psychological functioning (Corbeanu et al., 2023; Lei et al., 2025; Matos et al., 2022). In the context of the lecturer profession, psychological well-being can be realised in the ability to interpret work as an intellectual calling, maintain supportive academic relationships, and maintain a long-term orientation towards the development of science (P. L. Chen et al., 2021).

Based on this description, this study aims to analyse the role of psychological well-being as a resilience mechanism in strengthening lecturers' professional commitment, especially in conditions of emotional exhaustion. This research seeks to go beyond the deficit perspective that focuses on the negative impact *of burnout by placing lecturers as agents with* the psychological capacity to maintain their professional dedication. Theoretically, this study is expected to contribute to the development of an integrative model that explains the relationship between *emotional exhaustion*, *Psychological Well-Being as a Source of Resilience,* and *professional commitment*. In practice, the findings of this research are expected to serve as the basis for formulating human resource management strategies in universities that not

only reduce workload but also strengthen psychological well-being, thereby laying the foundation for the sustainability of lecturers' professional commitments.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research design with an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach to examine in depth lecturers' experiences of emotional fatigue and to interpret psychological well-being as a resilience mechanism for maintaining professional commitment (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The interpretive phenomenological approach was chosen because this study aims to capture subjective meaning, the intentionality of experience, and the psychological constructs that emerge from individuals' interactions with their professional context. Each lecturer has unique experiences in responding to work pressure, so it is important to explore how those experiences are interpreted and internalised as psychological resources. The research process focuses on transforming participants' experiences into the essence of meaning, articulated through systematic and reflective analysis.

The main data source for this research consists of lecturers from several public and private universities who meet high academic performance standards. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their relevance to the research objectives and depth of experience. Participant criteria include a minimum of 5 years of work experience, active involvement in implementing the *tridharma* of higher education, and experience managing significant work pressure. The number of informants was 15 lecturers with diverse academic positions (Expert Assistants to Head Lecturers) across the social sciences, humanities, and sciences, with varying ages and years of service. These variations are intended to enrich experiential perspectives and enable in-depth exploration of the dynamics of emotional exhaustion and strategies for maintaining professional commitment across different contexts.

Data collection was carried out through semi-structured in-depth interviews, limited observations, and documentation (Nigbur et al., 2025). Interviews were conducted in person and online, with an average duration of 60–90 minutes, using interview guidelines to ensure consistency in exploring experiences of emotional exhaustion, forms of psychological well-being, self-regulation strategies, and factors supporting the sustainability of professional commitment. Observations were carried out to capture the dynamics of professional interactions, work patterns, and the context of the academic environment as they occur naturally. Documentation complements interview and observation data, including institutional policies on workload, academic activity reports, and internal documents relevant to the lecturer's work context.

All interview data are transcribed verbatim, while observation notes and documents are systematically compiled into a single integrated data corpus. Data analysis begins with repeated reading to achieve contextual understanding and deep engagement with participants' narratives, accompanied by writing analytical memos to support the researchers' reflexivity. The data condensation and reduction stage is carried out through an open *coding* process, identifying meaningful segments related to emotional exhaustion, psychological well-being, and professional commitment. The initial codes are then reviewed and refined to ensure consistency between data sources. Next, relevant codes are grouped into conceptual categories, from which the main themes are developed by identifying repetitive patterns, differences in experience, and relationships between categories. In the final stage, the emerging themes are re-verified against the raw data to ensure analytical coherence and fidelity to the participants' experience(Nizza et al., 2021).

To ensure data validity, this study employs several strategies. Credibility is strengthened through *member checking*, in which participants review a summary of the interpretation of the interview results. Transferability is maintained by providing detailed context descriptions that enable readers to assess the applicability of the findings to other contexts. Dependability is guaranteed through systematic documentation of the research process via a trail audit that records all stages of data collection and analysis. Confirmability is achieved through the researcher's self-reflection and discussion with peers to minimise interpretive bias. To ensure ethical compliance, informed *consent is* obtained before the data collection process begins. Participants' identities are disguised with pseudonyms, and findings are presented in aggregated and selective ways to prevent indirect identification and maintain the integrity of individuals and institutions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis shows two main dynamics in the lecturer experience. First, the constant pressure of work depletes psychological energy, gradually weakening professional commitment and shifting the meaning of work to mere obligation fulfillment. Second, psychological well-being serves as a source of resilience, allowing lecturers to reconstruct the meaning of the profession and re-strengthen their commitments. These findings confirm that professional commitment is dynamic, influenced by the interaction between work pressure and internal psychological resources.

1. Disintegration of Psychological Energy in the Process of Reducing Lecturers' Professional Commitment

Emotional fatigue in lecturers' experiences is not merely physical fatigue but a draining of psychological energy that slowly alters the quality of professional

involvement. Interview data showed that the disintegration of psychological energy emerged through changes in the meaning of work, value conflicts, and shifts in commitment orientation. Here are 5 findings that strengthen this;

Table 1: Interview Data on the Disintegration of Psychological Energy

Interview Data	Description	Code
PTN Senior Lecturer*: "After all the reports were completed, it was not a relief, but empty. Like energy is depleted without meaning."*	Feeling empty after meeting administrative demands	Emotional Depletion
PTS Lecturer: *"I do not go home feeling productive, but I feel drained."*	Draining of psychological energy due to repetitive loads	Emotional Depletion
Science Lecturer: *"I keep teaching, keep researching, but it feels like an autopilot."*	Work without emotional involvement	Mechanical Engagement
Social-Humanities Lecturer: *"The important thing is that the class is walking, publication exists. Regarding enthusiasm, that is later."*	Technical orientation without affective depth	Mechanical Engagement
Expert Assistant Lecturer: *"I used to feel that teaching was a calling; now it is more because of the BKD target."*	Shift from a call to value to administrative obligations	Value Shift
Head Lecturer: *"Now everything is measured by numbers. Sometimes I forget why I chose this profession in the first place."*	Reduction of the meaning of the profession to quantitative indicators	Value Shift
PTN lecturer: *"Ideally, I would like to guide students more intensely, but time is running out for reports."*	The conflict between idealism and bureaucratic demands	Value Conflict
PTS lecturer: *"I want to research seriously, but the administration is more urgent."*	The tension between academic grades and the reality of the system	Value Conflict
Senior Lecturer: *"I still love this profession, but honestly, I am tired of the system."*	Alienation from the institutional system	Professional Alienation
Associate Lecturer: *"Sometimes I feel unfamiliar with the rhythm of campus work now."*	Dissonance between professional identity and work context	Professional Alienation

Based on the data in Table 1, the disintegration of psychological energy consists of the following five forms of experience;

First, emotional depletion. Data collected from several informants showed that lecturers experienced a condition of emotional emptiness after completing various work demands. The sense of "empty" and "drained" expressed by the participants reflected the loss of the psychological vitality that had previously been an intrinsic source of motivation. From a phenomenological perspective, this experience is not merely physical

exhaustion but a loss of existential energy. Repetitive administrative routines now consume energy that once went into intellectual exploration.

Second, Mechanical Engagement. Research shows a change in the quality of professional engagement. Participants continued to carry out *tridharma* tasks, but in a more mechanistic pattern. The term "autopilot" indicates a disconnect between action and personal meaning. Interpretively, professional commitment is not structurally lost; rather, it loses affective depth. Professionalism shifted from *value-based* engagement to *obligation-based* compliance.

Third, Value Shift. The data shows a shift in orientation from academic calls to performative targets. Indicators such as BKD, indexed publications, and accreditation are the main references in determining work priorities. This shift shows that the structure of the meaning of the profession has been reduced (shifted). The profession of lecturing, which was previously understood as a space for intellectual service, has become an arena for achieving numbers and administrative evaluation.

Fourth, Value Conflict. The large volume of data produced indicates an internal conflict between academic idealism and bureaucratic demands. Participants are aware of the professional values they want to realise, but the realities of the work system limit their actualisation. This tension creates a fragmentation of professional identities. Lecturers feel divided between the ideal self and the administrative self, which slowly erodes the quality of commitment.

Fifth, Professional Alienation. Some participants stated that they still love their profession, but feel alienated from the institutional system in which they live. This alienation shows that the source of fatigue lies not in the profession itself but in the work structure that frames it. In the IPA, this experience of alienation reflects the dissonance between professional identity and the organisation's context. Commitment is not completely lost, but becomes fragile and defensive.

These five forms of experience are intertwined and form a gradual process that erodes the quality of professional commitment. Emotional exhaustion does not directly remove commitment, because the lecturer continues to fulfil his academic obligations, but shifts it from meaningful involvement to a more mechanistic, defensive engagement. Thus, the commitment remains formal but experiences a decrease in affective depth and integration with professional identity.

2. Strengthening Commitment through Psychological Well-Being as a Source of Resilience

Although some participants experienced psychological energy disintegration, the study found that many lecturers maintained, and even strengthened, their professional commitments. Interpretive analysis indicates that psychological well-being serves as an

internal resilience, enabling lecturers to reconstruct the meaning of work amid structural pressure. Research data show that strengthening commitment through psychological well-being is manifested in five main forms of experience.

Table 2: Interview Data on Strengthening Commitment through Psychological Well-Being

Interview Data	Description	Code
Head Lecturer: *"I am tired, yes. However, I always remember, this is a profession that I consciously chose."*	Self-acceptance of the reality of the profession	*Self-acceptance*
PTN lecturer: *"I cannot control the system, but I can control my response."*	Reflective awareness and self-regulation	*Self-acceptance*
Science Lecturer: *"Teaching is still a calling for me. Pressure is part of the process."*	The meaning of work as a life goal	Purpose in Life
Social-Humanities Lecturer: *"If I stop caring, students will lose. That is what keeps me going."*	An orientation of meaning that transcends the self	Purpose in Life
Expert Assistant Lecturer: *"I set my own work rhythm so that I do not run out of energy."*	Ability to manage psychological boundaries	Autonomy
Associate Lecturer: *"I learned to say no to additional tasks that were not a priority."*	Independent decision-making	Autonomy
Senior Lecturer: *"Stress made me learn to be wiser in managing time."*	Personal growth through difficult experiences	Personal Growth
PTS lecturer: *"I used to be easily stressed; now I am more reflective and mature."*	Transforming experience into maturity	Personal Growth
PTN lecturer: *"Discussions with colleagues are often a place for me to recover my energy."*	Positive relationships as a source of support	Positive Relations
PTS lecturer: *"Successful students are like new energy to me."*	Meaningful interaction strengthens commitment	Positive Relations

Based on the data in Table 2, strengthening commitment through psychological well-being consists of the following five forms of experience:

First, Self-acceptance. Data show that lecturers who accept the reality of their profession in its entirety, including its pressures and limitations, are more committed and stable. Self-acceptance allows the individual to avoid getting caught up in emotional resistance to the system. From a scientific perspective, *self-acceptance* serves as the foundation of resilience. By accepting that pressure is an important part of the profession, lecturers can maintain the integrity of their professional identity.

Second, Purpose in Life. Research shows that the profession's meaning as both an intellectual vocation and a broader social contribution is a protective factor against the erosion of commitment. Participants with a strong life-purpose orientation tend to

interpret stress as a logical consequence of their strategic role. Phenomenologically, the transcendent meaning of work goes beyond administrative importance and becomes a psychological anchor in situations of exhaustion.

Third, Autonomy. The results of the study show that the ability to set psychological boundaries and regulate work rhythm is an important strategy in maintaining professional energy. Autonomy allows lecturers to feel a sense of control over their work, even within a strict system. The experience of having personal control over work decisions reinforces a sense of competence and empowerment, which, in turn, underpins professional commitment.

Fourth, Personal Growth. Work pressure is not always interpreted as a threat. Some of the participants reflected on the difficult experience as a process of professional maturation. They describe themselves as more reflective, wiser, and more mature in their responses to academic dynamics. In the analysis of IPA, this experience reveals a transformation in meaning: stress is no longer seen as a destructive burden but rather as a space for psychological growth.

Fifth, Positive Relations. Positive relationships with colleagues and students emerge as a significant source of emotional energy. Social support, intellectual discussion, and student success provide affective reinforcement of lecturers' professional identity. Interpretively, meaningful interpersonal relationships strengthen attachment to the profession and restore drained psychological energy.

The five dimensions mentioned above form an internal resilience mechanism that allows lecturers to maintain and deepen their professional commitments. Psychological well-being does not eliminate emotional fatigue, but changes the quality of its impact. Thus, professional commitment in this context is not the absence of pressure, but rather the result of a dynamic interaction between external burdens and internal psychological resources.

The findings of this study reveal two main, interrelated dynamics in lecturers' professional experience. First, emotional fatigue is not only physical exhaustion but also a process of erosion of psychological energy that gradually changes the quality of engagement and weakens the depth of professional commitment. This process manifests as emotional depletion, mechanical engagement, value shift, value conflict, and professional alienation. Second, in the midst of these pressures, psychological well-being emerges as a resilience mechanism that enables lecturers to reconstruct the meaning of work and maintain, and even strengthen, their professional commitments. The dimensions of self-acceptance, purpose in life, autonomy, personal growth, and positive relationships serve as internal psychological resources that mitigate the negative impact of emotional fatigue.

The findings confirm that lecturers' professional commitment is dynamic and shaped by the interaction between external pressures and internal psychological capacity. From the perspective of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the emotional fatigue experienced by lecturers reflects disturbances in existential vitality (Ismail et al., 2023; Rajasinghe et al., 2024). When participants describe their work as "autopilot" or feeling "empty" after meeting administrative demands, the experience suggests a disconnect between professional action and personal meaning. Commitment is not completely lost, but it is reduced in affective depth and becomes more formal and defensive (Durodolu et al., 2024; Parmar et al., 2022).

However, the study also found that lecturers with higher levels of psychological well-being interpreted work pressure differently. Stress is not merely a destructive burden but rather part of a professional journey(Kaluza et al., 2020; Sczepanik et al., 2020). Self-acceptance helps reduce emotional resistance to the system; purpose in life sustains a sense of meaning that goes beyond administrative demands; autonomy restores a sense of control; personal growth turns stress into a space for learning; and positive relationships replenish emotional energy through social support(I. Chen, 2024; Huang et al., 2020; Stryftoy et al., 2024). Thus, psychological well-being transforms the impact of emotional exhaustion from one of erosion to one of reconstructing meaning.

These findings also align with the burnout literature, which views emotional fatigue as a major dimension that affects professional commitment (Chaika, 2025; Hu et al., 2024). However, this study goes beyond the deficit approach by placing psychological well-being as a protective mechanism. The results of the study are also consistent with Ryan (2021) and Shi et al. (2025) Who said that Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emphasises the importance of basic psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, and social connectedness, in maintaining intrinsic motivation? The dimensions of autonomy and positive relations in this study reflect these needs, which have been proven to support the sustainability of commitments despite work pressure. In addition, these findings expand Ryff's model of psychological well-being by showing that its dimensions are not merely indicators of mental health but also actively function as a professional resilience mechanism (Babnik et al., 2022; Blasco-Belled, 2022; Rehman et al., 2020). The study also challenges linear assumptions in stress models that assume emotional fatigue automatically reduces commitment. Instead, the relationship is conditional and mediated by the quality of the individual's psychological resources.

The main novelty of this research lies in the integration of three variables of emotional exhaustion, Psychological Well-Being as a Source of Resilience, and professional commitment in one comprehensive phenomenological framework. While previous studies have tended to examine the relationship between variables both qualitatively and quantitatively, this study uncovers internal psychological processes that explain how

commitments can be degraded and reconstructed. In addition, this study positions psychological well-being not as a result, but rather as a dynamic mechanism that shapes an individual's response to work pressure. This perspective makes a conceptual contribution to the development of professional resilience models in higher education settings (Orynbayeva et al., 2024; Viñoles-Cosentino et al., 2022). In practice, this study's results show that strengthening lecturer commitment is insufficient to reduce administrative workload. Higher education institutions need to develop policies that strengthen psychological well-being, such as leadership that supports autonomy, a space for professional reflection, a mentoring system, and the strengthening of a collaborative academic community (Záhorec et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2025). Human resource management in higher education needs to place psychological well-being as the foundation for the sustainability of professional commitment. Thus, commitment is not only supported by structural regulation but also by the psychological integrity of the individual.

In the global context of higher education characterised by managerialism, publication competition, and performance-based evaluation, this study offers an alternative perspective: that the sustainability of academic commitment requires strengthening internal psychological resources. The resilience model based on psychological well-being can serve as a reference for universities in various countries in designing lecturer development policies oriented towards long-term sustainability. Thus, the contribution of this research is not only relevant to the local context but also enriches the global discourse regarding the sustainability of the academic profession and the balance between performance demands and psychological health.

This research certainly has some limitations. *First*, a qualitative approach with a limited number of participants limits the generalisation of the findings. *Second*, this study focuses on specific contexts, so possible variations in experience across other higher education systems have not been fully accommodated. *Third*, this study has not quantitatively tested the power of mediation or psychological well-being as moderators in the relationship between emotional fatigue and professional commitment. Further research is recommended, using mixed- or longitudinal-designs, to empirically test resilience models in a broader population and across cultures. Thus, this study confirms that the professional commitment of lecturers is not only determined by the level of work pressure but also by the individual's ability to interpret and manage these experiences through psychological well-being, serving as a resilience mechanism.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that lecturers' professional commitment is dynamic and shaped by the interaction between academic pressure and internal psychological resources.

Emotional fatigue is not only interpreted as physical fatigue, but as a process of disintegration of psychological energy that gives rise to emotional depletion, mechanical engagement, value shift, value conflict, and professional alienation, so that commitment remains formal but experiences a reduction in affective depth. On the other hand, psychological well-being has been shown to function as a resilience mechanism, enabling lecturers to reconstruct the meaning of work through self-acceptance, a sense of purpose in life, autonomy, personal growth, and positive relationships. Thus, professional commitment is not determined by the absence of pressure, but by the individual's ability to interpret and manage that pressure constructively.

The main contribution of this research lies in integrating three emotional exhaustion variables, Psychological Well-Being as a Source of Resilience, and professional commitment into a comprehensive phenomenological framework, thereby going beyond the dominant deficit and linear approaches. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of burnout and psychological well-being by placing well-being not just as a condition of outcomes, but as an active mechanism that shapes the sustainability of professional commitment. In practical terms, these findings have strategic implications for universities, not only to reduce administrative burdens but also to build policies that support autonomy, space for reflection, collegial support, and the strengthening of the meaning of work as the foundation for the sustainability of the academic profession.

Further research is recommended to test the proposed resilience model quantitatively, using a mixed or longitudinal design, to empirically examine the role of psychological well-being in mediating or moderating the relationship between emotional burnout and professional commitment. Cross-institutional and cross-cultural studies are also important for understanding variation in lecturers' experiences across different higher education systems. In addition, developing this measurement instrument based on phenomenological findings can strengthen the validity of conceptual models and expand the contribution of research to the global discourse on the sustainability of the academic profession.

The main message of this study is that the severity of work demands does not solely determine lecturers' professional commitment, but rather individuals' psychological capacity to maintain a sense of meaning, autonomy, and meaningful relationships amid academic pressure. Emotional exhaustion can indeed erode energy and idealism, but it does not automatically destroy commitment when individuals have strong psychological well-being. Therefore, the sustainability of the academic profession requires serious attention to the psychological foundation of lecturers, because it is there that resilience, dedication, and professional integrity are truly maintained.

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