

Resilience in the veterinary profession

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Introduction

Resilience is an essential veterinary graduate attribute, and crucial to longevity and career satisfaction in veterinary practice. Despite this, the factors contributing to veterinarian resilience are currently ill-defined with the majority of research focusing on stress and burnout. Increasing attention is being paid to fostering resilience in the veterinary profession, and this must be underpinned by a thorough understanding of the personal and contextual factors that influence resilience, as well as an understanding of the resilience process.

Methodology

This poster presents the results of a literature review of studies published on veterinary mental health from 1995 to present (n=59). Qualitative analysis software (NVivo 10.2.2, QSR International) was used to code text within included papers, and to interrogate the literature by text search for resilience factors. After reviewing search results to ensure the word appeared in the correct context, the number of papers mentioning each term as a resilience factor was calculated. In order to better understand these factors, we used the four key groupings identified in a recent conceptualization of teacher resilience,¹ those being personal resources, contextual resources, strategies, and outcomes.

Results

The diagram below shows an overview of resilience factors mentioned in the veterinary mental health literature (number of papers in parentheses).

Key Points

Resilience is a dynamic and multifaceted **process** in which individuals demonstrate the **capacity** to draw on personal and contextual resources, and utilise specific strategies in order to navigate challenges and work towards adaptive **outcomes**.¹ Resilience is thus a capacity, a process, and an outcome.

Themes important in veterinary resilience are: emotional competence, motivation, personal resources, social support, organisational culture, life balance, and wellbeing strategies.

Personal resources (53)

- Emotional competence (27)
- Motivation (19)
- Sense of meaning, purpose (13)
- Autonomy (11)
- Optimism (11)
- Confidence (10)
- Flexibility, adaptability (9)
- Assertiveness (8)
- Proactivity (8)
- Self-awareness (6)
- Self-efficacy (6)
- Perspective (6)
- Initiative (5)
- Persistence (4)
- Hope (3)
- Positive attitude (2)
- Self-compassion (1)

Strategies (50)

- Life balance (30)
- Professional development (18)
- Counselling, therapy (16)
- Time management (15)
- Problem-solving (12)
- Exercise (12)
- Meditation (12)
- Reflective practice (12)
- Coaching (8)
- Sleep (8)
- Diet, nutrition (7)
- Mindfulness (7)
- Hobbies, volunteering (7)
- Spirituality, religion (6)
- Help-seeking (6)
- Gratitude (4)
- Prioritization, organisation (4)
- Humour (4)
- Positive psychology (3)
- Setting boundaries (2)
- Goal-setting (2)

Contextual resources (55)

- Relationships (43)
- Colleagues (32)
- Family support (28)
- Social support (26)
- Mentors (19)
- Feedback (15)
- Support networks (14)
- Peer support (12)
- Decision latitude (12)
- Culture (11)
- Skills discretion (10)

Outcomes (51)

- Wellbeing (45)
- Job satisfaction (23)
- Enjoyment (17)
- Self-esteem (14)
- Engagement (12)
- Fulfillment (10)
- Life satisfaction (7)
- Happiness (3)
- Thriving (3)
- Flourishing (2)
- Compassion satisfaction (2)
- Eudaimonia (1)



References

1. Mansfield C.F., Beltman S., Broadley T., Weatherby-Fell N. (2016) Building resilience in teacher education: An evidence informed framework. Teaching and Teacher Education, vol. 54, pp. 77-87.