

When Mind Meets Mission: Teachers Resilience, Motivation, and Wellbeing as Predictors of Professional Functioning During Crisis

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ABSTRACT

The ongoing military conflicts in Israel have significantly disrupted the education system, creating substantial challenges for students and teachers by interrupting their learning, and emotional and social routines. Beyond logistical implications, there is an urgent need to understand the personal and psychological factors that help teachers maintain their functioning at such a time. The present study examines the impact of personal resilience, self-efficacy, motivation, and mental wellbeing on the professional functioning of teachers at the forefront of the education system during times of crisis. Data were gathered through validated questionnaires. The findings indicate strong positive associations between personal resilience, self-efficacy, motivation and mental wellbeing, and high functioning. Additionally, teachers who worked in in-person or blended (in-person + remote) teaching settings reported higher levels of psychological resources compared to their colleagues in only remote/online settings. This study contributes to understanding the personal aspects that affect teachers' coping with war or other crisis situations.

Keywords

Professional functioning, Self-efficacy, Motivation, Mental wellbeing, Teachers, War, and crisis situations.

Introduction

Education systems are a cornerstone of social stability during routine times and times of crisis. Teachers, at its forefront, have a notably essential role during national crisis situations such as pandemics, natural disasters, and war. Teachers are required not only to ensure continued learning but also to serve as supporting and stabilizing figures for their students, who experience uncertainty, anxiety, and occasionally actual trauma.

Research in the last decade has indicated that psychological factors such as personal resilience, a sense of self-efficacy, motivation and mental wellbeing have a central role in determining the quality of teachers' functioning under changing and challenging conditions.

Personal resilience is an individual's ability to cope with and grow from adversity [1]. Studies show that teachers with high resilience are better at coping with stressful situations [2]. Mental wellbeing describes a person's sense of satisfaction, meaning, and belonging,

and is considered an important emotional basis for coping with challenges [3]. In the absence of mental wellbeing, teachers may develop symptoms of burnout, depression, or anxiety, phenomena that harm both their functioning and the emotional climate of the classroom [4,5]. According to Bandura [6], self-efficacy describes one's person's belief in their ability to succeed at tasks and predicts achievements and persistence [7]. Similarly, intrinsic motivation drives a person from a sense of mission, while extrinsic motivation is influenced by factors of reward and support [8].

This study examines the effect of personal resilience, self-efficacy, motivation, and mental wellbeing on teachers' level of professional functioning in times of crisis or war. Examining these associations could provide new insights regarding teachers' fortitude, and serve as a basis for formulating a support and training policy adapted for wartime and emergency situations.

Teachers' Personal Resilience During Wartime

The 'Iron Swords' war in Israel is a sudden and traumatic event with multiple losses [9,10]. People across the country have experienced life-threatening danger, both personally and concerning family members who were harmed or kidnapped. As a result of the war,

life has been disrupted, and feelings of insecurity and danger, anxiety, depression, grief, and uncertainty are now taking over all aspects of life [10].

The education system is no exception. It is also experiencing shock and a different, traumatic reorganization due to events that have seriously disrupted the education system. This reality has created a complex situation within the system on various levels: structural, functional, and behavioral [11]. Consequently, it reveals various challenges and problems in pedagogy, education, technological tools, human resources, and physical infrastructure [12]. Teachers note that the transition to remote learning has presented many difficulties. They face a complex conflict between their personal difficulties and those of their students, and the need to stabilize them. These difficulties overshadowed the teachers' resilience [10].

Resilience is generally understood as the ability to recover from setbacks and positively adapt to challenging circumstances. Personal resilience allows an individual to face adversity and adapt to changing events and demands when confronted with problems and stressful situations [12]. Personal resilience has three components: the individual's internal strengths and the support they receive from society and the community, the individual's character and skills, and the individual's social skills and self-regulation [14]. In the education system, teachers' resilience refers to their ability to successfully cope with pressures inherent in educational work, especially during pandemics, wars, or natural disasters, while maintaining their mental health and quality pedagogic functioning [15]. Beltman and colleagues [15] also reported that social support, a positive attitude, and a sense of significance in their work served as psychological resources that strengthened teachers.

Research conducted during the COVID pandemic [16] found that teachers with high personal resilience adapted better to remote teaching, demonstrated less symptoms of depression and burnout, and maintained a high degree of emotional engagement in their work.

Recent studies in Israel found that teachers who reported high levels of resilience succeeded in maintaining a good level of professional function despite conditions of uncertainty, emotional overload, and a changing work environment [17]. The researchers emphasized that protective factors such as a sense of mission, institutional support, and community backing aided teachers' resilience and pedagogical effectiveness in the field. At the same time, teachers with low resilience tended to develop feelings of anxiety, frustration, and hopelessness, which harmed their ability to maintain a healthy relationship with their students and perform emotional mediation [18].

Teachers' Self-Efficacy During Wartime

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to organize and execute the actions required to achieve specific goals, even under challenging conditions [6]. Among teachers, a high sense of self-efficacy is linked to the ability to cope with the demands of teaching, manage a classroom effectively, develop a sense of

professional control, and influence student achievement [19,20].

During crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic or periods of war teachers' self-efficacy is tested under difficult conditions. Teachers with a high sense of self-efficacy are able to initiate solutions, adapt their teaching to a changing environment (for example, remote teaching), and maintain the quality of their work despite the difficulties. They tend to view challenges as opportunities for growth and professional development rather than as threats, which directly impacts their professional functioning [21].

Empiric findings indicate that self-efficacy serves as a protective shield for teachers against burnout, pressure, and emotional harm [22]. For example, studies conducted during the COVID pandemic found that teachers who reported a high sense of self-efficacy managed to sustain relationships with their students, adapt to remote teaching, and maintain a sense of mission in their work despite conditions of uncertainty [16,23].

There are six elements of the education world that can affect teachers' self-efficacy. The first is teachers' knowledge and training on various disabilities, teaching strategies, and accommodations, because training programs that focus on practical and context-specific strategies are particularly effective. The second is experience and exposure; namely, experienced teachers or those who had worked with diverse learners in the past tend to have higher levels of self-efficacy. Experience helps teachers develop the necessary skills and confidence to manage inclusive classrooms [24]. Teacher characteristics, such as years of experience, can influence their sense of self-efficacy [23]. The third element is the availability of peer and institutional support. Collaborative environments and access to resources like teaching assistants or specialists improve teachers' confidence in implementing inclusive practices. The fourth element is student characteristics. Teachers' self-efficacy can also be influenced by the specific needs of the students in their classrooms. For instance, teachers who have students with severe or complex disabilities might report lower self-efficacy. The fifth element is teachers' beliefs about inclusion and the potential of students with disabilities, which can influence their self-efficacy. Teachers who hold positive attitudes toward inclusion are more likely to feel confident in their ability to create an inclusive environment. The sixth is a positive school climate including supportive leadership, sufficient resources, and commitment to inclusion, which are essential to boosting teachers' self-efficacy [24]. At the school level, factors such as the size, location, and overall environment of the school play a significant role in shaping a teacher's sense of self-efficacy [23].

Recent studies in Israel found that, even during wartime, a higher level of self-efficacy helped teachers continue their teaching routines, develop creative solutions for conducting remote learning or classrooms in bomb shelters, and cope with both personal and collective concerns [17].

Teachers' Internal and External Motivation During Wartime

Motivation is defined as an internal or external process that

produces, directs, and sustains goal-oriented behavior [25]. In the context of teaching, both internal and external motivation have a significant impact on functioning quality, professional commitment, persistence, and job satisfaction. According to the self-determination theory, internal motivation stems from an internal desire for learning, curiosity, a sense of purpose, and personal satisfaction, whereas external motivation is based on external rewards such as salary, status, or other forms of recognition [26].

The war presented unique challenges for teachers, who were required to continue in their professional roles while dealing with a complex and changing reality. The motivation of educators during this period was influenced by a variety of internal and external factors that shaped their response to the emergency situation [27].

Teachers with high internal motivation act out of a sense of mission, interest in teaching, a desire to contribute to their students, and professional development. They tend to show high levels of creativity, flexibility, personal investment, and care for their students, even during times of crisis [28]. In contrast, while external motivation can contribute to short-term drive, it does not sustain the same level of commitment or adaptability to stressful situations over time and is sometimes accompanied by burnout and a loss of meaning.

For example, König et al. [29] found that, during the COVID pandemic, internal motivation was a central factor in sustaining teachers' commitment to the learning process, especially in situations of remote learning, emotional overload, and systemic uncertainty. Teachers who reported high internal motivation managed to create innovative teaching methods, adapt quickly, and continue to uphold significant educational relationships with their students.

A recent study in Israel concerning the current war [17] found that teachers with internal motivation sustained higher professional stability, employed educational initiatives even under harsh conditions, and were willing to volunteer for tasks beyond formal requirements. On the other hand, teachers who were driven by external motivation tended to have feelings of burnout and a loss of meaning.

However, not all teachers experienced the same high level of internal motivation. Some dealt with high anxiety, uncertainty, and a lack of motivation due to the security situation and personal complexities. Personal and family difficulties, such as being evacuated from their homes or worrying about family members, made it difficult for some teachers to maintain a high level of motivation. Additionally, the feeling of displacement from home and their familiar workplace, along with loneliness in new workplaces, contributed to a decrease in motivation for some of the evacuated teachers [27].

Teachers' Mental Wellbeing During Wartime

Mental wellbeing among educators is described as a state of

emotional stability, a sense of meaning from work, satisfaction, and the ability to cope with changing professional demands. It is not a lack of stress, but includes optimal functioning on personal, social, and professional levels [30]. Mental wellbeing is basically individuals' subjective evaluation of their mental health, and how they perceive and experience the overall quality of their life as positive and desired, including cognitive reasoning and emotional reactions [30,31]. The perception of mental wellbeing is affected by one's personality and life conditions. Accordingly, social demographics influence one's overall psychological wellbeing. Thus, psychological wellbeing is higher among people who live in cities, work, are educated, and are married. In this context, the extent to which an individual feels social support is of great importance [32].

During periods of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or a war, teachers' psychological wellbeing is challenged and at times weakened due to the need to adapt to sudden changes, loss of routine, and increased professional and emotional demands. A recent study conducted in Israel [17] shows that in wartime many teachers experience high emotional stress, persistent anxiety, and a sense of professional loneliness. However, the study found that high levels of psychological wellbeing helped teachers maintain suitable professional functioning, mobilize internal resources, and serve as a stable source for their students even under conditions of uncertainty and security isolation. In addition, a connection was found between teachers' psychological wellbeing and their persistence in the teaching profession. Studies indicated that teachers with high psychological wellbeing are more likely to remain in the system long-term, exercise independent pedagogical judgment, and demonstrate flexibility and creativity in times of crisis [33].

Teachers' Professional Functioning During Wartime

Teachers' professional functioning is defined as an amalgamation of behaviors, skills, and abilities that they utilize to optimally fulfill their educational role, including planning and delivering lessons, managing a classroom, promoting learning, emotional mediation, and forging interpersonal relationships [34]. However, during periods of crisis (such as pandemics or wars) the contexts change dramatically, and challenge teachers' ability to function under non-optimal conditions. Remote learning, for example, requires technological expertise, the ability to organize pedagogic processes on-screen, maintain students' engagement, and manage a virtual classroom outside the familiar environment. Studies have shown that during the COVID-19 period, many teachers reported a decrease in their professional effectivity, difficulty sustaining a meaningful dialog with students, and frustration with their unpreparedness for teaching in an online environment [35].

A disrupted routine forces teachers to cope with closed schools, unexpected intermissions, work under restricted physical conditions, and personal fears for their own family. In these circumstances, teachers are expected to be flexible, to adapt quickly, and to find creative ways to continue teaching and sustain a relationship with their students. High professional functioning

during crises includes independent decision making, managing changing tasks, and maintaining balance between pedagogic duties and the students' emotional needs.

Emotional mediation is another critical aspect of professional functioning during stressful times. A teacher's role is not just to deliver knowledge, but to serve as an anchor for students, especially during periods of insecurity, fear, or trauma. Studies have found that teachers with high sensitivity, empathy, and emotional awareness are successful at regulating their own emotional responses, providing emotional support to students, and creating a safe space for learning. These abilities contribute to high professional functioning and job satisfaction, even under shifting conditions [17,36].

Furthermore, changing contexts require teachers to manage interactions with parents, adapt to dynamic systemic guidelines, and sometimes even lead pedagogical and emotional initiatives independently. Successful professional functioning in these circumstances is directly related to personal characteristics such as psychological resilience, self-efficacy, internal motivation, and emotional wellbeing, which were discussed in the previous sections [17].

Hypotheses

1. A positive relationship will be found between teachers' personal resilience and functioning in times of crisis and war, such that the higher the level of resilience – the higher the functioning.
2. A positive relationship will be found between teachers' self-efficacy and functioning in times of crisis and war, such that the higher the sense of self-efficacy – the higher the functioning.
3. A positive relationship will be found between teachers' motivation and functioning in times of crisis and war, such that the higher the level of motivation – the higher the functioning.
4. A positive relationship will be found between teachers' level of wellbeing and their functioning in times of crisis and war, such that the higher the sense of wellbeing – the higher the functioning.
5. Teachers' levels of mental wellbeing, self-efficacy and motivation significantly predict their functioning in times of crisis and war.

Method

Sample

The sample included 373 teachers from schools in Israel who participated in a study conducted during the Iron Swords' war. This is a fairly diverse sample that allows for a reliable examination. The data were collected anonymously, while adhering to research ethics, and was analyzed using standard quantitative tools.

Tools

The research questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part included demographic background questions, and the second part was the research questionnaire itself. The questionnaire included statements related to teachers' level of personal resilience, self-

efficacy, motivation, psychological wellbeing, and professional functioning. The questionnaire included closed-ended self-report items, and responses were given on a 5-point Likert scale (1=*Not true at all*, 5=*Very true*). The internal consistency of all the variable questions was high.

The personal resilience items were based on the questionnaire developed by Wagnild [37], Cronbach's $\alpha=0.859$. The self-efficacy items were taken from Bandura (1997), Cronbach's $\alpha= 0.847$. The motivation items were adapted from Deci and Ryan [26], Cronbach's $\alpha= 0.873$. The mental wellbeing items were measured with Keyes' [38] Mental Health Continuum, Cronbach's $\alpha=0.883$. The professional functioning items were adapted from Goleman [39], Cronbach's $\alpha=0.787$.

Procedure

Data were gathered by means of a structured online questionnaire developed on the Google Forms platform. The link to the questionnaire was distributed to teachers via various professional groups and social media (WhatsApp, Facebook), institutional e-mails, and personal contacts among teachers. Participation was anonymous, voluntary, and not compensated, and it was made clear that the information would be used only for research purposes. The participants were asked to sign a consent form. Filling out the questionnaire took about 10-15 minutes. This procedure enabled wider access to teachers working in diverse sectors, areas, and type of school (primary, post-primary, special education, etc.), while preserving the ethical standards of confidentiality and non-maleficence.

Findings

The findings section is divided into two parts. The first part presents the participants' demographic data (Table 1) and the research variables' correlations (Table 2). The second part describes the findings of the main statistical analysis tools that were employed to examine the hypotheses, as well as other findings that had not been hypothesized.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the participants' demographic data (N=373).

		Mean (SD)
Age*		42.02 (8.38)
Frequency		
Gender	Male	66 (17.7%)
	Female	307 (82.3%)
Seniority (professional experience)	Up to 5 years	62 (16.6%)
	6-10 years	57 (15.3%)
	11-20 years	128 (34.3%)
	Over 20 years	126 (33.8%)
Employment	Full-time	280 (75.1%)
	Part-time	93 (24.9%)
Work setting	In-person	339 (90.9%)
	Remote	7 (1.9%)
	Blended (In-person + Remote)	27 (7.2%)

* The age range of the participants was between 21 and 68.

Pearson correlations analysis found significant and positive relationships between all four of the psychological variables and the teachers' professional functioning.

Hypotheses

The *first hypothesis* posited that a positive relationship would be found between the respondents' level of psychological resilience and their professional functioning during the war. To examine this relationship, we employed Pearson's correlations, and found a significant, positive, and strong relationship ($R_{(371)}=.52, p<.001$) between the variables. The higher the teachers' resilience was, their professional functioning was higher, and vice versa. The first hypothesis was substantiated. The relationship is presented in Figure 1.

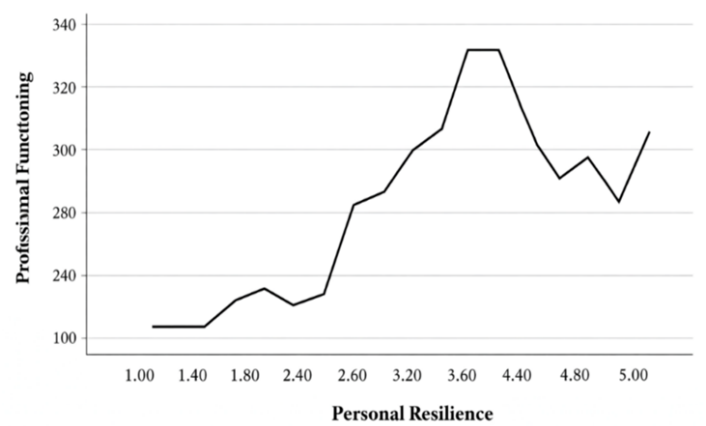


Figure 1: Correlation between resilience and professional functioning.

The *second hypothesis* predicted that a positive relationship would be found between the respondents' level of self-efficacy and their professional functioning. Person's correlation analysis found a significant, positive, strong, and significant relationship between the variables ($R_{(371)}=.57, p<.001$). The higher the teachers' resilience was, so was their professional functioning, and vice versa. The second hypothesis was upheld. The relationship is depicted in Figure 2.

The *third hypothesis* posited that a positive relationship would be found between the participants' level of motivation and their professional functioning during the war. Pearson's correlations analysis revealed a significant, positive, and strong relationship between the variables ($R_{(371)}=.71, p<.001$). The higher the teachers' motivation was, so was their professional functioning, and the other way around. The third hypothesis was corroborated. The

Table 2: Correlations between research variables (N=373).

	M	SD	Resilience	Self-efficacy	Motivation	Wellbeing	Functioning
Resilience	3.90	.70					
Self-efficacy	4.17	.67	.63***				
Motivation	4.10	.65	.60***	.76***			
Mental wellbeing	4.14	.63	.50***	.56***	.66***		
Professional functioning	3.80	.67	.52***	.57***	.71***	.60***	

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

relationship is illustrated in Figure 3.

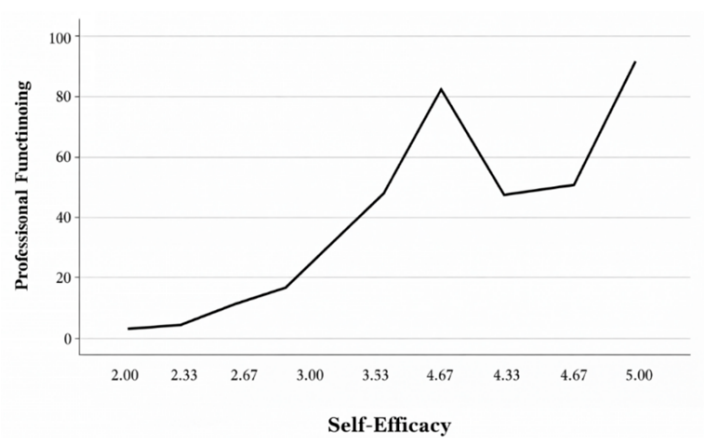


Figure 2: Correlation between self-efficacy and professional functioning.

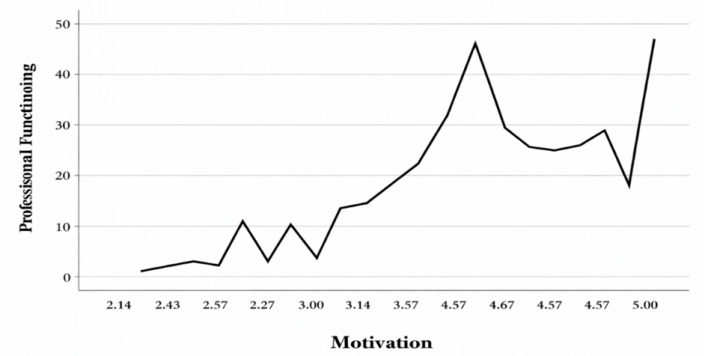


Figure 3: Correlation between motivation and professional functioning.

The *fourth hypothesis* predicted that a positive relationship would be found between the respondents' mental wellbeing and their professional functioning during wartime. Pearson's correlations analysis found a significant, positive and strong relationship between the variables ($R_{(371)}=.60, p<.001$). The higher the lecturers' mental wellbeing was, the higher their professional functioning was, and vice versa. The fourth hypothesis was supported. The association is shown in Figure 4.

The *fifth hypothesis* posited that the levels of mental wellbeing, self-efficacy and motivation would significantly predict the respondents' professional functioning. To examine this hypothesis, multiple linear regression analysis was performed. The prediction model was found to be significant ($F_{(3,369)}=139.39, p<.001$). The model explained 53% of the variance in the respondents' level of

professional functioning ($R^2=0.53$).

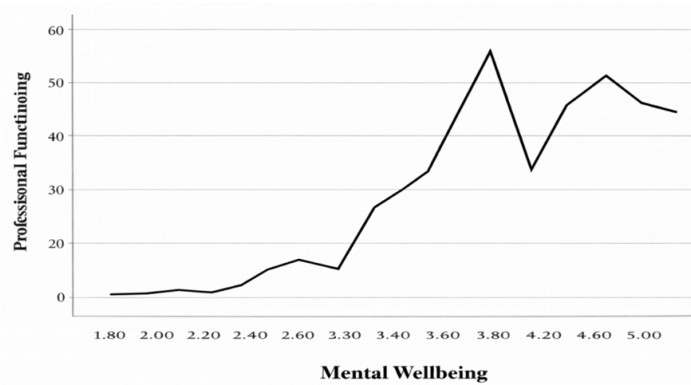


Figure 4: Correlation between wellbeing and professional functioning.

Examining the individual contribution of each variable (mental wellbeing, self-efficacy and motivation) to predicting professional functioning, we found that teachers' mental wellbeing ($\beta=.23$, $t=4.71$, $p<.001$) and motivation ($\beta=.54$, $t=8.95$, $p<.001$) significantly predicted their professional functioning, whereas self-efficacy ($\beta=.03$, $t=0.49$, $p=.62$) did not significantly predict their professional functioning. The most significant predictor was motivation. The fifth hypothesis was upheld. Table 3 presents the results of the linear regression (dependent variable: professional functioning).

Table 3: Multiple linear regression analysis (N=373).

	B	S.E.	β	t	p
Mental wellbeing	.24	.05	.23	4.71***	<.001
Self-efficacy	.03	.06	.03	.49	.622
Motivation	.56	.06	.54	8.95**	<.001

* $p<.05$ ** $p<.01$ *** $p<.001$.

To examine the relationship between job type and the research variables: personal resilience, professional functioning, self-efficacy, motivation, and psychological wellbeing, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted using Hotelling's Trace criterion. The overall multivariate model was found to be statistically significant (*Hotelling's Trace* = .06, $F_{(5,367)} = 4.63$, $p < .001$). Significant relationships were found between job type (full-time/part-time) and all research variables, with the exception of psychological wellbeing: personal resilience ($F_{(1,371)} = 8.99$, $p < .01$, *Partial η^2* = .02), self-efficacy ($F_{(1,371)} = 18.56$, $p < .001$, *Partial η^2* = .05), motivation ($F_{(1,371)} = 11.99$, $p < .001$, *Partial η^2* = .03), and professional functioning ($F_{(1,371)} = 5.67$, $p < .05$, *Partial η^2* = .02).

For all variables, significant differences were found between full-time and part-time jobs, with full-time jobs showing a more favorable outcome. Table 4 presents the means and standard deviations of the research variables according to job type (full-time/part-time).

Table 4: Means and SD of research variables by job type (N=373).

	Full-Time N=280	Part-time N=93
Personal resilience	3.96 (0.71)	3.71 (0.62)
Self-efficacy	4.26 (0.64)	3.91 (0.71)
Motivation	4.17 (0.61)	3.90 (0.70)
Mental wellbeing	4.16 (0.64)	4.08 (0.59)
Professional functioning	3.84 (0.64)	3.66 (0.73)

To determine the relationship between work mode (in-person/remote/blended learning) and the research variables: resilience, professional functioning, self-efficacy, motivation, and wellbeing, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted using Pillai's Trace criterion. The overall multivariate model was found to be statistically significant (*Pillai's Trace* = .08, $F_{(10,734)} = 2.92$, $p < .01$). Significant relationships were found between mode of work (in-person/remote/blended) and all research variables except for self-efficacy: personal resilience ($F_{(2,370)} = 8.19$, $p < .001$, *Partial η^2* = .04), motivation ($F_{(2,370)} = 6.13$, $p < .01$, *Partial η^2* = .03), psychological wellbeing ($F_{(2,370)} = 7.62$, $p < .001$, *Partial η^2* = .04), and professional functioning ($F_{(2,370)} = 4.16$, $p < .05$, *Partial η^2* = .02).

Table 5: Means and SD of research variables by work mode (N=373).

	In-person N=339	Remote N=7	Blended N=27
Personal resilience	3.90 (0.68)	2.94 (0.89)	4.12 (0.66)
Self-efficacy	4.18 (0.67)	3.67 (0.84)	4.17 (0.71)
Motivation	4.11 (0.64)	3.29 (0.58)	4.20 (0.67)
Mental wellbeing	4.15 (0.61)	3.29 (0.72)	4.30 (0.63)
Professional functioning	3.81 (0.45)	3.09 (0.53)	3.80 (0.83)

Post-hoc analysis using the Scheffe test revealed that for all variables where significant differences were found, the source of the differences was between the remote work mode and the in-person and blended work modes, with the remote mode showing less favorable outcomes. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of the research variables according to the work mode (in-person/remote/blended).

Discussion

The first hypothesis, which posited a positive relationship between the level of personal resilience and the professional functioning of teachers, was supported by a significant and strong correlation. This finding highlights the importance of teachers' ability to bounce back from setbacks and positively adapt to the challenging circumstances of war, as defined in the literature [40]. Personal resilience enabled teachers to maintain their professional stability

despite the numerous disruptions and difficulties in the education system [41].

The second hypothesis, which hypothesized a positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their professional functioning, was also supported by a significant and strong correlation. This belief in their ability to successfully perform tasks and achieve goals [28] helped teachers cope with the unique challenges of remote learning and the need to provide emotional support to students [12].

This finding is supported by various studies [42,43]. Teachers who rated themselves as having a high level of self-efficacy also rated their professional functioning as high. However, in the paper by Baguri and colleagues [42], teachers reported low levels of both self-efficacy and professional functioning. Those who believed in their ability to overcome obstacles and manage difficult situations were more likely to remain resilient, adapt to new circumstances, and maintain high levels of functioning.

The relationship between self-efficacy, professional functioning, and work mode can be explained by the level of experience, knowledge, and support available in a remote work environment. The transition to remote teaching requires teachers to master technological tools and resources [43]. For example, teachers who received support for remote instruction reported having opportunities to cooperate with other teachers, which led to a stronger sense of success [44].

The third hypothesis, which posited a positive relationship between the level of motivation and the professional functioning of teachers, was corroborated by a significant and strong. This finding indicates that motivation, whether intrinsic – a sense of mission and commitment to the profession and students, or extrinsic – supported by education institutions has served as a central factor that allowed teachers to continue and operate effectively under pressure and stress. This finding is supported by research [45] that showed that teachers' motivation considerably affects their professional functioning.

The fourth hypothesis posited a positive relationship between teachers' wellbeing and their professional functioning. This hypothesis was supported by a strong and significant correlation and emphasizes the close association between teachers' mental health and their ability to function optimally, as noted in the literature [46]. High mental wellbeing allows teachers to manage stress, to sustain a positive attitude, and to cope with the psychological tension at the beginning of the war [47].

During periods of crisis, teachers have also been known to exhibit low levels of mental wellbeing and of functioning. These teachers emphasized negative aspects of wellbeing such as stress, fatigue, dissatisfaction with work, and high levels of anxiety and tension and, consequently, dealt with great difficulties at school [48].

The association between motivation and professional functioning,

and work mode can be explained by considering factors such as workload, imbalance, job uncertainty, and lack of support. The psychological effects of these factors, which led to low mental wellbeing (such as a lack of self-worth, anxiety, and burnout) also resulted in negative effects on professional functioning, motivation, and a sense of belonging [49]. These points are highlighted by the significant correlations found between teachers' job type and their work mode, and their mental wellbeing and professional functioning.

The fifth research hypothesis, which predicted that the levels of mental wellbeing, self-efficacy, and motivation would significantly predict teachers' professional functioning, was partially confirmed. A multiple linear regression analysis showed that the predictive model was significant and explained 53% of the variance in professional functioning. In the sample of teachers, mental wellbeing and motivation were found to have a significant contribution in predicting professional functioning, while self-efficacy was not a significant predictor in this model. This finding is surprising and raises important questions. It is possible that during extreme wartime conditions, when teachers had to cope with numerous objective difficulties (such as a shortage of textbooks, student dispersal, workload) as well as significant emotional distress of their students, mental wellbeing and internal motivation played a more dominant role in their ability to maintain their function.

While self-efficacy is important, as highlighted in the literature [50], it is possible that under such conditions, the ability to maintain emotional stability and an internal drive to continue to act takes precedence over a specific belief in one's professional abilities, or that it is absorbed into the contribution of the wellbeing and motivation factors. This insight points to the complexity of resilience and function factors in a crisis environment, and necessitates further research to examine the interactions between these variables in similar contexts.

One of the most notable findings among the teachers relates to the mode of work. In the sample of teachers, it was found that a blended work model (both in-person and remote) was associated with higher levels of personal resilience, professional performance, motivation, self-efficacy, and mental wellbeing compared to working exclusively in-person or exclusively remotely. The teacher sample showed that a remote-only work model was associated with lower averages in personal resilience, motivation, mental wellbeing, and professional performance, compared to in-person or blended work. For example, personal resilience in remote work was 2.94, compared to 4.11 for in-person work and 4.12 for hybrid work. This finding suggests that a work model that combines physical presence and remote work may provide an optimal balance that allows for flexibility, work-family balance, personal safety, and the ability to maintain connection and functional continuity, thereby contributing to the strengthening of the mental and professional resources of educators during a crisis.

A significant additional finding among the respondents was related

to the type of job. In comparison to teachers who worked part-time, teachers who worked full-time reported higher levels of personal resilience, self-efficacy, motivation, and professional functioning. It is possible that working full-time provides a greater sense of job and financial stability, as well as deeper involvement in the educational community. These factors may strengthen teachers' mental resources during a time of war and uncertainty.

The study found that the variables directly and significantly contribute to teachers' ability to sustain effective and quality teaching even in times of conflict and war. The results indicate that the professional functioning of teachers during wartime is shaped, primarily, by internal psychological resources, and not solely by external conditions. Teachers who were able to perform optimally were those with high levels of personal resilience, mental wellbeing, self-efficacy, and motivation. These factors allowed them to maintain a proper standard of teaching, mediate emotions for their students, and provide a stable learning environment despite the difficult circumstances.

The practical implications of these findings highlight the need for governmental and systemic investment in psychological support programs for teachers, not only during emergencies but also as part of routine practice. This support should include workshops for developing personal resilience, building a sense of self-efficacy, strengthening internal motivation, and reducing factors that lead to burnout. Concurrently, educational policies that recognize teacher wellbeing as an essential component of teaching quality must be promoted, especially in conditions of constant change or uncertainty.

Limitations

The essence of quantitative research is based on validated statistical analyses, but it does not allow for a deep understanding of the experiential and emotional processes that teachers undergo during wartime. The use of quantitative data alone may miss the subjective layer of coping, especially in dynamic contexts such as emergencies, war, or sudden changes in the work environment. The integration of qualitative tools, such as in-depth interviews, observations, or focus groups, could have deepened the understanding of the study's findings.

Secondly, the use of self-report questionnaires may be a source of bias. Teachers might report on themselves in a way that reflects social desirability or self-idealization, either to present themselves as capable and functional or out of fear of external judgment. Additionally, there may be differences in the interpretation of questions and in self-awareness regarding levels of stress, motivation, or functioning.

Recommendations for Future Research

Integration of qualitative methodology: It is recommended to conduct qualitative studies based on in-depth interviews, observations, or case studies, which would allow for a deeper, reflective understanding of teachers' experiences during wartime and crises. This approach can reveal hidden patterns, subjective

interpretations, and coping mechanisms that do not necessarily emerge from quantitative tools.

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