

Evolving challenges in Ukrainian education: a comparative study of teacher perspectives

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Abstract

This study compares the educational challenges faced by teachers in Ukraine between 2022 and 2024, with a particular focus on the deterioration of student learning outcomes, lack of student motivation, and the ongoing influence of the war. In 2022, an open-ended survey was administered to 86 practising teachers, revealing key difficulties such as adapting teaching methods for distance learning, deteriorating student outcomes, large class sizes, motivational challenges, and managing students' social and emotional issues. These challenges were largely attributed to limited resources and the disruptive impact of the war rather than deficiencies in teachers' abilities.

To assess how these issues have evolved, the same survey was redistributed in 2024 to a comparable group of educators. The data were qualitatively analyzed to identify recurring and emerging themes, allowing for a direct comparison of the educational landscape across the two years. The study found that while some challenges persisted, the war's ongoing influence exacerbated issues like declining student performance and motivation, as well as the stress on both students and teachers.

The findings underscore the need for increased teacher involvement in national decision-making processes, particularly in the context of a protracted conflict, and highlight the ongoing struggle to balance educational quality with limited resources and external pressures. By comparing the experiences of teachers over these two years, this study provides valuable insights into the evolving needs of educators in Ukraine and offers recommendations for future policy and practice.

KEYWORDS: Ukrainian Education, Teacher Perspectives, War Impact, Educational Challenges.

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1. Introduction

Achieving sustainable development, a robust economy, and overall societal well-being are crucial for future prosperity, all powerfully interconnected with state policies in education and science. Effective policy coordination, strategic management decisions, and long-term investments are essential to attain these objectives. The Human Development Index (HDI) is a

critical dimension of a country's overall development, capturing average achievement across three key dimensions: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living (UNDP, 2023). In Ukraine, the HDI has experienced fluctuations over recent years, mainly due to the impacts of ongoing conflict and socio-economic challenges. The UNDP Human Development Report 2023 highlighted that Ukraine's HDI stood at 0.77, setting the country within the high human development category (UNDP, 2023). The marked improvement from previous years reflects resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and war. However, as of March 2024, Ukraine's HDI value declined to 0.734, dropping the country's ranking to 100th out of 193 countries and territories. The drop represents a significant setback, bringing the HDI to its lowest since 2004 (UNDP, 2024).

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Despite being in the high human development category, socio-economic disparities have persisted, affecting various sectors, including education. The war and displacement of populations have disrupted access to education, healthcare, and stable livelihoods, exacerbating these inequalities. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia has had severe impacts on the country's development, including education. The disruption of educational services due to conflict, displacement, and frequent air alerts has led to significant learning losses, further widening the gap between Ukraine and other countries in key educational metrics. Prior to the intensification of the war, the PISA 2018 results revealed that Ukrainian students were already lagging behind their OECD counterparts in reading, mathematics, and science. This performance gap highlighted more profound, systemic challenges within Ukraine's educational framework, particularly concerning resource allocation and socio-economic disparities. In 2018, Ukrainian students scored 31 points lower in mathematics, 48 points lower in reading, and 35 points lower in science compared to the OECD average. This disparity equates to roughly one and a half years of schooling lost in mathematics and science and nearly two and a half years in reading (PISA 2018). Participation in PISA 2022 has further underscored these issues, with a significant decline in performance: math scores fell by 12 points, science by 19 points, and reading by 38 points, mainly due to the disruptions caused by the war. The educational impact on 15-year-olds in reading alone is equivalent to nearly two years of learning, demonstrating the war's profound effect on an already strained educational system (PISA, 2022). The ongoing war and its associated disruptions have likely exacerbated these educational challenges. The declining HDI in 2024 suggests that access to knowledge, a critical component of human development, has been significantly impaired. In conclusion, the decline in Ukraine's HDI from 0.77 in 2023 to 0.734 in 2024 reflects the cumulative impact of ongoing war, socio-economic challenges, and disruptions to essential services like education. While Ukraine's development has shown resilience, the continuing war has reversed some of these gains, underscoring the crucial need for robust international support and domestic policy interventions to stabilize and rebuild the country's human development trajectory.

The ongoing war in Ukraine has had severe and multifaceted impacts on the country's children, exacerbating risks such as poverty, disease, family separation, learning loss, mental health issues, violence, and exposure to unexploded ordnance. Over 22 months into the war, 2.92 million children, including 1.5 million girls, are in urgent need of assistance. The war has resulted in the deaths of 531 children and injuries to 911 others. One-third of Ukraine is now contaminated by explosive remnants of war, posing a

daily threat, particularly to boys and men (United Nations, 2023). The war has also led to significant displacement, with more than 3.7 million people internally displaced and 4.6 million returning to their places of origin. Many children, particularly in frontline areas, face unsafe living conditions, inadequate access to essential services, and intense shelling. Poverty levels have sharply increased, with the share of children living below the poverty line rising from 43% in 2021 to 65% in 2022. Vulnerable groups, including families with children with disabilities and single parents, are now frequently below the extreme poverty line (World Bank, 2023).

The war has taken a toll on children's mental health, with 56% of parents in eastern regions reporting that their children often feel anxious or tense. Social isolation and the upheaval of war have worsened the situation for displaced children, those living in institutions, and those with disabilities (UNICEF, 2023). The psychological impact on children is a stark reminder of the human cost of the war.

Educationally, the war has caused severe disruption. Nearly two million of the 3.837 million children enrolled in Ukrainian schools rely on online or blended learning due to the closure of 2,321 schools in frontline areas for safety reasons. As of December 2023, 3,714 educational facilities had been damaged and 392 destroyed. The 2022 PISA results indicate that 15-year-old students in Ukraine have experienced significant learning losses, equivalent to almost two years of skills loss in reading literacy (Ministry of Education and Science, 2023; OECD, 2023). This situation has compounded the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving many children with four years of disrupted education. The situation has worsened due to frequent air alerts and the constant threat of attacks, leading to significant distractions and interruptions in students' learning processes. These disruptions and distance education challenges during wartime have resulted in substantial learning losses. Estimates suggest that the cumulative effect of these interruptions could cause Ukrainian students' academic performance to fall below that of the poorest-performing countries in Europe.

In the context of the war, distance education remains a topic of concern in Ukraine, especially in light of the 2022 Russian invasion. The Ukrainian education sector is also grappling with budget constraints, low teacher salaries, and large class sizes, hindering the power to provide quality, personalized education. Despite some progress, such as introducing education subventions and reforms to align with European standards, the system still faces numerous obstacles, including outdated teacher compensation systems, incongruous education legislation, and the devastating effects of war. Motivating students amidst these challenges is complex and requires a multifaceted approach. The lack of individualized attention due to overcrowded

classrooms, declining teacher morale and the constant stress of war-related disruptions further diminishes student engagement and learning outcomes. The Ukrainian education system's struggle to adapt to modern needs and global shifts has resulted in numerous educational challenges that significantly impact the quality of education.

The study examines teachers' perspectives on these challenges, comparing the situation in 2022 with that in 2024. By exploring the deterioration of learning outcomes, lack of student motivation, and the influence of the war, including air alerts and other distractions, this research aims to provide insights into the evolving needs of educators in Ukraine and inform future educational policy and practice.

2. Literature review

The impact of class size differences on educational outcomes has been a subject of intense debate, widely covered in media and research. Much of the discussion revolves around how class size correlates with academic performance, with limited insights into the classroom dynamics that might drive any observed effects (Anderson, 2000; Finn & Achilles, 1999; Grissmer, 1999). Studies examining pupil-to-teacher ratios have indicated that smaller class sizes may lead teachers to shift from group teaching to more personalized, one-on-one instruction (Betts & Shkolnik, 1999). Anderson (2000) presented a comprehensive framework detailing potential factors that connect class size to student achievement, highlighting aspects such as enhanced understanding of individual students, increased instructional time, elevated student involvement, and a deeper dive into content material in smaller class settings.

However, Finn, Pannozzo, and Achilles (2003) determined that the impact of class size in elementary grades primarily pertains to student engagement rather than direct effects on teaching methods. Nevertheless, smaller classes can positively influence teachers' interpersonal approaches. Achievement motivation, recognized as a crucial factor in academic success, has been widely studied and confirmed by Robbins et al. (2004), Hattie (2009), Plante et al. (2013), and Wigfield et al. (2016). This motivation encompasses various components such as beliefs, task values, goals, and achievement motives, as supported by Wigfield and Cambria (2010) and Wigfield et al. (2016).

The closure of schools and the resulting social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic had detrimental effects on students' psychological and emotional health, while families were thrust into the educator role amidst economic challenges (Dorn et al., 2021). Educators faced unprecedented challenges as they adapted to new technologies and navigated students' emotional and social needs (Decker & Beltran, 2021;

Zieher et al., 2021). The emphasis on social-emotional learning (SEL) became evident, focusing on competencies such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship-building skills, and responsible decision-making (Reddig & Vanlone, 2022; Yang, 2021). Teachers' social-emotional competence and well-being were crucial to managing stress and burnout (Corcoran & O'Flaherty, 2022; Schonert-Reichl, 2021).

Research has also highlighted the impact of public perception on educators. Studies by Shine (2021) reveal a gap between teachers' perceptions and public sentiment, often portraying a negative image of the profession. Conversely, research by Cruickshank and MacDonald (2017) emphasizes the importance of recognition and gratitude in sustaining teacher motivation, while Allen et al. (2020) found that teachers are generally highly regarded but stressed the need for acknowledgment of their efforts.

The study aims to explore the challenges faced by Ukrainian educators amidst ongoing war and socio-economic disruptions. Specifically, the research question guiding this investigation is: "What do educators in Ukraine identify as the most significant factor influencing student outcomes amid ongoing war and socio-economic challenges?" This question is important for understanding how the dynamics of the education system have evolved from 2022 to 2024, particularly in response to the compounded effects of the war and other stressors on student performance and educational quality.

By examining this question, the study seeks to compare findings from previous years with the current situation, providing a comprehensive view of how factors impacting student outcomes have shifted over time and highlighting the evolving needs and challenges within the Ukrainian educational landscape.

3. Methods

The 2024 study involved a similar sample of 86 teachers actively teaching in Ukraine. The participants included 15 male and 71 female teachers. Their teaching experience was distributed as follows: 18% had 0-2 years, 22% had 3-6 years, 18% had 7-10 years, 6% had 11-15 years, and 50% had 16 or more years. This demographic provides a comprehensive view of the teaching profession amid current challenges.

The research question for this study was: "What do teachers in Ukraine identify as the most influential factor impacting student outcomes in 2024, given the ongoing war and socio-economic changes?" To explore this, an open-ended questionnaire was employed, asking participants: "In your opinion, what is the most significant factor currently influencing student outcomes in Ukraine?". This approach was

designed to encourage in-depth and thoughtful responses from educators, collect diverse perspectives without introducing bias, and uncover emerging factors that may not have been highlighted in earlier research.

Following Creswell's guidelines, the open-ended format allowed participants to express their views freely, ensuring that new insights could be captured. The data collection spanned from September 2023 to January 2024, with a response rate of 60%. The survey was administered through various methods, including distribution by school principals and contact teachers, to accommodate different school environments (Creswell, 2007). Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis method, which is suited for exploring participants' perspectives and identifying key themes.

The comparative aspect of this study involved examining changes in educators' perceptions of factors influencing student outcomes in Ukraine from 2022 to 2024. The analysis focused on three key areas: differences in perceived factors affecting student outcomes, trends in how socio-political and educational challenges have shifted, and emerging themes in teacher perspectives that reflect current realities. By comparing these aspects, the study aims to provide insights into how the evolving context of war and socio-economic conditions has shaped educators' views on the factors impacting student success.

First, the analysis sought to identify any differences in the factors that teachers perceived as most influential to student outcomes between 2022 and 2024. This involved evaluating changes in the significance and priority of various factors, such as economic stability, mental health support, access to educational resources, and safety concerns. Second, the study tracked trends in how socio-political and educational challenges have shifted over this period. This included examining how ongoing war, displacement, and economic challenges have affected the educational environment, influencing teacher perceptions. Lastly, the analysis aimed to uncover emerging themes that might not have been evident in earlier years. These themes were identified through a detailed review of qualitative responses, highlighting the evolving realities that teachers face.

4. Results

In the context of the ongoing war and socio-economic changes impacting Ukraine's educational system, the qualitative analysis of teachers' responses from the 2024 study revealed several distinct themes and categories (Table 1).

In comparing the challenges faced by Ukrainian teachers in 2022 and 2024, it is evident that while some issues have remained consistent, the nature and severity of these challenges have evolved in response to the

prolonged impacts of the war and COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1 - Main categories and themes.

MAIN CATEGORIES AND THEMES

1. TEMPORAL CHALLENGES

Impact of War

2022 Study: Future uncertainty

2024 Study: Frequent disruptions due to war and air alerts.

2. INSTRUCTIONAL CHALLENGES

Resource Limitations

2022 Study: Limited resources and large class sizes were issues.

2024 Study: Insufficient resources, outdated technology, and large class sizes.

Curriculum and Content Delivery

2022 Study: Difficulty in adjusting to online formats.

2024 Study: Challenges in adjusting curriculum and maintaining standards.

3. BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES

Student Motivation and Engagement

2022 Study: Low student motivation and connection to real-life.

2024 Study: Increased disengagement and lack of real-life connection.

Social and Emotional Well-being

2022 Study: Stress and emotional issues among students.

2024 Study: Elevated levels of anxiety and trauma among students.

4. SOCIETAL CHALLENGES

Changing Perceptions of the Teaching Profession

2022 Study: Declining status and unrealistic expectations.

2024 Study: Further decline in status and increased expectations.

Category 1: Temporal challenges

The comparative analysis of teachers' perceptions from 2022 to 2024 revealed significant shifts in the challenges faced by educators in Ukraine, highlighting the evolving socio-political and educational landscape. In 2022, 50% of teachers reported difficulties related to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, by 2024, this theme was no longer prominent, as new challenges emerged. The war remained a major concern, with 90% of teachers in both years identifying it as a significant issue impacting education. While safety concerns due to the war were consistently reported by 90% of teachers in both 2022 and 2024, new issues such as inadequate infrastructure, which was not reported in 2022, emerged in 2024, with 40% of teachers highlighting it as a barrier to effective online learning. Additionally, 30% of teachers in 2024 mentioned reduced student engagement, while 35%

faced technical difficulties and challenges adapting traditional teaching methods to online environments. The ongoing war further worsened educational disruptions, with 75% of teachers in 2024 citing the destruction of infrastructure and displacement as critical issues. Furthermore, 85% of teachers reported experiencing trauma and psychological impacts on both students and educators due to the war, a theme not previously reported in 2022. Lastly, 45% of teachers in 2024 noted the need for curriculum adaptations to address the specific challenges and experiences of students affected by the war, indicating a shift toward more responsive and context-sensitive educational practices (Figure 1).

Category 2: Instructional challenges

The impact of limited resources and large class sizes increased dramatically, with a rise from 45% to 76%, highlighting growing challenges in managing classroom dynamics. Individualized attention saw an impressive increase from 35% to 85%, indicating a heightened focus on catering to the unique needs of students. Engagement and participation also improved, with scores rising from 45% to 75%, reflecting efforts to foster a more interactive learning environment. Interestingly, assessment and feedback remained constant at 63%, suggesting stability in evaluation practices despite changing conditions. The teacher workload saw an increase from 75% to 85%, underscoring the growing demands placed on educators. Lastly, the ability to address diverse needs improved significantly, rising from 45% to 78%, indicating a greater emphasis on inclusivity in the classroom. Overall, these findings underscore the evolving landscape of education and the increasing importance of individualized and engaged learning experiences (Figure 2).

Category 3: Behavioral challenges

The findings indicate notable shifts in behavioral challenges between 2022 and 2024. Student motivation experienced a decline, dropping from 50% to 35%, which raises concerns about the factors contributing to decreased interest and enthusiasm among learners. Similarly, engagement and participation also fell from 45% to 35%, suggesting that strategies aimed at fostering active involvement in learning have not been as effective in recent years. Conversely, social and emotional problems have escalated significantly, increasing from 55% to 73%. This rise highlights the growing challenges students face in their emotional well-being, which may further affect their overall academic performance. On a more positive note, behavioral management saw a substantial improvement, soaring from 40% to 78%. This suggests that there have been successful initiatives in managing classroom behavior, contributing to a more conducive learning environment. Overall, these findings point to

the need for renewed focus on student motivation and engagement while recognizing the importance of addressing social and emotional challenges (Figure 3).

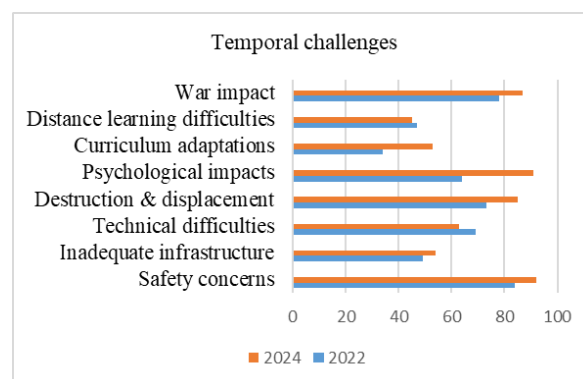


Figure 1 - Teachers' perceptions of temporal challenges in 2024 and 2022.

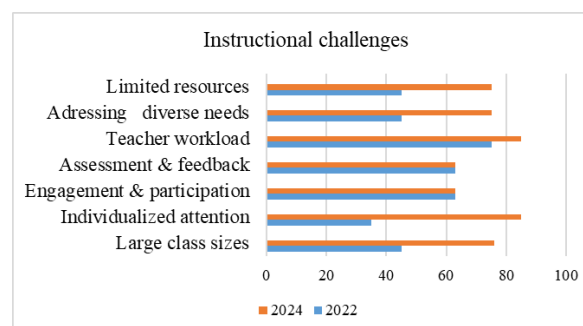


Figure 2 - Teachers' perceptions of societal challenges in 2024 and 2022.

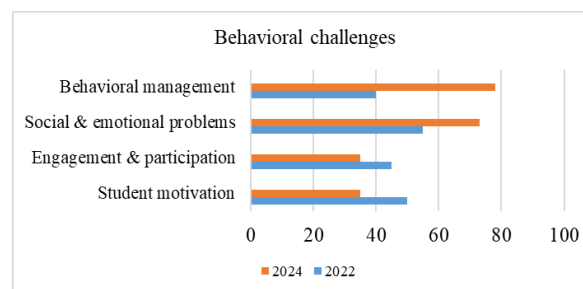


Figure 3 - Teachers' perceptions of behavioral challenges in 2024 and 2022.

Category 4: Societal challenges

Status decline among educators has increased from 47% to 62%, indicating a growing perception of diminished respect and recognition for the teaching profession. Unrealistic expectations have also risen dramatically, from 47% to 77%, suggesting that educators feel increasingly pressured to meet demands that may not align with available resources or realities in the classroom. Additionally, the increased workload and administrative burdens have become a pressing issue, with perceptions soaring from 50% to 87%. This highlights the escalating challenges educators face in

balancing teaching responsibilities with administrative tasks, potentially leading to burnout and decreased job satisfaction. Furthermore, societal criticism and negative perceptions of the teaching profession have also intensified, climbing from 60% to 75%. This reflects a concerning trend where educators may feel undervalued and scrutinized, impacting their morale and effectiveness in the classroom. Overall, these findings underscore the urgent need to address the pressures faced by educators and to foster a more supportive environment for teaching professionals (Figure 4).

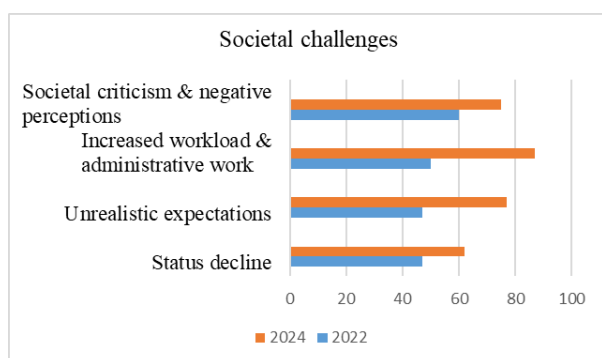


Figure 4 - Teachers' perceptions of societal challenges in 2024 and 2022.

4. Discussion

The implementation of distance learning in Ukrainian education has met various challenges, which have intensified in recent years due to the ongoing war. Limited access to technology and internet connectivity, particularly in areas affected by the war, leads to difficulties in conducting online classes. Inadequate training and resources for teachers also contribute to the challenge. Moreover, the ongoing war in Ukraine has created a host of obstacles for teachers and students, as the displacement of students and educators disrupts the continuity of education. The destruction of educational infrastructure, including schools and universities, has further negative impacts on the learning environment. Safety concerns and psychological trauma experienced by students and teachers also have negative effects on their educational experiences. These challenges were highlighted in the CEDOS review titled "War & Education: How a Year of Full-Scale Invasion Affected Ukrainian Schools" (CEDOS, 2023).

Ukraine's constrained financial situation has resulted in classrooms with a high student count, leading to challenges for teachers in offering instruction tailored to each student's unique needs. This observation aligns with Anderson's 2020 study, which explore the dynamics between class size, student performance, and in-class dynamics (Anderson, 2000). Equipping classrooms with the necessary resources and infrastructure can support teaching methodologies and

foster better student participation. This perspective aligns with findings from the OECD study titled "Improving Education Outcomes for Students Who Have Experienced Trauma and Adversity" (OECD, 2020).

Teachers have also identified a notable dip in student motivation, with insights suggesting that this decline is more attributable to students' decisions than any deficiency in motivational teaching techniques. A potential misalignment between the academic content and its real-world relevance diminish students' enthusiasm. Outdated educational methodologies and curricula could be the culprits behind this issue. This aligns with the research conducted by Chingos et al. (Chingos et al., 2012).

Ukrainian teachers are confronting the uphill task of addressing students' escalating social and emotional issues. Educators report increased levels of anxiety and trauma among their students, a rise from previous years. Poverty, unstable family environments, and mental health challenges can cast a shadow on the learning environment. These challenges mirror Choi's (2018) and Viac & Fraser (2020) findings. The research titled "Emotional Wellbeing of Children and Adolescents: Recent Trends and Relevant Factors" and "Teachers' Wellbeing – A Framework for Data Collection and Analysis" investigates trauma-associated cases, including stress, personal security concerns, bullying, physical discomfort, and the broader spectrum of emotional well-being.

Various societal challenges and unrealistic expectations have negatively impacted the status of teachers in Ukraine. In recent assessments, teachers reported a further decline in their professional status compared to previous years. These expectations, placed on educators by parents, policymakers, and society, create immense pressure and stress. The decline in the status of the teaching profession may also adversely affect the recruitment of qualified teachers. McCallum and Price (2010) argue that the well-being of both educators and learners is a shared responsibility among individuals, collectives, and communities. This highlights the complexity of addressing employee well-being, which must be approached holistically. They advocate for a collaborative effort between schools, sectors, relevant authorities, and professional associations to prioritize and address teacher well-being throughout the teacher training, induction, mentoring, and professional learning. (McCallum & Price, 2012).

The challenges in Ukrainian education identified in the study can be attributed to a range of factors, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, societal changes, the impact of war, and the overall economic situation in the country. Addressing these challenges requires investments in technology and infrastructure, teacher training and support, curriculum reform, and efforts to enhance the status and recognition of teachers in Ukrainian society. As the findings from the 2024

study demonstrate, a comprehensive and collaborative approach is essential for creating a sustainable and resilient educational system that can effectively support both teachers and students in the face of adversity.

5. Conclusions

The comparative analysis of the 2022 and 2024 studies highlights the evolving and multifaceted challenges faced by teachers in Ukraine. The transition from focusing on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic to the profound effects of the ongoing war underscores the dynamic nature of the educational landscape in conflict-affected regions. Temporal challenges have shifted to frequent disruptions caused by war and air alerts. These disruptions create an unpredictable learning environment, affecting both teacher effectiveness and student attendance. The constant threat of conflict not only disrupts instructional time but also places immense psychological strain on students and teachers alike. The need for a responsive and flexible educational framework has never been more critical, as teachers must adapt to an environment where safety concerns can lead to sudden changes in learning modalities.

Instructional challenges have intensified, with resource limitations and outdated technology hindering effective teaching and learning. The lack of access to modern educational tools further complicates the transition to effective online or hybrid learning models, emphasizing the urgent need for investment in educational infrastructure. Moreover, the difficulty in adjusting curriculum and content delivery to maintain standards amid these challenges can lead to educational inequities, particularly for marginalized or displaced students. In this context, professional development for teachers must focus not only on pedagogical strategies but also on utilizing available resources effectively to meet curriculum goals.

Behavioral challenges are evident in the declining student motivation and engagement, which has been exacerbated by the ongoing conflict. The increased disengagement and lack of real-life connection to their education can lead to a cycle of underachievement and frustration. This situation necessitates the implementation of innovative and engaging pedagogical approaches that resonate with students' lived experiences. Additionally, the social and emotional well-being of students has deteriorated, with heightened anxiety and trauma becoming significant barriers to effective learning. Schools must prioritize mental health support and social-emotional learning (SEL) programs to create a safe and nurturing environment that addresses the psychological needs of students.

The societal challenges identified indicate a troubling trend in the perception of the teaching profession. The

continued decline in status and rising expectations place additional pressure on teachers. This situation can lead to burnout, job dissatisfaction, an outflow from the profession. Acknowledging and addressing these perceptions is crucial for attracting and retaining competent teachers in the field. Community engagement and advocacy efforts are needed to elevate the status of teachers, highlighting their critical role in society and the challenges they face in delivering quality education under adverse conditions.

Recruitment and retention issues have been deteriorated by the war and financial constraints, leading to significant gaps in the teacher workforce. Effective recruitment strategies must be developed that not only attract new talent but also support existing teachers through mentorship programs and professional development opportunities. Policymakers and educational leaders must collaborate to create an attractive and supportive environment for teachers, ensuring that they feel valued and equipped to meet the demands of their roles.

Despite the formidable obstacles faced, teachers in Ukraine have exhibited remarkable resilience and commitment to delivering high-quality education. This resilience is particularly noteworthy in light of the ongoing challenges posed by the war and its consequences. To effectively overcome these difficulties, teachers engage in collaborative efforts, sharing best practices and seeking support from school administrators and educational leaders. This collaborative approach help foster a more supportive environment for both educators and students.

Addressing critical issues such as insufficient funding, large class sizes, lack of student motivation, and societal attitudes toward education is essential to enhancing Ukraine's education system. To achieve meaningful reform, it is advisable to conduct further investigations that delve deeper into these obstacles. By recognizing and actively addressing these challenges, Ukraine can make significant progress in its effort to achieve educational excellence, which ultimately contributes to effective integration into European and global society.

6. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

It is essential to acknowledge that the findings of this study do not represent the entirety of the national teaching workforce, as they are based on a limited sample of 86 teachers. Nonetheless, this qualitative and interpretive small-scale study provides valuable insights by contextualizing the experiences of teachers within their social and educational environments, considering both national and local factors that influence their work.

To explore these challenges in future research, it is advisable to conduct more in-depth investigations through individual interviews and focus group discussions with educators. These qualitative inquiries can examine the implications of current instructional, student-related, and societal challenges in greater depth, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the issues at hand. Additionally, gathering teachers' suggestions for overcoming these challenges can yield practical solutions that may be implemented within the educational framework.

Conducting quantitative analysis to establish correlations between these four categories of challenges would be beneficial. Such analyses could illuminate the causal relationships among these challenges, particularly how lower-quality instruction impacts student motivation and behavior. This approach would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between these factors, offering insights into potential strategies for improvement.

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