



# Clío

Revista de Historia, Ciencias Humanas  
y Pensamiento Crítico



ISSN 2660-9037



Adscrita a:  
Fundación Ediciones Clío  
Academia de Historia del  
estado Zulia  
Centro Zuliano de  
Investigaciones  
Genealógicas

Sección: Artículo científico | 2025, julio-diciembre, año 5, No. 10, 1916-1962

## Educating in wartime: emotional impact and teaching challenges in humanistic training under armed conflict

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**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15598200>

### Abstract

The primary objective of this study was to assess how forced conditions, particularly distance learning, impact the quality of education, students' emotional well-being, and academic performance. The survey was conducted between September 2022 and May 2023. The research methodology employed a mixed approach, incorporating both questionnaires and curriculum analysis. Teachers were asked about changes in teaching methods, adaptations of instructional materials, and strategies for supporting students during wartime. The key findings of the study indicate that the war has significantly disrupted the educational process, primarily due to technical issues such as power outages and

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**Recibido:** 2025-04-04 **Aceptado:** 2025-05-28

unstable internet connections. These challenges have led to a decline in students' concentration and motivation. A notable difference was observed in the responses of male and female students. Female students were more likely to experience mental exhaustion, as they had to balance academic responsibilities with other obligations, whereas male students demonstrated greater adaptability but encountered difficulties related to military service. Teachers also reported an increased need to modify teaching materials and methods to provide emotional support for students. Quantitative analysis confirmed that female students experienced higher levels of stress during distance learning, while male students faced greater challenges due to their involvement in military service.

**Keywords:** Martial law, crisis conditions, adaptation of training, emotional state, critical thinking

*Educar en tiempos de guerra: impacto emocional y retos  
pedagógicos en la formación humanística en conflicto armado*

## Resumen

El objetivo principal de este estudio era evaluar cómo las condiciones forzosas, en particular el aprendizaje a distancia, repercuten en la calidad de la educación, el bienestar emocional de los estudiantes y el rendimiento académico. La encuesta se llevó a cabo entre septiembre de 2022 y mayo de 2023. La metodología de investigación empleó un enfoque mixto, incorporando tanto cuestionarios como análisis curriculares. Se preguntó a los profesores sobre los cambios en los métodos de enseñanza, las adaptaciones de los materiales didácticos y las estrategias para apoyar a los estudiantes en tiempos de guerra. Las principales conclusiones del estudio indican que la guerra ha perturbado considerablemente el proceso educativo, debido sobre todo a problemas técnicos como los cortes de electricidad y la inestabilidad de las conexiones a Internet. Estos problemas han reducido la concentración y la motivación de los estudiantes. Se observó una diferencia notable en las respuestas de los alumnos y las alumnas. Las alumnas eran más propensas a experimentar agotamiento mental, ya que tenían que compaginar las responsabilidades académicas con otras obligaciones, mientras que los alumnos demostraban una mayor capacidad de adaptación, pero se encontraban con dificultades relacionadas con el servicio militar. Los profesores también informaron de una mayor necesidad de modificar

los materiales y métodos de enseñanza para proporcionar apoyo emocional a los estudiantes. El análisis cuantitativo confirmó que las estudiantes experimentaron mayores niveles de estrés durante el aprendizaje a distancia, mientras que los estudiantes varones se enfrentaron a mayores retos debido a su participación en el servicio militar.

**Palabras clave:** Ley marcial, condiciones de crisis, adaptación de la formación, estado emocional, pensamiento crítico.

## Introduction

The humanities play a crucial role in developing students' critical thinking, cultural awareness, and worldview. However, the experience of the 2022 war in Ukraine highlights the need to rethink approaches to teaching humanities in higher education. The war has profoundly affected the social, psychological, and economic aspects of students' and teachers' lives, necessitating adaptations in the educational process to address these new realities. In this context, research in humanities education takes on particular significance, as existing educational models have proven insufficient for effectively educating students in times of crisis.

Given the circumstances that emerged in Ukraine during the war, the approach to higher education, particularly in the humanities, requires urgent revision. The challenges of social instability, evolving modes of learning, and the psychological impact of stress on both students and teachers make it essential not only to maintain the quality of education but also to adapt curricula to contemporary realities.

Key challenges in teaching humanities during wartime include adapting curricula to new conditions, ensuring the continuity of the educational process,

and maintaining high teaching standards. Limited access to resources, declining student motivation, and the psychological toll of ongoing stress present significant obstacles that demand innovative solutions. The content of humanities education requires special attention, as it plays a vital role in preserving national identity and fostering resilience against information warfare. In times of conflict, education serves not only as a means of preparing a new generation of professionals but also as a tool for maintaining social stability, safeguarding cultural heritage, and upholding the moral values of society (Buniak, 2024).

Studies, particularly those by Utomo and Wasino (2020), highlight the significance of liberal arts education in fostering tolerance among students. They emphasised the crucial role of liberal arts education; however, their study did not consider the specific challenges posed by wartime conditions, which can significantly alter the educational context. Lavrysh et al. (2022) examine the challenges faced by the Ukrainian education system in its transition to a democratic model, stressing the need to analyse these challenges within the framework of war. The long-term effects of this transition, alongside the impact of globalisation on the quality of higher education, remain open questions that require further investigation. At the same time, Marginson (2022) analysed the influence of Anglo-American hegemony and methodological globalism on education systems, highlighting the complex relationship between national and global interests. He addressed the impact of globalisation on national education systems, underlining the importance of understanding these processes in the context of Ukraine. However, further research is needed to assess how these dynamics affect regional education systems and their autonomy. With regard to

the archiving of historical data, Birdsall and Tkaczyk (2019) emphasised the significance of audio recordings in scholarly research, particularly in preserving historical audio events. Nonetheless, gaps remain in addressing the technical limitations associated with accurately preserving and reproducing such data in modern archives.

In their article, Sula and Hill (2019) examined the early stages of text analysis development and the advancement of digital learning methods. The issue of radicalisation in educational institutions is particularly significant in countries where education has a strong religious component. Ali et al. (2021) investigated an approach to interfaith literacy in Islamic universities in Indonesia, aimed at reducing radicalisation by introducing a humanistic functional approach to religious education. Their research reflects a substantial shift from doctrinal educational models to the integration of interfaith dialogue through practical learning, including collaboration with other religious communities. However, a research gap remains regarding the long-term impact of such educational approaches on preventing student radicalisation and promoting social integration in post-conflict communities. Both studies support the broader theme of adapting educational models during wartime, highlighting the importance of innovations in teaching alongside the social and cultural factors that influence educational quality and student well-being. The study conducted by Zayachuk (2024) focuses on ensuring the quality of education in Ukraine amid Russian military aggression. It explores efforts to organise online education, the relocation of educational institutions, partnerships with international organisations, as well as the role of security and the psychological well-being of participants in the educational process. Similar challenges are



evident in Yemen, where Alawadhi (2024) analysed the impact of war on higher education based on the experiences of Yemeni scholars. The primary challenges in Yemen include attacks on teachers, staff shortages, and financial constraints, all of which significantly affect the quality of education.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the key challenges faced by students and teachers in humanities disciplines during wartime and to propose strategies for overcoming them. Several critical issues were addressed: the psychological state of students and teachers during armed conflict, including stress, fear, and adaptation to new learning conditions. Technical difficulties commonly encountered in distance education were analysed in detail, along with the challenges associated with classroom and blended learning. Currently, all three modes of learning – distance, classroom, and blended – are utilised in Ukraine, depending on the specific characteristics of higher education institutions and curricula. This presents additional challenges, as each mode requires distinct resources, such as technical support, access to educational materials, and the facilitation of effective teacher-student interaction.

## 1. Theoretical overview

In the modern world, increasing attention is being paid to the development of the humanities in higher education, particularly during times of war. This includes the implementation of innovative learning approaches that benefit all students, including those with special educational needs. In this educational context, the objective is to establish an organisational structure that supports students effectively. In his work, Marchenko (2023) analysed the challenges faced by higher education in Ukraine during the war. The primary issues

identified were mental and physical overstrain, infrastructural conflicts, and a significant outflow of students. Despite these difficulties, Ukrainian universities continued to function through the implementation of distance education. Kaminsky (2024) examined the role of e-learning during martial law, focusing on the Ukrainian experience. He noted that during the war, e-learning became a crucial tool for ensuring the continuity of the educational process, employing modern technologies such as interactive modelling and individualised learning.

Tsybuliak et al. (2024) explored inclusion in Ukrainian universities and found that, although perceptions of inclusive practices vary somewhat depending on professional roles, most respondents acknowledged the presence of inclusive education within the broader context of socio-political transformations. Similarly, Bakhmat et al. (2023) analysed international experiences of e-learning during pandemics and military conflicts, demonstrating its effectiveness in countries such as Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Their study confirmed that while e-learning facilitates access to education during crises, it also presents challenges in adapting to rapidly changing conditions. Conversely, Dąbrowa (2024) assessed the significance of interdisciplinary approaches and solidarity in the educational process, particularly in the context of safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities. The authors emphasised that, even during times of crisis, it remains essential to uphold inclusivity and protect the rights of vulnerable groups.

In his article, Marcov (2024) explored the issue of the humanisation of education. The author highlights the growing trend of dehumanisation, which is evident in the diminishing emphasis on humanitarian subjects. Kozubtsov (2023) focused on the challenges faced by the educational process during wartime,

particularly the difficulties universities encounter due to infrastructure destruction. According to the authors, the predictive teaching method, in which core lectures are delivered before students formally study the topics outlined in the curriculum, is an effective strategy for maintaining continuous education during armed conflict. This approach enables students to engage with the material even when traditional learning opportunities are restricted. Greco (2024) examined the historical development of the humanities in the United States, tracing its evolution from the advent of the printed book to the present day. The author emphasises how the humanities served as the foundation of academic education in American universities, particularly before the Second World War, after which the focus began shifting towards scientific disciplines. This study also analysed the role of the humanities in modern education and its impact on teachers.

Levchuk et al. (2024) investigated the educational process in Ukrainian universities during wartime, with a particular emphasis on the regional aspects of educational service provision. The author underscored the significance of blended learning as the most effective format for universities located outside active combat zones. The study also explored the challenges faced by students and teachers, proposing strategies to sustain educational continuity, including the use of online platforms and psychological support for students. Murata (2024) examined the Japanese military programme at Yale University during the Second World War, analysing its organisation and long-term influence on the post-war education system in the United States. The author investigated how military training shaped the education of specialists in the Japanese language and



regional studies, ultimately contributing to the development of post-war academic curricula.

The study conducted by Andrieieva et al. (2024) analysed the impact of short-term adventure programmes on the psychophysiological state of students during wartime. The author investigated how participation in such programmes reduces the risk of stress, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The findings confirm the potential of extreme tourism as an effective tool for mitigating stress-related conditions. The research by Zozulak and Bashuryn (2023) focused on distance education under martial law. The authors examined the security aspects of the educational process during the Russian invasion, highlighting the importance of effectively utilising distance learning technologies and ensuring the safety of all participants. Their conclusions underscore the necessity of transparent communication between students and teachers, as well as the implementation of structured and supportive teaching methods.

Zhukov and Kotelevets (2024) investigated student engagement in volunteer activities during wartime, with a particular focus on fundraising initiatives for Ukrainian military personnel and internally displaced persons. A volunteer group established at the university contributed to logistics support, humanitarian relief efforts, and counteracting disinformation. The study by Sergienko and Chernobai (2024) explored modifications to medical training programmes during the war. Online learning emerged as one of the few components of postgraduate training that enabled medical professionals to continue their professional development under challenging conditions. Labenko et al. (2023) identified the primary difficulties encountered by students and

educators during the learning process, such as power outages, air raid sirens, and psychological distress. Their study also analysed various teaching methods employed during the war and proposed potential solutions to these challenges. The research methods included observations, interviews with teachers and students, and comparative analysis of responses. The article by Sazanova (2022) examined the need for educational institutions to adapt to martial law. The author emphasised the practical experience of police officers as a valuable component of the educational process, aiding in the development of crisis-response strategies. This underscores the necessity of adapting and transforming educational activities to meet the demands of wartime conditions.

The study by Galynska and Bilous (2022) analysed the challenges faced by higher education institutions, students, and teachers during the war. The authors found that while distance education presents accessibility challenges, it remains a viable means of achieving educational goals even in crisis situations. The article by Levchuk et al. (2024) explored infrastructural and personal challenges faced by students. The study concluded that blended learning provides the greatest flexibility in the learning process, making it the optimal format for education in wartime conditions. Westerlund et al. (2023) examined the experience of online English teaching in the context of both a pandemic and wartime conditions. The authors identified key challenges faced by teachers and students, including a lack of interaction and technical difficulties, which hindered the effectiveness of online learning. The article by Momot (2022) investigated the implementation of dual education in Ukraine, which integrates theoretical and practical learning. The author emphasised the role of stakeholders

in the educational process and highlighted the need for educational programmes to align with the evolving demands of the wartime labour market.

## 2. Materials and methods

The study was conducted between September 2022 and May 2023 at Mykolaiv National Agrarian University. A survey methodology was employed to achieve the research objectives. The survey covered 200 participants, comprising 150 students and 50 humanities teachers. The student sample included 80 female and 70 male students, while the teacher sample consisted of 35 female and 15 male teachers. The inclusion criterion for participation was prior experience of studying or teaching at a university under martial law. The study adhered to strict ethical principles, ensuring voluntary participation, confidentiality, informed consent, and sensitivity to the emotional state of respondents. All participants were properly informed about the purpose of the study and the potential implications of their participation, fostering trust and open communication. Recognising that respondents might experience stress and emotional distress due to wartime conditions, the researchers implemented measures to provide support where necessary. A gender analysis was conducted to identify specific challenges and needs faced by different gender groups in humanities education during wartime. The analysis examined how the war affected the educational process, psychological well-being, and social adaptation of both students and teachers, with attention to gender-specific experiences.

The study's survey aimed to assess the impact of war on the educational process and the specific challenges encountered by participants. The emotional state of students and teachers was examined in detail, particularly their self-

assessed psychological condition and the emotional difficulties they experienced. The Spielberger-Khanina Anxiety Scale was employed to measure respondents' levels of anxiety and emotional distress. The survey covered a range of key aspects, including: psychological pressure experienced by students and teachers; technical difficulties, such as internet disruptions and power outages; adaptation of teaching methods to wartime conditions; changes in teaching materials to accommodate the new educational challenges.

Tables were developed for the analysis, presenting the key findings of the survey. Primarily, data were collected on psychological pressure, decreased concentration and motivation, and the impact on access to educational resources. Particular attention was given to gender differences in the perception of the educational process, providing deeper insights into the specific challenges faced by male and female participants in the context of war.

The study also examined G. Selye's theory of stress and adaptation, which explains the effects of emotional stress on the educational process in crisis situations, particularly during wartime. Additionally, the theory of social learning and the theory of social identity were referenced, both of which highlight the importance of interaction, social support, and the formation of new social identities in stressful conditions that influence educational practices (Tran, 2023).

The research procedure began with a preparatory stage, during which questionnaires were designed, forming the foundation for the subsequent analysis of collected data. Data collection was conducted via Google Forms, allowing for the participation of respondents from various regions. For quantitative analysis, data were processed using SPSS software (version 26).

Student's t-test and descriptive statistics were employed to identify the key trends in the impact of war on the educational process.

### 3. Results

To understand the impact of war on the educational process, it is essential to consider the theoretical aspects related to crisis situations in the educational environment. War and conflict create unique conditions that alter educational practices, learning approaches, and the emotional well-being of participants in the learning process. According to G. Selye's classical theory of stress and adaptation, the study of emotional states in students and teachers during crisis situations is crucial. Selye defined stress as a state of tension, which can be physiological or psychological in nature. Emotional stress has a negative impact on cognitive activity, which in turn complicates the learning process (Radchenko, 2022).

Stress theory suggests that stressful situations, such as war, have both physical and psychological consequences, affecting the ability to learn. Teachers and students may experience high levels of anxiety due to instability, which can reduce motivation and concentration (Vakulyk, 2025). Therefore, it is essential to examine the factors that contribute to stress in the educational environment and explore effective methods for mitigating its effects. Additionally, the adaptation of curricula and learning materials to crisis conditions must be analysed to ensure educational continuity.

Modern psychological theories covering the issue of stress and ways to overcome it consider this phenomenon as a complex interaction between individual characteristics, external stressors and the social environment. One of



the leading theories is Richard Lazarus's cognitive stress theory, which emphasizes the role of an individual's assessment of a stressful situation. According to this theory, stress arises not only from external events, but also from the subjective perception of a threat or excess of human resources to overcome it. The main mechanism for overcoming stress is coping strategies, which are divided into problem-oriented (aimed at changing the source of stress) and emotion-oriented (aimed at regulating the emotional state) (Tkachenko et al., 2022).

Another important theoretical framework is the theory of self-regulation, which considers the ability of an individual to control his or her emotions, thoughts, and behavior as a key condition for overcoming stressful situations. This theory emphasizes the development of emotional regulation skills, the ability to focus attention, and flexibility of thinking, which allows for effective adaptation to change and maintaining psychological balance.

Positive psychology also makes a significant contribution to the study of stress by offering concepts of resilience and psychological well-being. In particular, the post-traumatic growth model emphasizes the possibility of personal development through the experience of traumatic events that change values, attitudes and interpersonal relationships. In this context, overcoming stress is seen not only as a reduction of negative consequences, but also as a process of personal growth and transformation. Another important model is the biopsychosocial model of stress, which integrates biological, psychological, and social factors in explaining the development of stress reactions and the choice of coping strategies. This model emphasizes the complexity of the adaptation

process and the need for an interdisciplinary approach to create effective interventions.

The social learning theory proposes that people learn from one another through observation, exploration, and behaviour modelling. This process, known as observational learning, explains various forms of behaviour that other learning theories do not fully address. The theory emphasises that learning occurs not only through individual perception but also through interaction with others. During wartime, there may be a need to modify teaching methods, including the integration of distance learning technologies, to maintain access to education while preserving educational quality (Radchenko, 2022).

In addition, it is essential to consider the social and cultural factors that influence the educational process during wartime. Social identity is a component of self-concept, based on an individual's awareness of belonging to a particular social group, accompanied by the emotional significance of this connection (Murtezaj et al., 2024). Social identity theories suggest that collective experiences, such as war, can foster the formation of new social identities, which in turn shape educational practices. Social support and interaction among participants in the educational process are key factors in maintaining psychological well-being under stressful conditions (Kaplánová, 2017). These theoretical foundations provide a basis for further analysis of data on the impact of war on the study of humanities in higher education institutions. In this context, teachers must adapt their teaching methods to create a more supportive learning environment for students experiencing stress and anxiety. It is particularly important to examine the current state of higher education, specifically the learning conditions introduced and how they were restructured as

a result of the war. Many educational institutions were compelled to rapidly transition to distance learning formats due to security threats posed by military conflict (Apakhayev et al., 2024).

This transition presented new challenges for teachers and university administrations in organising the educational process. Educators modified curricula and teaching methods, incorporating tools such as online lectures, webinars, and interactive platforms to ensure uninterrupted access to educational materials and provide academic and emotional support to students during wartime.

However, distance learning has several drawbacks. Students frequently encounter technical difficulties, such as unstable internet connections, inadequate hardware, and limited access to essential resources (Khoda et al., 2024). These challenges can negatively impact the quality of education, preventing students from fully utilising the opportunities provided by distance learning. Therefore, it is crucial for higher education institutions to develop strategies to address these issues and provide appropriate support to students. Internet and power outages have significantly disrupted the learning process, depriving many students of access to learning materials and resources (Dudar et al., 2025). This underscores the need for the technological adaptation of educational processes, particularly the development of new strategies to ensure the continuity of education in unstable situations.

Stress, emotional reactions, and resilience mechanisms in wartime are among the most important aspects of psychological research that have a direct impact on individual and collective human functioning in crisis situations. War creates conditions of significant psycho-emotional stress that threaten not only

physical health but also psychological stability, which directly affects the ability of an individual to adapt to changes and maintain efficiency in everyday activities, including study and work (Oliynyk et al., 2025).

Stress in wartime is complex and occurs as a result of a constant threat to life, loss of loved ones, destruction of social structures, and uncertainty about the future (Efremov, 2025). According to the classical stress theory of Hans Selye, stress is the body's reaction to any stimulus that disrupts its homeostasis, and in the psychological context it manifests itself as tension, anxiety, fear and emotional disturbance. War conditions intensify these reactions, provoking chronic tension that negatively affects cognitive functions, including attention, memory, and decision-making. Constant stress causes a decrease in motivation and disruption of learning activities, which is particularly acute for students and educators (Duanaeva et al., 2023).

Emotional reactions to military events include a wide range of experiences: from fear and anxiety to anger, sadness, despair, and even apathy. These reactions are a natural response of the psyche to traumatic experience, accompanied by a disruption of the normal functioning of the emotional sphere. Young people who are at the stage of psychological development and personality formation are particularly vulnerable. Military conflicts lead to emotional burnout, expressed in chronic fatigue, decreased interest in learning and social interaction, which negatively affects their overall life (Lewinski, 2016).

Resilience mechanisms act as a counterweight to the negative psycho-emotional effects of war. Resilience is understood as an individual's ability to effectively withstand stressors, adapt to change, and maintain mental health in difficult circumstances. It is formed under the influence of both internal

resources, such as resilience, optimism, self-regulation, and social skills, and external factors, such as family support, social support, a stable educational environment, and access to professional psychological help. Psychological resilience helps to reduce anxiety, improve learning, and increase overall resilience (Brovina et al., 2024; Lleshi et al., 2024).

In war, effective resilience-building strategies include learning emotional self-regulation techniques such as meditation, breathing exercises, cognitive behavioral therapy, and creating a safe space to express emotions and receive social support. Adapting learning processes to help reduce cognitive load and maintain motivation to learn is also important. The involvement of psychologists and social workers in educational institutions not only helps to support the emotional health of students and teachers, but also to build a culture of resilience at the community level (Apakhayev et al., 2017).

It is equally important to foster a supportive learning environment that sustains students' interest and motivation. However, the responsibility for supporting students should not rest solely on teachers, as they are also under stress and face their own challenges. Furthermore, most teachers lack specialised training in providing professional psychological support. Instead, it is essential to involve trained specialists who can offer psychological assistance and help students cope with wartime challenges. Thus, providing adequate support requires an integrated approach that involves collaboration between various professionals within the education system.

Table 1 presents data illustrating the impact of war on various aspects of humanities education.



Table 1: Impact of war on the educational process

Criterion	Share of respondents (%)
Psychological pressure	65
Internet and power outages	60
Decreased concentration and motivation	55
Adaptation of teaching methods	70
Simplifying educational materials	40

Source: created by the authors.

The findings presented in Table 1 confirm that students and teachers in higher education institutions face significant challenges during wartime. The first critical factor requiring attention is psychological pressure, which affects the majority of students. War not only has physical consequences but also profoundly impacts the mental and emotional well-being of young people. Psychological pressure manifests in severe anxiety, depression, and sensory disorders, which can lead to poor academic performance (Messina et al., 2023; 2024). The constant fear and unpredictability of military actions negatively affect students’ concentration and their ability to absorb new knowledge. This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that young people – already undergoing psychological development and adaptation – become even more vulnerable to external stressors during wartime.

Another major challenge is interruptions in internet connectivity and electricity, which were reported by the majority of respondents. These disruptions have created additional obstacles in organising distance education,

which has become the primary mode of learning during military operations. The lack of stable internet access has made it impossible for many students to attend online classes, further contributing to a decline in educational engagement (Aviv et al., 2023). Students often experience a sense of hopelessness due to their inability to access learning resources. Additionally, frequent power outages have disrupted the academic schedule, further increasing disorientation and uncertainty among students and teachers alike.

The decline in concentration and motivation, reported by the majority of respondents, has been confirmed as a challenge resulting from a combination of psychological stress and external technical difficulties. Inconsistent learning experiences and the lack of clearly defined goals can lead to frustration, further exacerbating issues related to low academic performance and a perceived lack of purpose in learning (Barabash & Glebova, 2018).

In response to these challenges, most teachers have adapted their teaching methods, transitioning to a blended learning format. This approach provides greater flexibility in pedagogy and helps maintain educational standards even in difficult circumstances. Educators have developed new strategies to meet students' evolving needs, including the integration of technology to compensate for gaps in traditional teaching. Adapting teaching methods is essential to sustaining student engagement, ensuring that learning remains effective regardless of external challenges (Tolkyn et al., 2021).

Additionally, 40% of teachers reported modifying course materials to improve clarity and accessibility. Simplifying educational content is a necessary step in reducing students' cognitive load, particularly during periods of emotional and psychological distress. This indicates that teachers are attuned to

students' needs, recognising that those experiencing heightened stress levels may struggle with complex information. Although simplified materials reduce the cognitive burden, they still enable students to effectively absorb and comprehend new knowledge, even under conditions of increased workload and instability.

Table 2 presents gender differences in perceptions of education during wartime, providing deeper insights into how male and female students responded differently to the challenges faced in the educational process.

**Table 2:** Gender differences in the perception of learning

Criterion	Women (%)	Men (%)
Psychological pressure	65	45
Technical difficulties (internet outages)	35	45
Adaptation of teaching (teachers)	60	40

**Source:** created by the authors.

The results indicate that women were more likely to experience psychological pressure than men, whereas technical difficulties had a greater impact on men’s learning. This suggests that both external conditions and gender factors play a significant role in shaping perceptions of the challenges associated with the wartime educational process. In wartime conditions, women are more likely to experience psychological pressure, which may stem from differences in the perception of stressful situations or from traditional social and cultural expectations placed upon them (Spytska, 2023). Women are more likely to assume responsibility for protecting family well-being and stability, which leads to an increased burden during difficult times (Mirzakhmetova et al., 2024). War also introduces additional challenges that affect caregiving responsibilities,

particularly in relation to family and children, contributing to higher stress levels among women.

Conversely, men reported lower levels of stress related to studying, which is likely due to different priorities and attitudes towards wartime events. Many men are required to focus on external developments and compulsory military mobilisation, which may lead to greater concentration on external events rather than academic concerns. However, men were more likely to report technical difficulties, such as internet disruptions and power outages. This could be attributed to a greater involvement in the technical aspects of learning or a higher dependence on stable access to digital resources. Additionally, social stereotypes may play a role, as men are often expected to resolve technical issues at home and in professional settings, making the lack of technical support during wartime more apparent to them.

Teachers also demonstrated gender differences in their approach to adapting teaching methods. Female teachers were more likely to modify their teaching strategies in response to wartime conditions than their male counterparts. This may suggest that women tend to adopt a more flexible and innovative approach to teaching, taking into account the disruptions caused by war. Their adaptations may make curricula more accessible to students experiencing stress or difficulties in accessing educational resources. In contrast, male teachers may have been more inclined to rely on traditional teaching methods, which they might perceive as requiring fewer adjustments. This preference could be influenced by internal beliefs or external constraints, such as technical limitations or restricted access to new pedagogical methodologies. Table 3 presents the key aspects in which the adaptation of teaching materials to

wartime conditions has influenced students’ perceptions and the overall learning process.

**Table 3:** Adaptation of educational materials

Criterion	Share of students (%)
Growth of digital resources	75
Changes in learning tasks	55
Using flexible deadlines	60

**Source:** created by the authors.

Special attention has been given to the use of digital resources, modification of learning tasks, and introduction of flexible deadlines. These innovations have played a crucial role in supporting the learning process in unstable conditions, enabling students to continue their studies even during times of crisis. As shown in Table 3, the majority of students reported an increase in the availability of digital learning materials, which has been particularly significant during wartime. This shift towards digital formats has helped overcome barriers related to physical access to traditional educational resources. The destruction of infrastructure, travel restrictions, and other wartime challenges have made it difficult to access libraries, textbooks, study guides, and other physical materials (Plakhotnyk & Burian, 2024). In response, teachers have had to rapidly adapt their teaching strategies and prioritise digital resources. The expanded use of digital materials has allowed students to access information at any time and from any location, which is particularly important when access to physical resources is restricted.



Moreover, digital resources have contributed to the continuity of learning despite frequent disruptions in internet connectivity and electricity supply. The integration of e-books, online courses, and other digital tools has become a key component in ensuring the continuation of the educational process (Aviv et al., 2024). However, while the increase in digital resources has facilitated adaptation to new conditions, it has also introduced new challenges. Some students lack access to stable internet connections or appropriate technological equipment, creating inequalities in educational opportunities. As learning materials become increasingly digital, not all students have equal access, which may contribute to disparities in academic performance. Another significant adaptation has been the modification of learning tasks in terms of form and structure. Many students have noted that their learning tasks have become more flexible, which has been crucial for those struggling to adapt to new realities marked by physical and emotional instability. Changes to assignments often involve simplifying structures or shifting the focus from quantitative measures to qualitative ones. For example, instead of assigning a large number of tasks, teachers have allowed students more time to engage deeply with the material and focus on practical tasks with real-life applications. This approach enables students to better manage their study schedules, concentrate on core topics, and reduce the stress associated with multiple simultaneous assignments.

The final aspect of learning material adaptation, as outlined in Table 3, is the implementation of flexible deadlines. Students reported that deadlines had become more adaptable and better aligned with academic demands in an unstable environment. Setting flexible deadlines plays a crucial role in reducing stress and facilitating the learning process, enabling students to adjust their

studies according to their individual schedules and circumstances. For example, students may lose access to the internet, be forced to relocate or evacuate due to security threats, and consequently struggle to meet rigid academic deadlines. In such cases, flexible deadlines allow students to complete their assignments without undue pressure. This approach enables students to focus on the quality of their work rather than merely meeting deadlines, promoting deeper engagement with the material and enhancing learning outcomes. Additionally, it allows students to work at their own pace and plan their studies more effectively, which has had a positive impact on academic performance. However, as with other adaptive measures, flexible deadlines may also present challenges. Some students may experience a decline in motivation or procrastinate, leading to an accumulation of unfinished assignments. This, in turn, can increase stress levels and negatively impact academic performance. At the same time, flexible deadlines have served as a lifeline for many students, helping them manage pressure effectively and maintain a high standard of education during wartime.

An analysis of educational material adaptation during wartime suggests that these modifications have had both positive and negative effects on the educational process. The increased use of digital resources, curricular adjustments, and flexible deadlines have enabled students to better cope with the challenges posed by wartime conditions. These innovations have contributed to a more flexible and inclusive learning environment, ensuring that students can continue their education despite the crisis. However, some students have faced new challenges, particularly in self-managing their academic workload and time. Technical difficulties, such as internet connectivity issues and power outages, continue to hinder access to digital resources, resulting in unequal learning

opportunities. Despite these obstacles, the implementation of adaptive learning methods has proven essential in maintaining continuity in education. Table 4 presents data on the emotional state of students and teachers, derived from a survey assessing the impact of stress and anxiety on the educational process.

**Table 4:** Emotional state of students and teachers

Criterion	Share of students (%)	Share of teachers (%)
Emotional state assessment at level 3 and below (on a 5-point scale)	70	60
Feeling emotionally exhausted	60	50
Emotional support (provided by teachers)	65	-

**Source:** created by the authors.

These data were obtained using the Spielberger-Khanina anxiety scale, a method designed to assess emotional states and examine the impact of stress and anxiety on the educational process. The indicators reflect the emotional difficulties faced by participants in the educational system and highlight the importance of psychological support provided by teachers. In a situation of continuous stress and unpredictable events, mental health becomes a key factor that significantly influences both the educational process and classroom activities. Adaptation to wartime conditions requires not only modifications to educational materials and learning formats but also consideration of the psychological well-being of students and teachers (Bocheliuk et al., 2022). In this context, the results presented in Table 4 emphasise the need to prioritise mental health, particularly through the organisation of psychological support and

counselling services. These initiatives are essential in helping both students and teachers cope with emotional strain and fatigue.

The findings indicate that 70% of students rated their emotional state at level 3 or below on a five-point scale, highlighting serious mental health concerns among students during wartime. The deterioration of students' mental well-being can be attributed to several factors. Constant exposure to news of conflict, destruction of infrastructure, and human casualties exerts significant psychological pressure, leading many students to fear for their own safety and that of their loved ones. This factor is particularly critical for students living in conflict zones or those who have been forcibly displaced from their homes. The combination of wartime conditions and academic pressure further exacerbates stress levels. Despite the implementation of simplified assignments and flexible deadlines, students still face difficulties in meeting academic demands due to limited access to the internet, electricity, and essential learning resources. This situation often leads to feelings of helplessness and frustration, increasing negative emotions and further affecting academic performance. It is important to acknowledge that, during war, some students struggle to concentrate on their studies due to mental exhaustion and may experience a significant decline in motivation.

Another critical indicator is emotional exhaustion, which reflects a deep level of emotional and physical strain caused by chronic stress and the inability to fully recover from wartime conditions. Mental stress can manifest in various ways, including fatigue, apathy, loss of interest in learning, and even physical symptoms such as headaches and sleep disturbances (Barbagallo et al., 2025). Teachers are not immune to these challenges. Like students, they must adapt to

new circumstances, overcome technical and emotional difficulties, and simultaneously maintain academic standards. For many teachers, the war has brought not only professional stress but also personal distress, as they grapple with concerns about their own safety and that of their loved ones. Despite these hardships, they continue to play a key role in supporting students, ensuring that the educational process remains as stable as possible.

The emotional resilience of teachers is influenced by several key factors. Constant adaptation to new teaching methods and the need to sustain student motivation in wartime require significant effort. Teachers often work in challenging conditions, facing technological limitations and curriculum changes, which demand continuous adjustment. As a result, they may experience psychological crises that hinder their ability to effectively perform their professional duties.

One of the key consequences of providing emotional support to students is the emotional strain placed on teachers. As shown in Table 4, 65% of students reported receiving emotional support from their teachers. This reflects a high level of commitment among educators to creating a positive learning environment that considers the emotional needs of students. Emotional support can be offered through individual consultations, group meetings, and even adapted curricula designed to reduce academic pressure. Teachers are perceived not only as a source of knowledge but also as a source of emotional support, helping students cope with stress by providing a space to express their feelings and discuss their challenges. The emotional state of both students and teachers plays a crucial role in determining the overall quality of the educational process (Shalgynbayeva et al., 2014). A decline in emotional well-being and a lack of



validation can significantly impact academic performance and motivation. Students experiencing mental stress may struggle to concentrate on their studies, leading to a deterioration in performance. Similarly, teachers under stress may be less effective in their teaching, ultimately affecting the quality of education. The issue of emotional support is particularly critical during wartime, when traditional support systems, such as social interactions and a stable learning environment, become less accessible. Under these circumstances, teachers play a pivotal role in supporting students' mental well-being. Educators who demonstrate empathy and actively engage with their students can significantly reduce stress levels and help maintain motivation for learning, even in the face of wartime challenges (Baizhumanova et al., 2024; Dudar, 2024).

Practical solutions and recommendations aimed at overcoming stressors at different educational levels should be based on a comprehensive approach that takes into account the specifics of age and learning conditions. At primary and secondary levels of education, it is important to create a safe and supportive environment where children can openly express their emotions and receive psychological support from teachers and parents. It is recommended to introduce programs to develop emotional literacy and self-regulation skills to help students recognize and manage their emotions, reducing anxiety. Teachers should ensure that teaching materials and methods are adapted to reduce cognitive load, using interactive games and creative tasks that help maintain interest in learning even under stressful conditions. In higher education, it is recommended to introduce flexible curricula and deadlines for completing assignments, which allows students to adapt their studies to their personal circumstances, especially in times of instability. It is important for teachers to develop competencies in

psychological support for students, as well as to collaborate with mental health professionals to organize consultations and trainings on resilience development. Digital platforms play a significant role, which should be as accessible and convenient as possible for students, and should include the integration of resources to support their psycho-emotional state. In addition, the development of student communities and volunteer movements that create an atmosphere of mutual assistance and social protection should be encouraged.

## 4. Discussion

In times of war and conflict, the higher education system encounters numerous challenges that demand immediate adaptation and transformation. This section examines several studies that explore the synergy between social and institutional changes in higher education, particularly in Ukraine, and their impact on the educational process during military operations.

In their study, Havryliuk et al. (2024) investigated the synergistic effects of social and institutional transformations in higher education in the context of Ukraine's military reconstruction. This research focuses on the preservation and expansion of universities' educational potential, the revival of knowledge-intensive technologies, and the transformation of the education system. The study analyses the interactions between institutional and social changes, highlighting the need for modernising the Ukrainian higher education system. This modernisation involves the integration of the labour market into the educational environment and the implementation of a comprehensive approach to the renewal of higher education under martial law conditions. The findings underscore the necessity of adapting the educational process, particularly by

emphasising the importance of the humanities and critical thinking. This confirms the conclusion that the modernisation of education systems must encompass both social and institutional reforms to ensure effective education delivery during wartime. Thus, both studies highlight the critical role of integrating the labour market with the education system and adapting educational materials as part of the broader effort to rebuild education during wartime.

Conversely, Kester (2024) examines the conflicts in Afghanistan and Somaliland (a self-proclaimed, unrecognised state in northern Somalia) and explores how military conflict impacts educational processes and teaching methods. Through interviews with teachers, the study reveals that teaching strategies during conflict can undergo significant transformations, producing both positive and negative effects on student learning. On the positive side, teachers demonstrate flexibility in adapting their teaching methods to challenging conditions, incorporating modern technologies and innovative approaches to ensure continued access to education during wartime. These adaptations may include conducting online courses, utilising mobile applications for distance learning, and modifying materials to suit extreme conditions. Such strategies can help sustain learning during crises, fostering student motivation and maintaining the stability of the educational process. However, there are also negative consequences. The constant shifts in teaching methods can lead to instability in the learning process, making it difficult for students to absorb material effectively and increasing overall stress levels. Additionally, the absence of a structured learning framework, frequent changes in teaching approaches, and limited access to resources can diminish learning effectiveness, lower the quality of student training, and even impair cognitive abilities.

Research conducted in the Ukrainian conflict context underscores the critical need to adapt teaching materials to crisis situations. It highlights the importance of revising approaches to teaching humanities subjects, ensuring that they more accurately reflect the current challenges and realities faced by students.

Similarly, Kruszewska and Lavrenova (2024) examined the educational opportunities available to Ukrainian children during the war. Their study focused on distance education in conflict situations and the challenges faced by teachers and students. They emphasised the necessity of addressing students' psychological well-being and the difficulties in organising effective learning processes under such conditions. The findings highlight the urgent need to develop a dedicated platform to support distance learning and address the institutional challenges faced by educational institutions under martial law. Additionally, the study stresses the importance of psychological support for students in the humanities, recognising it as a key component in effectively preparing the education system for crisis situations.

Several studies provide valuable insights for analysing different aspects of education during war and conflict situations. Wang (2022) examined how Chinese higher education institutions, particularly universities in southern China, functioned during wartime. Following the conflict, universities were forced to relocate to the northern province of Guangdong to continue their academic activities. This study explores how the geographical displacement of universities influenced not only the modernisation of the higher education system but also curriculum development and teaching methodologies. Wang highlighted that historical context played a crucial role in shaping the subsequent localisation of academic research in China. In this regard, the author underscores the significant

role of digital technologies and innovative methods in ensuring the continuity of education. However, after an initial period of widespread digital adoption, the use of these technologies became more restricted. The study also addresses challenges faced by Ukrainian higher education during wartime, noting that martial law in Ukraine has reinforced the importance of distance learning and technological innovations in maintaining the educational process.

While Wang's (2022) study focuses on the physical relocation of universities, the present research highlights digitalisation as a key response to wartime challenges. Martial law in Ukraine has demonstrated the crucial role of distance learning and digital technologies in sustaining the educational process. In times of crisis, when students and teachers face physical mobility restrictions, online platforms serve as an essential tool for educational continuity. However, this shift also presents new challenges, such as internet accessibility and the adaptation of teaching methods to digital formats. Conversely, digital learning offers educational access to students in war-affected regions, but it also demands new skills from teachers and requires students to develop greater autonomy in their learning.

Bohomaz et al. (2024) examined how digital technologies have fundamentally transformed approaches to humanities education and emphasised the role of live communication in maintaining high-quality learning. The authors also highlighted that technology in distance education plays a crucial role in supporting the intellectual, social, and emotional dimensions of education. This study shares similarities with the current research, as both explore the impact of digital technologies on the educational process. However, while Bohomaz et al. analyse the challenges posed by the pandemic, the present study focuses



specifically on the challenges arising from military conflict and examines the effects of war on the emotional well-being of students and teachers. Both studies underscore the importance of digital technologies in sustaining education during times of crisis, yet this research places greater emphasis on the emotional and psychological aspects, particularly in terms of mental health support for participants in the educational process during wartime.

Similarly, Raccanello et al. (2024) conducted a study on the psychological impact of the war in Ukraine on students from different regions. The researchers explored how students coped with emotional stress and anxiety caused by the conflict, identifying anger and fear as the most prevalent emotions. The findings highlight the need for policy recommendations to mitigate the negative psychological effects of war on students, even for those who are not direct victims of the conflict. The study also acknowledges the importance of mental health in a wartime educational environment. However, in contrast to D. Raccanello et al.'s study, which focuses on the psychological aspects of war's impact on students, the present study primarily examines challenges in the educational process and explores technological solutions to ensure continuity of learning during wartime. While psychological factors remain a significant consideration, this research places a stronger emphasis on the practical aspects of organising distance education in conflict situations.

Kaplia et al. (2024) emphasised that the war has compelled educational institutions to prioritise the digitalisation of education and adopt new models for organising both educational processes and scientific activities. Their study analyses the impact of digital technologies on different generations of students and teachers, offering recommendations to mitigate potential risks associated

with digitalisation. The present study is closely related to the research conducted by Kaplia et al., as both examine the digital transformation of education in wartime conditions. However, while Kaplia et al.'s study focuses on general trends in the digitalisation of education during conflict, the current research delves deeper into specific educational challenges encountered by Ukrainian universities.

Similarly, Artyukhov et al. (2024) conducted a study to assess the scientific discourse on sustainability in education. Using bibliographic analysis tools such as Zozulak App and VOSviewer, the authors examined 2,797 publications from the Scopus database spanning the period 2000-2024. Their research centred on key aspects such as the adaptation and reconstruction of the education system during wartime. The authors highlighted the importance of a multidisciplinary approach in the study of educational resilience and noted the active involvement of Ukrainian scholars in this field of research. Although both studies address educational resilience, they differ in their context and scope. Artyukhov et al. conducted a global-level bibliographic analysis, drawing on a wide range of academic publications to assess the development of research and academic networks related to educational resilience in conflict settings. Conversely, the present study focuses on Ukraine's national context, allowing for a more detailed examination of how the war has affected the educational process within a specific country. This approach also enables the development of recommendations for the post-war restoration of Ukraine's education system.

Thus, the analysis of various studies on the challenges faced by higher education during wartime and conflict situations highlights the necessity of comprehensive adaptation measures to ensure the effective functioning of

educational institutions under such conditions. A central aspect of these measures is the modernisation of institutional and socio-pedagogical approaches, which enhance the flexibility and resilience of the education system (Sharata et al., 2023). As research has shown, war necessitates not only curricular and pedagogical modifications but also a closer integration of the labour market into the educational environment to better prepare students for emerging challenges. Additionally, an essential component in mitigating stress, anxiety, and other adverse effects of armed conflict is the provision of psychological support for both students and teachers. Such support plays a crucial role in sustaining learning motivation and fostering a positive educational environment.

## Conclusion

The study of the humanities education process in higher education institutions under martial law has produced a range of scientific and practical findings, highlighting the impact of hostilities on the educational process and the interaction between teachers and students. The primary objectives of this study were to determine how the war has affected the organisation of education, the adaptation of teachers and students to new circumstances, and changes in their emotional and psychological well-being. Based on the quantitative and qualitative analysis involving 200 respondents (150 students and 50 teachers), the study identified several solutions to emerging challenges and confirmed the complexity of educational processes in crisis situations. Quantitative analysis revealed that war significantly influences students' and teachers' perceptions of the educational process. In particular, students reported a decline in concentration and motivation, primarily due to persistent stress caused by

military actions and the difficulties associated with transitioning to distance learning. Most respondents expressed concerns over frequent power outages and internet disruptions, which result in missed classes and hinder effective learning.

Beyond organisational difficulties, the study also identified gender differences in the perception of the educational process. According to the collected data, female students were more likely to experience psychological stress and exhaustion, largely due to balancing academic responsibilities with caregiving duties and heightened anxiety caused by the war. Although male students demonstrated greater adaptability to the new learning conditions, they also reported difficulties related to preparing for military service. These gender differences are significant indicators for enhancing educational programmes by incorporating individualised support strategies for students of different genders. Findings from the survey of humanities teachers identified key challenges faced in teaching under martial law. Teachers emphasised the need to adapt educational programmes and materials to the new reality, including the transition to distance learning and the use of online tools. One of the primary issues was providing students with essential learning resources, given unreliable internet access. Furthermore, teachers noted a growing demand for psychological support among students, recognising it as a critical component of a successful educational process.

The results indicate the urgent need to revise humanities curricula and teaching materials, particularly in the context of military conflicts. The practical recommendations include expanding psychological support programmes for students, enhancing teachers' skills in working under crisis conditions, and developing adaptive learning strategies to improve educational resilience.

The results of the study can be applied at all educational levels, as stress and emotional burden are relevant to primary, secondary, and higher education. However, it is important to take into account the specifics of each level: at the primary level, the creation of a supportive environment, at the secondary and higher levels, the development of self-regulation and flexible curricula. At the same time, the implementation is complicated by problems with recruiting participants, especially in times of war, due to limited mobility and security. Therefore, innovative forms of learning, such as distance and blended learning, as well as collaboration with educational institutions and the community are needed to maximize support for students and learners. Despite the challenges, these findings will help to develop effective support strategies at all levels of education.

The limitations of this study include the narrow sample, as respondents were drawn from only one educational institution, and the inability to account for all potential factors influencing the impact of war on the educational process. Future research should focus on a broader range of educational institutions and students, enabling a more comprehensive assessment of the effects of war on humanities education and the identification of additional measures to enhance educational effectiveness.

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### **Conflict of interest and originality declaration**

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