

JOURNALISM EDUCATION IN TIMES OF WAR: NEW CHALLENGES AND ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

Svitlana Fiialka,¹

Doctor of Science, Associate Professor, Department of Publishing and Editing
National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute", Ukraine

fiyalka@i.ua

ORCID: 0000-0002-1855-7574

Zoia Kornieva,²

Doctor of Science (Pedagogics), Full Professor, Department of Theory, Practice and
Translation of the English Language

National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute", Kyiv,
Ukraine

kornieva.zoia@ill.kpi.ua

ORCID: 0000-0002-8848-4323

Abstract. *In this study, the issues, and prospects of journalistic education in times of Russian-Ukrainian war are highlighted. By analyzing the adaptation processes and the incorporation of innovative technologies, we aim to understand how students navigate the unique challenges posed by wartime conditions. **Method.** In-depth interviews were conducted among fourth-year bachelor students majoring in journalism at the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute" regarding the impact of war on journalism education, the students' perceptions of journalistic ethics, motivations, necessary skills, and psychological resilience in adapting to wartime conditions, etc. The interviews were meticulously recorded and analyzed to identify recurring patterns, divergent viewpoints, and emergent themes. **Findings.** The results underscore the multifaceted challenges faced by students in wartime. The students emphasized the necessity in training in safety, ethical norms in journalism, conflict, sensitivity, and advocated for the adaptability of educational programs, integration of real-life scenarios, and the cultivation of critical thinking. Additionally, participants stressed the importance of fostering resilience and providing psychological support mechanisms for students. **Implications for research and practice.** The findings highlight the importance of integrating critical thinking skills and promoting media literacy to prepare journalists for professional coverage of war-related aspects and emphasize the necessity of collaboration between the university, media organizations and the government to ensure quality updates to educational programs. This research contributes to the development of scholarly discourse on journalistic education under crisis conditions.*

Keywords: *journalism education, in-depth interview, Russian-Ukrainian war, innovative technologies, critical thinking, information literacy, digital literacy.*

¹ Corresponding author, responsible for Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft

² Co-author, responsible for Writing - Original Draft, Review and Editing, Project Administration

1. INTRODUCTION

The transformation of journalistic education in times of war, particularly within the context of Ukraine, presents a complex and pressing issue. War conditions necessitate significant shifts in journalistic education, particularly in cultivating critical thinking and media literacy among students due to heightened propaganda and misinformation campaigns. The Russian-Ukrainian war has forced students to adapt to new realities, particularly to studying in situations where physical attendance at the university has become dangerous. Digital technologies play a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of education, providing remote access to educational resources. However, students face numerous challenges, which can complicate the learning process.

Existing literature offers fragmented insights into the Ukrainian experience, alongside glimpses into similar contexts in the Middle East. The majority of works are dedicated to journalistic education as a whole, immersive and safety journalism, specific avenues of journalistic education development, and forecasting future prospects. However, a notable gap remains in comprehensively exploring the challenges and potential pathways specific to the transformation of journalistic education amidst the backdrop of war. This article aims to address this gap by critically examining existing literature while offering new perspectives on the challenges and possibilities inherent in the evolution of journalistic education under Ukraine's wartime conditions.

Literature review

Existing literature on journalism education has touched upon various aspects relevant to the Ukrainian context. Solkin (2022) conducted a general review of the scientific literature on journalism education, while Lavrysh, et al. (2022) and Marchenko (2023) specifically highlighted the adaptation of higher education to military realities and the impact of war on education quality. Semerikov, et al. (2023) further explored these themes, emphasizing challenges facing distance learning during martial law.

The quality of online learning is influenced by various factors, which can be broadly classified into:

- a) factors related to the qualities of the teacher (proficiency in online teaching and the required competencies for this mode of education);
- b) factors related to the organization of online learning (access to necessary materials, quality of equipment, and internet connectivity);
- c) factors regarding the learners' characteristics and engagement in the learning process (Marchenko, 2023, p. 52).

Despite the ongoing war challenges, the Ukrainian education system has shown remarkable resilience, continuing to meet educational needs (Semerikov, et al., 2023).

Meanwhile, journalism university programs all over the world encounter external comparison and competition from polytechnics, vocational schools, and popular education institutions, which offer degrees in journalism (Drok, 2019). Significant attention is paid to the decolonization of journalism curricula to produce civic-minded professionals better prepared for reporting on multicultural societies (Aujla-Sidhu, 2022). This approach is essential in conflict zones where understanding diverse perspectives can aid in more accurate and unbiased reporting.

The **objectives** of the study are following:

1) to investigate how the war influences journalism students' ethical considerations, their motivations for choosing a career path, and their focus on developing skills necessary for handling crisis situations, as well as building psychological resilience;

2) to analyze the shift towards alternative educational resources, such as online courses, webinars, and self-directed learning, because of the war impact on traditional learning formats. Additionally, to assess how the integration of innovative technologies in journalistic education in wartime enhances students' abilities to critically analyze diverse information sources and improve media literacy;

3) to identify the importance of collaborative efforts between academic institutions, media organizations, and governmental bodies in addressing the challenges faced by journalistic education in times of war.

This article aims to perceive how wartime conditions reshape journalism education, including ethical standards, understanding of professional identities, educational resources, etc.

This study focuses on exploring the adaptation of journalistic education in response to the unique challenges posed by wartime conditions, with a particular emphasis on the integration of innovative technologies, the development of critical thinking skills, and the promotion of media literacy.

2. METHODS

Research model/Design

The study employed in-depth interviews with students from the Department of Publishing and Editing at Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute regarding the impact of war on journalism education, the students' perceptions of journalistic ethics, motivations, necessary skills, and psychological resilience in adapting to wartime conditions, etc.

Sample/Participants

The study involved 15 fourth-year bachelor's students majoring in Journalism (Specialty 061) who were interested in the research topic and agreed to participate in it.

Instruments and procedure

The data were collected by interviewing students individually in June 2024. The students were writing their bachelor projects, and they were in the final stage of their bachelor degrees.

The interview questions were structured to elicit detailed responses regarding the participants' views, and experiences. We asked questions from the list, but took into account the extended answers and detailed stories of the students, asked clarifying questions, and maintained a dialogue.

Once participants were identified, informed consent was obtained, and individual in-depth interviews were conducted using the Zoom video conferencing tool. Audio data were stored. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission to ensure accurate data collection. Subsequently, the recorded interviews were transcribed and analyzed thematically to identify common patterns, emerging themes, and insightful perspectives regarding journalistic education in times of war. The semi-structured composition contained several questions on students' expectations from journalistic education, and its orientation towards professional coverage of aspects related to the war.

The length of the interviews ranged from 35 to 48 minutes. The total duration of all interview data was 11 hours and 15 minutes. The interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Data analysis

The first stage involved organizing and clearing the collected data to ensure its accuracy and readiness for analysis. Tasks included transcribing the recorded interviews, verifying data integrity, and handling any missing or incomplete information.

Thematic coding was applied to the transcribed interviews to identify recurring themes, topics, and patterns related to the impact of war on journalism education, the students' perceptions of journalistic ethics, motivations, necessary skills, and psychological resilience in adapting to wartime conditions. Exploratory data analysis techniques were used to gain insights into the dataset through visualizations and summary statistics. This helps to identify trends, relationships, and outliers within the interview data.

Patterns and trends identified during data exploration were further analyzed to understand their implications for journalistic education in times of war. This involved examining how students' perceptions and expectations align with the challenges and perspectives outlined in the article's focus.

The findings from thematic coding, data exploration, and pattern recognition were synthesized to draw conclusions about the transformation of journalistic education in times of war. This stage involved interpreting the data in the context of the study's research questions and objectives.

Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the characteristics of the participants' responses, providing an overview of their perceptions and expectations. Content analysis techniques were used to systematically analyze the transcribed interviews and identify recurring themes and patterns.

Thematic coding was used to categorize and code the interview data. Comparative analysis techniques were applied to compare and contrast the responses of different participants, exploring variations in perceptions and expectations related to journalistic education in times of war.

Ethical issues

Participants gave their informed consent for participating in the study (were informed of the withdrawing possibility, with no other consequences on their status). In order to preserve confidentiality and anonymity, the names of the research participants are not given.

3. RESULTS

At first, students were asked four questions:

1. How has the war affected your perception of ethical standards in journalism?
2. How has the war changed your motivation for pursuing a career in journalism?
3. What skills do you consider critically important for a journalist working during the war, and how have you developed them during your studies?
4. What strategies do you use to maintain psychological resilience while studying in wartime conditions?

In response to the first question, all students indicated that the war made them reconsider their views on journalistic ethics. Specifically, they emphasized their disapproval of instances in journalism where the pain and suffering of victims were exploited: "We must

be careful not to use the suffering of victims for hype” (S 1), “During the war, it is especially important to be responsible for every word, as false information can cause panic or increase tensions” (S 2), “We must carefully assess the potential impact of our material on victims and the audience. Sensationalism and shocking details can do more harm than good” (S 3), “When conducting interviews with people who have experienced the war, we need to be highly sensitive to their emotional states and respect their privacy” (S 4), “The experience of war has taught us to be more attentive and compassionate. We must strive to provide the support that victims need” (S 13), “It is important to avoid emotionally charged language that may manipulate the perception of events. Our language should be neutral and objective” (S 15). Students also emphasized the importance of protecting the anonymity of sources, especially in temporarily occupied territories: “Protecting the anonymity of individuals as sources of information is critical, especially in temporarily occupied territories where their lives may be at risk” (S 9), “The war has made me respect freedom of speech more and understand the importance of information hygiene in wartime conditions” (S 14).

Then students noted that the war significantly impacted their motivation and professional interests: “The war highlighted the importance of journalism as a tool for social change. I feel a greater responsibility to report the truth and combat disinformation to help people better understand the situation” (S 2); “The war has sparked an interest in specialized fields of journalism, such as military journalism or covering humanitarian crises” (S 4), “My motivation has changed; I feel I can be of service by working in conflict zones and helping to provide unbiased coverage of events” (S 5), “The war made me think about the humanitarian aspect of journalism. Now I am more focused on covering stories about affected people and giving a voice to those who are usually overlooked” (S 6); “I had previously planned to work in IT media, but the war changed my plans. Now I want to work in organizations investigating human rights violations or in non-governmental organizations” (S 10), “I became more interested in local journalism as an essential tool for informing local communities” (S 12), “The war has shown the importance of critically analyzing information. I want to be part of a media environment that fights propaganda and provides accurate data to the audience” (S 13), “The war sparked my interest in international journalism” (S 14), “I started to be interested in investigative journalism. I want to engage in investigative journalism and cover corruption and abuses related to the war” (S 15). The changes in professional interests from the time of entry to the completion of the bachelor’s program are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Transformation of professional interests from the time of entry (2020) to the completion of the bachelor program (2024)

Professional field	Interested at the time of enrollment (2020)	Interested at the end of the bachelor's program (2024)
Military journalism	S 13	S 4, S 5, S 8, S 13, S 14
Human rights journalism	S 2, S 3	S 2, S 3, S 4, S 6, S 10, S 15
Local journalism	S 1, S 3, S 5, S 11, S 13	S 11, S 12, S 13
International journalism	S 1	S 1, S 5, S 10, S 14
Investigative journalism	S 1, S 4	S 1, S 2, S 5, S 13, S 15

Professional field	Interested at the time of enrollment (2020)	Interested at the end of the bachelor's program (2024)
Popular science journalism	S 6, S 8, S 12	S 6, S 12
Specialized journalism (e.g., economics, medicine, technology)	S 3, S 7, S 10, S 11, S 13, S 15	S 3, S 6, S 7, S 11
Journalism in the fields of culture, sports, fashion, hobbies, and entertainment	S 1, S 2, S 4, S 5, S 9, S 14	S 1, S 2, S 10
Other	S 8	S 9

In response to the question about skills critically important for journalists working during the war, students highlighted several key abilities. Critical thinking, information and digital literacy skills were emphasized: “Fact-checking is one of the most crucial skills, especially during the war, when misinformation can be deadly. We developed this skill by analyzing various sources of information and doing exercises to detect fakes” (S 1), “At our classes we evaluate arguments, identify fallacies, and develop well-reasoned conclusions” (S 3), “We are encouraged to analyze complex scenarios, weigh evidence, and propose solutions based on our findings. Through debates and discussion-based classes, teachers create the environment where students must articulate and defend their viewpoints while considering and countering opposing perspectives, thus enhancing our critical thinking skills” (S 4), “University library offers workshops and courses on research methods and information retrieval techniques. These resources teach us how to effectively search for, evaluate, and use academic and non-academic sources” (S 7), “Assignments and projects frequently involve evaluating and synthesizing information from multiple sources. This practice helps us build the ability to critically assess and evaluate information” (S 9), “We develop digital literacy through courses on digital tools and technologies. These courses cover a range of skills, from basic computer usage to advanced data analysis and digital communication techniques” (S 10), “Students are often required to use digital platforms for collaboration, research, and presentation. Training in these platforms helps us to become proficient in digital tools and understand how to effectively manage and communicate information online” (S 14).

The ability to work under extreme conditions was also noted: “We are adapting to work under conditions of power outages and shelling. It is challenging, but we need to remain productive and resilient. The war demands physical and psychological endurance. We worked on this through stress management training, physical exercises, and relaxation techniques to be prepared for working in extreme conditions” (S3), “We learned to adapt to different working conditions, which is essential in crisis situations. For example, when teaching formats changed for safety reasons, we quickly transitioned to online learning and mastered new tools” (S6).

Upholding ethical standards, empathy and sensitivity towards those affected were also considered crucial: “We understand the importance of empathy when covering the war. At lectures and training sessions, we learned how to conduct interviews with victims, considering their emotional states” (S8), “Upholding ethical standards is always important, but it becomes even more critical during the war. We studied journalistic ethics, reviewed real cases, and discussed how to avoid bias and discrimination” (S9).

Teamwork was also highlighted: “During the war, journalists often work in teams. We developed teamwork skills through group projects, where we learned to coordinate our actions, communicate effectively, and support each other” (S13). Lastly, foreign language skills were emphasized: “Knowledge of foreign languages is essential, especially for working internationally or interacting with foreign media. We developed this set of skills through specialized courses, reading international news, and communicating with foreign professors and students” (S15) (Table 2).

Table 2. Essential skills identified by students

Skill	Number of students
Critical thinking, information and digital literacy skills	15
Psychological resilience, the ability to work under extreme conditions	13
Upholding ethical standards, empathy in reporting	12
Teamwork	11
Foreign language skills	11

Students also shared several effective ways they maintain psychological resilience during their studies amidst the war: regular physical activity (“For me, it’s important to stay physically active, even if it’s just a jog or yoga session. It helps relieve stress and improve mood, which is crucial under such challenging study conditions” (S 6)), clear planning and time management (“I try to plan my day clearly and prioritize tasks to avoid overloading myself. This helps prevent the stress of unfinished tasks and gives a sense of control over the situation in remote learning conditions” (S 7)), support from family and friends (“Staying connected with family and friends is a vital source of support. We often talk, share our feelings, and support each other. It helps not to feel alone in tough times” (S 8)), hobbies and leisure activities (“I make time for my favorite activities, like reading, writing poetry, and playing the violin. It allows me to unwind, relax, and recharge” (S 11)), limiting news consumption (“I try to limit watching the news and browsing social media to avoid overwhelming myself with negative information. Instead, I choose reliable sources and only read the news at certain times to stay informed” (S 12)), professional help (“I consult a psychologist who helps me cope with emotional challenges. It helps me find new ways to deal with stress and maintain emotional balance” (S 13)), support from the student community (“Connecting with other students helps me feel supported and understood. We discuss our difficulties, share our problems, help each other, and participate in volunteer activities” (S 14)), relaxation (“I try to focus on the positive aspects of life, even in difficult conditions. It could be something simple, like a walk in the park or a pleasant small purchase. These moments help maintain optimism and hope” (S 15)).

Then we asked the students the next set of questions:

1. What alternative educational resources do you use during your studies under wartime conditions?
2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of distance learning compared to traditional classes?
3. Do you believe that the use of innovative technologies in journalism education during the war improved your critical analysis skills?
4. What challenges did you encounter while using online resources for learning?

Regarding the first question, students mentioned using large-scale online courses, webinars from professionals (“I often used online courses on the Coursera platform, particularly a course on media literacy” (S 2), “I regularly take courses from Litosvita” (S 13), “Webinars from leading journalists and media experts have become an important source of new knowledge for me” (S 6)), YouTube (“The YouTube platform helped me to improve my article writing skills and learn new editing tools, including fact-checking” (S 7)), books (“I read books and studies available in open access to gain a deeper understanding of topics like journalism ethics and human rights” (S 10)), participation in online discussions (“I participated in online discussions and forums on journalism and media issues to exchange experiences with other students and professionals” (S 5), “I regularly read the Facebook pages of editors Olga Vasylieva and Yulia Moroz and others” (S 15)), participation in academic events (“I registered for several free online journalism conferences” (S 7), “I regularly participate in academic conferences and have published six academic articles, including two in Scopus-indexed journals. I’m going to continue my academic activities” (S 4)).

Comparing distance learning with traditional education, students noted several advantages, such as safety (“I can study with less risk of being caught under shelling” (S 1), “I am learning from a safe place abroad” (S 3), “Digital technologies have become an integral part of our education, allowing us to maintain contact with professors and classmates, even when it’s physically impossible to be at the university due to the danger of shelling” (S 7), “Online tools, such as video conferencing platforms, allow us to continue our education even during air raid alerts when we have to stay home or in shelters” (S 13)), convenience and flexibility (“Distance courses offer more flexibility, allowing me to study at convenient times” (S 4), “Distance courses can be integrated into my schedule, especially during the war when access to the university is limited” (S 7), “Distance courses allow me to rewatch lectures, which helps better understand complex topics” (S 9), “I like the ability to study at my own pace that distance courses offer” (S 11), “Distance courses and webinars often focus on practical skills and allow me to choose courses that interest me specifically” (S 10), “Thanks to distance courses, I could study topics not included in our university curriculum” (S 12)), and the opportunity for wider communication (“Distance courses provide the opportunity to communicate with students from around the world, broadening my perspective and helping me improve my foreign language skills” (S 15)).

At the same time, students noted several disadvantages of distance learning, such as the lack of interaction with instructors and other students (“The lack of direct interaction with instructors sometimes makes it difficult to understand the material” (S 1), “I feel that traditional classes provide a more structured approach to learning and a systematic development of knowledge” (S 5), “I like the ability to study at my own pace that online

courses offer. However, the loss of the ability to immediately get answers to questions from instructors or discuss them with classmates reduces the effectiveness of learning” (S 12), “I miss the lively discussions and debates we had in traditional classes, especially when discussing complex ethical issues” (S 14)), loss of motivation (“I find it difficult to maintain self-discipline. University classes require discipline and give a sense of responsibility” (S 3)) (Table 2).

Table 3. Traditional vs Distance learning

Aspect	Traditional learning	Distance learning
Safety	More risk of being caught under shelling	Less risk of being caught under shelling, learning staying home or in shelters
Interaction	Face-to-face, personal guidance	Virtual, limited personal contact, but the opportunity to communicate with students and teachers from around the world
Convenience and flexibility	Fixed schedules, accessibility dependent on location	Flexible, self-paced, accessible from anywhere, access to global resources
Motivation	It depends on teaching quality, classroom environment, course content, goals, peer interaction, feedback, resources, personal interest	Loss of motivation, it is difficult to maintain self-discipline

The use of innovative technologies in journalism education during the war has improved critical information analysis skills: “Using analytical tools and fact-checking platforms has helped me quickly and accurately determine the reliability of information, which is especially important during the war” (S 5), “Thanks to the use of social media monitoring programs, I have learned to track and analyze trends” (S 11), “Innovative tools for text and semantic analysis have helped me better understand context and subtext in news materials” (S 12). Students also noted other advantages of using innovative technologies: “The application of artificial intelligence technologies helps me receive feedback on my work” (S 1), “Using ChatGPT for analyzing large volumes of text has helped me quickly identify key themes and patterns, facilitating critical information analysis” (S 8), “Information visualization platforms have helped me understand how graphic elements can change the perception of information and influence the audience” (S 11), “Media trend monitoring and analysis tools have helped me keep track of changes in information campaigns and understand how they affect public opinion” (S 14).

Among the challenges faced by students when using online resources for learning, the following were highlighted: lack of electricity, technical problems (“Issues with technical equipment, such as an old computer or lack of necessary software, sometimes hindered me from completing tasks on online platforms” (S 4), “One of the main difficulties was the instability of the internet connection, which sometimes interfered with normal video viewing and participation in online lectures” (S 6)), problem with accessing paid platforms (“I faced

problems accessing paid resources, which were often necessary for in-depth study of topics but were not always available for free” (S 4)), difficulty in adapting to interfaces (“It was challenging to adapt to different platforms and interfaces, which often required time to figure out how to use them” (S 9)), superficial coverage (“I couldn’t always find resources for a deep understanding of complex topics that were not covered in detail in online courses” (S 11)), lack of information literacy (“Sometimes, it was challenging to verify information independently, as the lack of physical contact with the teacher made it difficult to confirm the accuracy of the obtained data” (S12)), difficulties in completing group projects (“The lack of face-to-face communication slowed down the learning process and group work” (S 14)).

At the end, questions were asked to identify students’ suggestions for improving the quality of journalism education during the war:

1. Which aspects of journalism education, in your opinion, require more support or changes in collaboration with media organizations and the government?
2. Do you have any additional suggestions for enhancing the quality of your journalism education during the war?

Regarding aspects of journalism education that require more support or changes, students mentioned the following: international collaboration (“It is worth developing internship programs with international media companies so that students have the opportunity to learn from different experiences and participate in international projects” (S4)), increasing the volume of practical training (“It would be helpful if students had more opportunities for practical work during their studies, including implementing their own projects and creating content for real media” (S7), “Collaboration between universities and media organizations should be strengthened to develop new educational resources and materials that reflect current issues and trends in journalism” (S11)), improving material and technical resources (“Broader access to specialized media equipment” (S12)). At the same time, students noted that even during the war, the university regularly hosted guest lectures and panel discussions with prominent journalists and media experts, allowing students to gain firsthand experience and advice from practitioners. Practical cases and career guidance activities are used during the educational process, including support from potential employers (the advertising and information agency “Naružka,” publishers “Vikhola” and “Knyholav,” the magazine “Vichny Mandrivnyk,” Media Systems, the textile company “Yaroslav,” “Fora,” TM “Morshynska,” “Nasha Pekarnya”). The All-Ukrainian Festival CreativeHub also takes place (<https://cutt.ly/reaN4wBR>). However, students highlighted that “It is important to develop courses on media management and the business aspects of journalism so that students can better understand the economic and managerial sides of the media industry” (S15).

Additional student suggestions were quite diverse: online meetings with frontline journalists (“I suggest organizing regular online meetings with journalists working on the front lines so we can learn about their real challenges and receive advice on working in extreme conditions” (S4)), medical courses for journalists (“It would be helpful to have access to specialized courses in medical journalism to better understand the impact of combat injuries and crises on the health of the people we work with” (S6)), media psychology courses (“It would be beneficial to have access to media psychology programs to learn how better support ourselves and our colleagues working under stress” (S10), “It would be useful to

introduce classes on emotional intelligence development, where students could learn to better understand and support people going through difficulties, as well as effectively cope with their own emotions in stressful situations” (S12)), platforms for student volunteering in media projects (“I would suggest creating platforms for student volunteering in media projects related to supporting affected individuals” (S11)), opportunities for independent projects (“It would be great to have more opportunities for independent projects where students could explore relevant topics and implement their ideas in real media settings” (S13)), crisis communication training (“It would be beneficial to organize training sessions on managing crisis communications to learn how quickly respond and coordinate actions in emergency situations” (S15)).

4. DISCUSSION

As emphasized by Lavrysh, et al. (2022), “modern philosophy of education highlights the necessity to reorient education towards the creation of conditions for cultivating the principles of innovative and critical thinking, media literacy and core values providing students with the ability to perceive rapid changes in academia and subject area, to adapt to new conditions and act the role of an active participant” (p. 1).

The findings from this study align with existing literature on the challenges and potential pathways for transforming journalistic education during wartime. The necessity in practical training and ethical journalism is well-documented (Geertsema-Sligh et al., 2020). However, this study adds to the discourse by highlighting the specific needs of Ukrainian students and the unique challenges posed by the ongoing warfare.

In examining the characteristics of an ideal graduate in journalism and media studies, Masoudi and Hejase (2023) identified several key attributes through interviews with Iranian students. These expected qualities include a strong interest in journalism, a high level of engagement in scientific and experimental studies, and the ability to integrate practical work with academic education. Graduates are also expected to have a clear goal of working in their media field of interest, proficiency in English, media literacy, and the capacity to produce a scientific and applied dissertation. Additionally, they are anticipated to contribute to the field by writing scientific articles on journalism-related issues, demonstrating innovation during their education, and possessing the professional skills necessary to work in specialized fields. After interviewing students, two additional focus areas emerged: the graduate's character and their moral and academic characteristics. This expanded view underscores the importance of both personal integrity and academic rigor in the formation of a well-rounded journalism graduate (p. 5).

Drawing parallels to the context of Ukrainian journalism students during wartime, it is crucial to consider how these expectations might be influenced by the unique challenges and pressures of wartime. The Ukrainian case can provide valuable insights into the adaptation of journalism education to meet the demands of a changing and volatile landscape.

The integration of innovative technologies into journalistic education during wartime can enhance students' abilities to navigate and critically analyze diverse sources of information, thus improving media literacy and promoting a more informed public discourse. Beyond media literacy, these technologies also open new avenues for creative expression.

The use of advanced AI tools like ChatGPT has demonstrated its potential in supporting both creative and analytical tasks. Fiialka, Kornieva, and Honcharuk (2024) highlight the generative capabilities of ChatGPT in creative writing, emphasizing its role in producing novel ideas and supporting content development across various genres. Similarly, in journalistic education, such tools can aid students in synthesizing information, refining narratives, and fostering ethical considerations in reporting, while also encouraging the imaginative exploration of storytelling techniques and formats.

Our study also underscores the importance of psychological support for students. The emotional and psychological toll of reporting in conflict zones can be significant, and educational institutions must provide adequate support to help students cope with these challenges. Collaborative efforts between academic institutions, media organizations, and governmental bodies are crucial. These collaborations can facilitate the development of comprehensive strategies to promote ethical journalism practices and safeguard press freedom. Such efforts are essential for fostering democratic values and ensuring that journalists can continue to report truthfully and transparently.

During times of war, significant adjustments become necessary: expanding the scope of distance education methods, tailoring learning experiences to individual needs, employing diverse psychological techniques to manage panic episodes during air raid alerts while classes are in session, and coping with frequent power outages affecting nearly all regions of Ukraine, among other adaptations (Marchenko, 2023).

Ripatti-Torniainen and Mikkola (2023) examined the social commitments, theoretical understanding, integrative thinking, and reflective knowledge of students using situational analysis. Their findings revealed that journalism students engaged inconsistently with disciplinary content knowledge, lacking a clear and structured understanding. However, the students showed a strong ability to employ the scientific research process ethically in their journalistic practices (p. 270).

Tynjälä, Kallio, and Heikkinen (2020, pp. 166–169) distinguish between (1) theoretical and conceptual knowledge; (2) technical and procedural knowledge; (3) reflective, practical ethical knowledge that is needed to regulate and reflect upon one's actions; and (4) sociocultural, contextual knowledge that is needed to act in a critical and emancipatory manner in context. Integration results in an increasingly encompassing expert knowledge. Many educators and policy-makers view news literacy as a crucial skill set for journalism students that helps students make well-informed choices about the information they encounter, especially online. For academics, news literacy is a subject with theoretical and philosophical aspects, prompting discussions about the role of journalism in a democratic society (Morris, & Yeoman, 2023, p. 1575), solving problems of gender and inequality (Geertsema-Sligh, Bachmann, & Moody-Ramirez, 2020).

Ogunyemi and Price (2021) discovered that journalism education overlooks the need to equip students with the skills necessary to cope with the emotional and psychological impacts of witnessing traumatic events. Unlike professionals in fields such as ambulance services, policing, firefighting, and nursing, journalists are not typically trained to manage the psychological stress and emotional burden associated with their work. This omission is particularly concerning given the increasing frequency and severity of traumatic situations journalists may encounter. The focus is largely on instilling professional values like

objectivity, public service, gatekeeping, and ethics, along with teaching essential journalism skills such as newsgathering, news writing, and editing. According to Barnes (2015), these skills are often taught without encouraging critical thinking or analytical skills.

While it is commonly believed that journalism schools focus primarily on the basics of the profession and neglect the emotional effects of the work (Young, 2011), our findings suggest otherwise. The students emphasized that they have training on managing emotional and psychological impacts, especially in response to the conditions of war. So, the heightened exposure to traumatic events during wartime has led to a more comprehensive approach in journalism education, recognizing the necessity of preparing students to cope with the unique challenges.

In the context of journalism education during wartime, it is crucial to emphasize the concept of “occupational safety” as it relates to journalists’ work. As Slavtcheva-Petkova et al. (2023) suggest, this term effectively captures the various dimensions of threats journalists face due to their professional activities. Occupational safety encompasses not only the physical risks such as violent attacks, abductions, arrests, and detentions, but also verbal aggression, hate speech, harassment, and other forms of intimidation aimed at compromising journalists’ mental and emotional well-being. Moreover, the concept extends to infrastructural safety concerns. Journalists are increasingly vulnerable to digital threats, including breaches of digital privacy through phishing attacks, surveillance, hacking, and the criminalization of digital whistle-blowing. These issues not only endanger journalists’ digital self-determination but also restrict access to critical information and the ability to disseminate content freely. Additionally, financial stability is a significant aspect of occupational safety, as threats to job security and the execution of fundamental journalistic practices can undermine the ethical standards and core functions of journalism, such as the watchdog role.

Our discussion highlights the necessity of integrating comprehensive training in journalism education that addresses these multiple facets of occupational safety. This includes preparing students to safeguard their physical, psychological, digital, and financial well-being. By adopting the framework outlined by Slavtcheva-Petkova et al. (2023), journalism programs can better equip future journalists to navigate the complex and often dangerous environments in which they operate, especially in war-torn regions. This holistic approach to safety is essential for enabling journalists to perform their duties effectively and ethically, without undue risk to their personal integrity and professional standards.

In the context of Ukrainian journalism education during wartime, it is essential to consider the findings of Mesmer (2023), who highlighted a significant gap in the training of early-career journalists. According to Mesmer’s study, not a single participant reported that the topic of hostility was addressed in their journalism classes. This lack of preparation left them without the necessary knowledge to navigate hostile situations, and they often did not anticipate encountering such hostility in their journalistic routines. Meanwhile, Ukrainian journalism students are experiencing a profound shift in their educational and professional perspectives, rethink ethical standards in journalism, reassess their motivation for choosing a career in this field, and prioritize skills essential for working in crisis situations. This includes the ability to handle sensitive topics, interact compassionately with affected

individuals, and develop psychological resilience to cope with the stress and trauma associated with warfare reporting.

Moreover, due to the limitations of traditional learning formats during wartime, such as disrupted access to physical classrooms and limited availability of in-person instruction, students are increasingly turning to alternative educational resources. Online courses, webinars, and self-directed learning have become crucial tools for acquiring knowledge and skills. This shift towards digital and remote learning has also facilitated the integration of innovative technologies into journalism education. These technologies enhance students' abilities to navigate and critically analyze diverse sources of information, significantly improving their media literacy. By adapting to these new educational modalities, Ukrainian journalism students are better prepared to face the challenges of modern journalism, especially in the context of a war-torn country.

Meanwhile the traditional role of journalists as primary gatekeepers of information is undergoing significant transformation. Mensing (2010) highlights that the historical function of journalists to discover, accurately narrate, and swiftly disseminate news to a mass audience is being fundamentally challenged. This shift underscores the necessity for journalism education to evolve in response to changing media consumption habits. The decline in influence of traditional media, coupled with the rise of personalized news feeds, calls for a re-examination of the skills and knowledge imparted to journalism students. Educators must now focus on equipping future journalists with competencies in digital literacy, multimedia storytelling, and audience engagement, ensuring they are adept at navigating in a rapidly evolving media landscape. Additionally, there is a growing need to emphasize ethical considerations and critical thinking skills, as journalists increasingly operate in a media environment saturated with diverse and competing narratives.

Scholars and researchers in social studies have consistently been captivated by the ways in which war is reported and portrayed to the global audience (Allam, & Ghetany, 2020, p. 43). In this context, there is a pressing need for non-sectarian journalism programs that emphasize multi-platform skills and multi-disciplinary training. These programs should equip students to work across various media, including print, broadcast, multimedia, and social media platforms. The growing focus on new telecommunications and media technologies necessitates significant investments in equipment, software, and facilities, along with the recruitment of qualified and trained faculty and staff to deliver these educational programs (p. 53).

In preparing journalism graduates for the unpredictable nature of the future, it is crucial for curricula to be contextualized both environmentally and cognitively. As Breit (2020) suggests, journalism education should be tailored to the specific environments in which journalism will be practiced, ensuring that students understand the unique challenges and dynamics they may face. Additionally, the curriculum must foster cognitive relevance by developing advanced thinking and problem-solving skills. This dual focus is essential for equipping graduates with the ability to adapt to rapidly changing professional and social contexts.

This approach is particularly relevant given the complexities and uncertainties posed by the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war. Journalism curricula must be designed to prepare students not only for traditional journalistic roles but also for the unpredictable and often

hazardous situations they may encounter. This encompasses developing specialized reporting abilities, including thorough, analytical, and sustained coverage of topics. To address these deficiencies, the use of case-based education can be an innovative strategy. By integrating real-world cases throughout the curriculum, students can develop cognitive flexibility, enhancing their capacity for critical thinking and problem-solving. This method helps ensure that learning is both contextually and cognitively relevant, preparing journalism graduates to navigate the complex and uncertain landscape of modern journalism.

In the context of the ongoing war, journalism programs face significant challenges in providing practical experiences for students. As newsrooms shrink and media landscapes evolve, responsibility increasingly falls on journalism education to offer relevant and effective learning opportunities. The predominant model, internships, is becoming less viable due to limited placements and concerns over equitable access. This situation has prompted educators to explore alternative approaches.

Valencia-Forrester (2020) presents a typology of work-integrated learning (WIL) in journalism education, highlighting various models from traditional internships to innovative approaches such as university-led WIL, pop-up newsrooms, and Purpose WIL. These models offer valuable insights into how journalism education can adapt to the needs of students in conflict zones.

The war compels students to reevaluate ethical standards in journalism, reassess their professional motivations, and focus on developing skills essential for crisis reporting, handling sensitive topics, interacting with affected individuals, and building psychological resilience. Given these new demands, the shift towards alternative educational resources such as online courses, webinars, and self-directed learning has become more pronounced. The integration of innovative technologies into journalism education during wartime not only provides students with new tools but also enhances their ability to critically analyze diverse sources of information, thereby improving media literacy.

Furthermore, the evolving challenges faced by journalism education during the war highlight the need for collaborative efforts between academic institutions, media organizations, and governmental bodies. Such collaborations are crucial for developing comprehensive strategies to address these challenges, promote ethical journalism practices, and protect press freedom.

Today the concept of decolonizing curricula becomes more and more relevant. Ukrainian journalism students face the challenge of reporting on a complex reality that includes multicultural aspects, national differences, and the impact of propaganda. Our research emphasizes the need for journalism education that not only prepares students to cover crisis situations but also promotes the development of ethical standards and critical thinking necessary for working in conflict conditions. Similar to the situation with UK journalism programs, which are largely grounded in Western experiences and often neglect non-white perspectives (Aujla-Sidhu, 2022), Ukrainian journalism education could also benefit from greater inclusivity. This would not only involve addressing the direct impacts of the conflict but also recognizing and challenging the biases that can emerge in reporting. By adopting a decolonized approach, Ukrainian journalism programs can equip students with the tools to better understand and communicate the diverse experiences within their own society and beyond, fostering a more comprehensive and ethical journalistic practice.

Instead of merely reporting on a humanitarian crisis, students can learn to create immersive experiences that place viewers in the midst of the situation, offering a more profound understanding of the context and the individuals affected (Uskali, et al., 2021;). For Ukraine, this implies adapting to the realities of war and the evolving digital landscape, necessitating an educational framework that is flexible, adaptive, and in tune with current technological and societal shifts.

The role of the educator is evolving towards a model characterized by co-learning and knowledge exchange. This approach requires educators to move away from traditional methods of directing students and instead engage in a collaborative learning process. To effectively adopt this model, it is crucial for journalism educators to be well-versed in digital tools and methodologies, integrating these into their teaching practices (Maniou, Stark, and Touwen, 2020). Educators must undergo continuous professional development to enhance their digital competencies and adapt to technological advancements. This involves understanding and supporting the shift towards an “all-learning” environment that values experiential learning and modern pedagogical methods. Establishing robust routines and processes that facilitate ongoing collaboration and co-creation with students, as well as engagement with the broader media landscape, is essential for the successful implementation of this new educational paradigm.

The Ukrainian experience in journalism education, particularly during the ongoing war, offers valuable insights that could benefit the global journalism community. As journalism programs worldwide often rely heavily on Western academic materials and frameworks, there is a risk of intellectual dependency and excessive homogenization in Journalism and Mass Communication programs worldwide (Blom, Bowe, and Davenport, 2020; Goodman, 2017) that may not fully address local contexts and challenges. This issue, noted in countries like Pakistan (Bockino, and Ilyas, 2021), where the majority of academic resources are authored by American and British writers. However, the unique challenges faced by Ukrainian journalists during the war have necessitated the development of locally relevant content and pedagogical approaches. These include addressing the specific ethical dilemmas, practical challenges, and psychological pressures encountered in conflict zones. The integration of local authors and perspectives into the curriculum provides students with a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the media landscape in their country, equipping them with the skills to effectively report in crisis situations.

The Ukrainian model of adapting journalism education to meet the realities of a war-torn environment can serve as a valuable case study for other nations. It highlights the importance of tailoring educational content to reflect local conditions and the critical need for a diverse range of intellectual resources. By sharing these experiences and insights, Ukraine can contribute to a broader global conversation on decolonizing journalism curricula and enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of journalism education in diverse socio-political contexts. This approach not only strengthens the capacity of local journalists but also enriches the global journalistic community with varied perspectives and innovative strategies for reporting in challenging situations.

This study is limited by several factors, primarily related to the recruitment strategies and sample size. The participation of only 15 students may not fully represent the experiences of all Ukrainian journalism students during the war. Consequently, it is possible

that other students have been exposed to different aspects of their education not captured in this study, particularly in terms of preparation for crisis reporting. Future research should expand the sample size and diversity to better understand the range of educational experiences.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study confirms that the Russian-Ukrainian war has had a significant impact on journalism education and has posed numerous challenges to it. The war had a profound effect on students' ethical perceptions, underscoring the importance of responsible reporting, especially when covering sensitive topics related to war victims. Students shifted their professional interests towards specialized fields such as military journalism, humanitarian crisis investigations, and human rights protection. Among the most important professional skills in wartime, they identified critical thinking, information and digital literacy, psychological resilience, the ability to work under extreme conditions, empathy in reporting, teamwork, and foreign language proficiency.

The war in Ukraine has tested the resilience of journalism education but has also provided a critical opportunity to reassess and innovate educational practices to better prepare the next generation of journalists. Researchers should continue to explore the long-term effects of these adaptations and further refine the strategies that will enable journalism education to remain relevant and effective in the face of ongoing challenges. As conflicts persist globally, this study holds significant value for global scholarship and practice by offering insights into how journalism education can adapt to crisis conditions.

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ЖУРНАЛІСТСЬКА ОСВІТА В УМОВАХ ВІЙНИ: НОВІ ВИКЛИКИ ТА СТРАТЕГІЇ АДАПТАЦІЇ

Анотація. У цьому дослідженні висвітлюються питання та перспективи журналістської освіти в умовах російсько-української війни. Аналізуючи процеси адаптації та впровадження інноваційних технологій, ми прагнемо зрозуміти, як студенти долають виклики, зумовлені військовими умовами.

Метод. Було проведено глибинні інтерв'ю зі студентами четвертого курсу бакалаврату спеціальності «Журналістика» Національного технічного університету України "Київський політехнічний інститут імені Ігоря Сікорського". Тематика інтерв'ю передбачала вплив війни на журналістську освіту, сприйняття студентами журналістської етики, мотивації, необхідні навички, психологічну стійкість в умовах війни тощо. Інтерв'ю ретельно записували та аналізували для визначення повторюваних моделей, розбіжностей у поглядах і нових тем.

Результати. Результати підкреслюють багатогранні виклики, з якими стикаються студенти під час війни. Студенти наголосили на необхідності навчання правилам безпеки, етичним нормам у журналістиці, конфліктній чутливості, а також закликали до адаптації освітніх програм, інтеграції реальних сценаріїв та розвитку критичного мислення. Учасники також відзначили важливість сприяння стійкості та забезпечення механізмів психологічної підтримки для студентів.

Практичне та теоретичне значення. Результати дослідження підкреслюють важливість інтеграції навичок критичного мислення та просування медіаграмотності для підготовки журналістів до професійного висвітлення аспектів війни. Окремо наголошується на необхідності співпраці між університетом, медіаорганізаціями та державою для забезпечення якісного оновлення освітніх програм. Це дослідження робить внесок у розвиток наукового дискурсу щодо журналістської освіти в умовах кризи.

Ключові слова: журналістська освіта, глибинне інтерв'ю, російсько-українська війна, інноваційні технології, критичне мислення, інформаційна грамотність, цифрова грамотність.