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#### Abstract

The purpose of the study is to examine the teachers' opinions on teacher resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study employed a phenomenological design, implementing maximum variation sampling to select a participant group of 20 teachers from private schools in Istanbul and public schools in Erzurum's rural district, Hınıs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted both in-person and virtually, after which descriptive and content analyses were undertaken utilizing the MAXQDA 2020 software, facilitating the identification of predominant themes and sub-themes. Eight themes are surfaced from the study, encapsulating teachers' opinions on resilience, professional challenges, complications tied to distance education, environmental problems, factors contributing to resilience, leaving the profession, the COVID-19 pandemic's impact, along with suggestions for enhancing resilience. The study's findings indicate that teacher resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic is significantly affected by factors such as the lack of internet infrastructure, the lack of hardware, learning loss in students, absenteeism problems of students, physical distance, increase in workload, the lack of parental interest, the lack of support from the administration, and economic conditions. Conversely, professional dedication, professional development, positive attitude, administrative and parental support, collaboration among colleagues, and engaging in hobbies were identified as factors contributing to teacher resilience.

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**Research Article****Teachers' Opinions on Teacher Resilience during the COVID-19 Pandemic\***Zeyneb ÇETİNER<sup>1</sup>  Ahmet Faruk LEVENT<sup>2</sup> **Abstract**

The purpose of the study is to examine the teachers' opinions on teacher resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study employed a phenomenological design, implementing maximum variation sampling to select a participant group of 20 teachers from private schools in Istanbul and public schools in Erzurum's rural district, Hınıs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted both in-person and virtually, after which descriptive and content analyses were undertaken utilizing the MAXQDA 2020 software, facilitating the identification of predominant themes and sub-themes. Eight themes are surfaced from the study, encapsulating teachers' opinions on resilience, professional challenges, complications tied to distance education, environmental problems, factors contributing to resilience, leaving the profession, the COVID-19 pandemic's impact, along with suggestions for enhancing resilience. The study's findings indicate that teacher resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic is significantly affected by factors such as the lack of internet infrastructure, the lack of hardware, learning loss in students, absenteeism problems of students, physical distance, increase in workload, the lack of parental interest, the lack of support from the administration, and economic conditions. Conversely, professional dedication, professional development, positive attitude, administrative and parental support, collaboration among colleagues, and engaging in hobbies were identified as factors contributing to teacher resilience.

**Keywords:** Resilience, teacher resilience, COVID-19 pandemic**1. INTRODUCTION**

In December of 2019, a novel coronavirus, subsequently named COVID-19, was identified in a seafood market in the city of Wuhan (Huang et al., 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) officially classified the COVID-19 disease as a pandemic on March 11, 2020, in response to the escalation of over 200,000 confirmed cases and 8,000 fatalities across more than 160 nations (WHO, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, marked by the profound loss of 6.9 million lives (WHO, 2023), has engendered deleterious consequences extending far beyond the realm of health. The pandemic has precipitated detrimental effects across diverse domains, notably within economic sectors (Ceylan et al., 2020), educational systems (Khan & Ahmed, 2021), and the realm of human psychology (Akat & Karataş, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly disrupted the educational landscape (Khan & Ahmed, 2021). The necessity to mitigate the virus' spread in high-density environments resulted in the closure of educational institutions across nearly 200 countries, impacting over 94% of students globally (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021). In response to these closures, numerous countries have pivoted to remote or online education as a novel pedagogical approach for K-12 education (Kurt et al., 2021). This abrupt transition to remote learning has intensified the pandemic's educational impact, presenting a

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unique set of challenges for both educators and students. Nevertheless, amidst these adversities, remote education has surfaced as a pivotal solution during this unparalleled global health crisis (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021).

In this context, the role of resilience has become increasingly vital, as educators must adapt to these unprecedented challenges while maintaining the quality of education. The concept of resilience has gained prominence due to a heightened interest in the personal attributes that allow certain individuals to positively adapt and develop despite being identified as at risk for negative life outcomes (Howard et al., 1999). Resilience is defined as the capacity to successfully adapt in the face of challenging or threatening conditions (Masten et al., 1990). This construct necessitates the presence of substantial threats or severe adversity, alongside the successful attainment of positive adaptation in the face of developmental perturbations (Luthar et al., 2000). The scholarly discourse on resilience, while emphasizing the identification of individual characteristics, underscores the pivotal role of both "risk" and "protective" factors in facilitating positive adaptation and outcomes (Mansfield et al., 2012).

For teachers, resilience is particularly important, as their profession often exposes them to a wide range of stress-inducing situations and conflicts throughout their careers (Bobek, 2002). These challenges can jeopardize an individual's physical and psychological health, leading to a spectrum of negative outcomes, such as self-esteem fluctuations, changes in sleep and dietary patterns, the emergence of depressive symptoms, diminished job satisfaction, and an increased vulnerability to illness (Bobek, 2002; Brooks, 1994; Linville, 1987). Recent research underscores the high-stress nature of the teaching profession, which exhibits a relatively elevated turnover rate compared to numerous other occupations (Day & Gu, 2014). The demands and conditions inherent to the educational sector necessitate resilience among teachers (Bobek, 2002). However, despite the extensive body of resilience research focusing on children across various disciplines, studies specifically addressing teacher resilience remain comparatively scarce (Gu & Day, 2013).

The scholarly discourse surrounding resilience, particularly within the pedagogical sphere, underscores its multifaceted nature, leading to a spectrum of definitions (Mansfield et al., 2012). Brunetti (2006) posits teacher resilience as an intrinsic trait facilitating teachers' sustained professional commitment amidst challenging scenarios and recurrent impediments. In a parallel vein, Day and Gu (2014) delineate resilience as an individual's capacity for rapid and efficacious adaptation and recuperation in the face of adversity.

The psychological perspective of resilience emphasizes individual internal factors and attributes, while a more comprehensive understanding incorporates the social and cultural contexts, presenting resilience as a dynamic process embedded within social interactions (Day & Gu, 2014). The cultivation and enhancement of resilience is not confined by age and is fundamentally contingent upon the symbiotic interplay between individuals and their encompassing environments (Gillespie et al., 2007). Consequently, every individual, endowed with a fundamental biological framework, has the capacity to foster resilience by augmenting social proficiency, problem-solving acumen, critical cognizance, self-governance, and a sense of purpose (Day & Gu, 2014). Kumpfer (1999) and Mansfield et al. (2012) conceptualize teacher resilience as comprising four primary dimensions. First, the professional dimension encompasses elements such as effective teaching practices, student commitment, time management, and adaptability. Second, the emotional dimension pertains to the regulation of emotions, the use of humor, maintaining an objective perspective, and promoting overall well-being. Third, the social dimension highlights the importance of communication skills, problem-solving abilities, seeking support, and fostering optimism. Finally, the motivational dimension involves goal setting, sustained motivation, perseverance, and the capacity to find enjoyment in challenges.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, academic investigations meticulously examined teacher resilience from diverse perspectives, aiming to identify efficacious strategies to bolster this resilience

within the educational sector. In their seminal work, [Henderson and Milstein \(2003\)](#) incorporated the concepts of student and school resilience, thereby suggesting strategies to enhance resilience across these facets. Extending their research scope, [Day and Gu \(2014\)](#) posited that teacher resilience, a critical element for maintaining commitment and efficacy, is not merely an innate characteristic, but can be cultivated through appropriate intellectual, social, and organizational school environments. Scrutinizing the impacts of a calamitous occurrence such as a pandemic on teachers through the lens of resilience can yield substantial contributions to the extant literature.

Despite the surge in research on teacher resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, the experiences of educators across both rural and urban landscapes have been insufficiently explored, with prior investigations primarily focusing on either rural or urban contexts and largely overlooking the potential differences in challenges faced by teachers in these distinct environments. Research during the COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated various factors impacting teacher resilience, including the use of online applications ([Lu & Hua, 2022](#)), workload ([Banal & Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2022](#)), administrative supervision ([Xun et al., 2021](#)), job stress ([Lagat, 2021](#)), and uncertainty ([Pham, 2021](#)). Concurrently, other studies have identified elements such as teacher competence ([Liu et al., 2022](#)), optimism ([Beltman et al., 2022](#)), and teacher seniority ([Mullen et al., 2021](#)) as significant contributors to the enhancement of teacher resilience during the pandemic.

This research endeavors to bridge this lacuna by scrutinizing the experiences and opinions of teachers in both rural and urban settings concerning teacher resilience amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective is to gain a more holistic comprehension of how to bolster teacher support during crises by exploring the factors that foster teacher resilience in diverse contexts. Furthermore, the findings of this study will equip school administrators with insights to implement initiatives that bolster teacher resilience within their institutions. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the imperative role of school leadership in cultivating teacher resilience and fostering resilient educational environments.

The primary goal of this study is to examine the opinions of teachers concerning the COVID-19 pandemic's influence on teacher resilience, the obstacles they encountered during this period, and the coping strategies they employed. In the context of this research, teacher resilience is understood as a multifaceted construct that enables teachers to adapt and recover from challenging situations, ensuring sustained professional commitment despite recurring obstacles ([Brunetti, 2006; Day & Gu, 2014](#)). Resilience involves not only internal psychological factors but also social and cultural contexts, making it a dynamic process shaped by interactions with the environment ([Gillespie et al., 2007](#)).

Thus, the research problem is centered on exploring teachers' opinions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on teacher resilience, identifying the risk and protective factors encountered by teachers during this process, and analyzing the experiences and opinions of two distinct groups of teachers - those working in rural and urban settings. The present study aimed to address the following research questions:

1. How are teachers' opinions of teacher resilience?
2. How are teachers' opinions on the challenging conditions they encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. How are teachers' opinions on the coping strategies they employed to maintain their resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic?

## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. Research Design

This research, utilizing a phenomenological design within the qualitative paradigm, seeks to explore teachers' perspectives regarding the impact of the pandemic on teacher resilience. Phenomenological studies aim to elucidate the collective significance of lived experiences associated with a concept or phenomenon among a select group of individuals ([Creswell, 2007](#)). This design was

chosen to thoroughly investigate the research problem by examining the firsthand experiences of participants who were directly affected by the pandemic in terms of teacher resilience.

## 2.2. Participants

This study implemented purposive sampling, a qualitative sampling method, to identify participants who could provide insightful opinions into the phenomenon being examined. This method is extensively employed in qualitative research due to its capacity to generate comprehensive, in-depth data (Creswell, 2007). Specifically, the study utilized maximum diversity sampling to ensure a wide-ranging exploration of teachers' experiences. The participant group was selected to reflect diversity across several variables: geographical location (teachers from private schools in Istanbul and public schools in Erzurum's rural district), subject area (teachers from a variety of disciplines including Turkish, Religion Studies, Visual Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Special Education, and more), professional experience (ranging from 3 to 25 years), and educational background (teachers with both bachelor's and master's degrees). This diversity was critical for capturing a broad spectrum of perspectives regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teacher resilience. The data for this research were collected during the 2022-2023 academic year.

**Table 1. Demographic information of the participants**

Participant	Gender	Type of School	Seniority	Educational Background	Teaching Subject	City
T1	Male	Private	10	Master's Degree	Turkish	İstanbul
T2	Male	Private	9	Master's Degree	Religion Studies	İstanbul
T3	Male	Private	6	Master's Degree	Visual Arts	İstanbul
T4	Female	Private	8	Bachelor's Degree	Mathematics	İstanbul
T5	Female	Private	11	Master's Degree	Classroom Teacher	İstanbul
T6	Male	Private	11	Master's Degree	Social Studies	İstanbul
T7	Male	Private	25	Bachelor's Degree	Physical Education	İstanbul
T8	Female	Private	4	Master's Degree	Visual Arts	İstanbul
T9	Female	Private	3	Master's Degree	Philosophy	İstanbul
T10	Female	Private	7	Master's Degree	English	İstanbul
T11	Female	Public	6	Bachelor's Degree	Classroom Teacher	Erzurum
T12	Female	Public	3	Bachelor's Degree	Classroom Teacher	Erzurum
T13	Female	Public	3	Bachelor's Degree	Special Education	Erzurum
T14	Male	Public	6	Bachelor's Degree	Classroom Teacher	Erzurum
T15	Male	Public	8	Bachelor's Degree	Classroom Teacher	Erzurum
T16	Male	Public	4	Master's Degree	Music	Erzurum
T17	Male	Public	7	Bachelor's Degree	English	Erzurum
T18	Male	Public	7	Bachelor's Degree	Turkish	Erzurum
T19	Female	Public	3	Bachelor's Degree	English	Erzurum
T20	Male	Public	10	Bachelor's Degree	Classroom Teacher	Erzurum

## 2.3. Data Collection

The researchers employed a semi-structured interview form as the data collection instrument for this study, comprising a section for participants' demographic information and incorporating 10 open-ended questions. The interview questions were designed to allow teachers to share their experiences that affected their resilience. The interviews were conducted in person with participants in Erzurum and Istanbul, and audio recordings were obtained with the explicit consent and approval of the

participants. Based on their preferences, interviews with three teachers working in Istanbul were conducted online.

#### 2.4. Data Analysis

In this study, descriptive analysis and content analysis methods were used for data analysis. Transcriptions of the interviews with participants were thoroughly examined by the researchers, and MAXQDA 2020 software was used to initially segment the interviews into meaningful units for analysis. A code list was generated from the obtained segments, and then main themes and sub- themes were developed from the code lists.

#### 2.5. Validity and Reliability

In the research, the assessment of validity and reliability was conducted under four main categories: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

*Credibility:* Various techniques were employed in this study to enhance the credibility of the research. Expert review of the interview questions was sought, and revisions were made based on their feedback. Establishing rapport and a friendly atmosphere with the participants through face-to-face interviews was considered vital for accurate data collection. Additionally, participant validation was conducted to corroborate the accuracy of the data obtained.

*Transferability:* To enhance the transferability of the research findings, meticulous steps were taken in the selection of participants using purposeful sampling, with the aim of obtaining data that can be generalized to similar contexts. Additionally, in the analysis and interpretation of the findings, direct quotations from participants were utilized to provide in-depth and contextually rich insights, thus augmenting the potential for transferring the findings to other settings or populations.

*Dependability:* To ensure dependability in the study, an audit trail method was employed. This method involves the researcher meticulously recording and organizing the data in a consistent and careful manner throughout the research process (Rodgers & Cowles, 1993). The interviews with the participating teachers were audio-recorded with their consent, and the transcription of the audio recordings was conducted by the researchers.

*Confirmability:* To enhance the confirmability of the study, audio recording devices were used during the interviews with the explicit consent of the participants. Participants were provided with consent and signature forms for audio recording, and the recording was conducted in accordance with the participants' informed consent.

### 3. FINDINGS

In this part of the research, the themes and codes resulting from the analysis of the data obtained from the interviews with the participating teachers are presented.

#### Theme 1: Teachers' Opinions on Teacher Resilience

The findings related to the opinions of participants on teacher resilience are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Teachers' opinions on teacher resilience**

Sub-theme	Code	Participant
Professional resilience	Psychological resilience	T2, T3, T7, T14, T16, T17, T18
	Professional competence	T1, T6, T8, T16, T19
	Physical resilience	T3, T7, T16, T20
	Problem-solving skills	T12, T16, T20
	Adaptability to different conditions	T19, T20
	Coping with administrators	T9, T12
	Patience	T4, T13

	Professional dedication	T18
	Struggle	T11
	Emotional exhaustion	T5
	Coping with parents	T12
Personal resilience	Resilient	T1, T2, T4, T6, T7, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19, T20
	Not Resilient	T3, T9, T10
	Occasionally resilient	T8
	Decreased resilience	T5

As shown in Table 2, within the theme of participants' opinions on teacher resilience, two sub-themes emerged: "Professional resilience" and "Personal resilience". Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

*"I associate teacher resilience with the ability to assert oneself against direct supervisors, as I have encountered incidents of mobbing in a previous workplace." (T9)*

*"Teaching comes with many challenges, both financially and spiritually, and if we do not exhibit resilience in this line of work, we can easily become overwhelmed." (T18)*

## Theme 2: Teachers' Opinions on Professional Challenges They Encounter in their Profession

The findings related to the opinions of participants on professional challenges teachers faced precipitated are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Teachers' opinions on professional challenges they encounter in their profession**

Sub-theme	Code	Participant
Student-related problems	Behavioral problems	T4, T6, T7, T9, T10, T17
	Academic achievement	T12, T14, T20
	Language problems	T16, T17
	Absenteeism	T16, T17
	Self-care problems	T16
Parent-related problems	Parental attitude towards teachers	T4, T10, T11, T17
	Lack of interest	T9, T13, T14, T17
	Educational level	T13, T16, T17
	Unwillingness to accept the student's situation	T4, T10
	Economic level	T16
Administration-related problems	Private school policies	T1, T2, T3, T9, T10, T17
	Workload	T2, T3, T4, T7, T8
	Administration's attitude towards teachers	T4, T8, T10, T12
	Inadequate number of administrators	T16
Other problems	Economic conditions	T2, T3, T4, T5, T10, T17
	Geographical conditions	T14, T15, T17, T18, T20
	Work-related problems	T3, T5, T8
	Social problems	T5, T18
	Other problems	T5

As shown in Table 3, within the theme of participants' opinions on Professional Challenges They Encounter, four sub-themes emerged: "Student-related problems", "Parent-related problems", "Administration-related problems" and "Other problems". Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

"Sometimes, if the student group is too naughty, too active, then it may be a problem." (T6)  
 "We feel that students have language problems a lot here. They cannot adapt and cannot communicate." (T16)  
 "Since private schools follow a method that focuses on parent satisfaction more than a little, teachers can be put forward to achieve this satisfaction." (T2)  
 "I experienced a lot of mobbing there and thought about quitting. I tried very hard not to give up because I wanted to teach so much". (T12)

### Theme 3: Teachers' Opinions on Factors Contributing to their Resilience in their Profession

The findings related to the opinions of participants on factors that contribute to their resilience in their profession are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Teachers' opinions on factors contributing to their resilience in their profession**

Sub-theme	Code	Participant
Professional dimension	Professional dedication	T1, T2, T3, T4, T12, T13, T15, T17, T18, T20
	Attitudes towards student	T7, T15, T19
	To be adaptable	T15, T19
	Professional competence	T5, T6
Motivational dimension	Fighting spirit	T10, T12, T19
	Professional development	T1, T8, T19
	Take initiative	T16, T18
	Positivity	T2, T18
	To be persuasive	T6, T15
	To be determined	T6
Social dimension	Communication with parents	T1, T6, T13, T15
	Communication with students	T6, T9, T11
	Administrative support	T12, T15
	Colleague collaboration	T7, T16
	Family support	T12
	To be solution-oriented	T19
	Helping others	T18
	Social opportunities	T5
Emotional dimension	Being patient	T2, T4, T17
	To empathize	T7, T9, T20
	Self-sacrifice	T2, T16
	Not taking things personally	T9

As shown in Table 4, within the theme of participants' opinions on factors contributing to their resilience in their profession, four sub-themes emerged: "Professional dimension", "Motivational dimension", "Social dimension" and "Emotional dimension". Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

"You accept all the difficulties, and you do them not out of obligation, but with a consciousness and emotion that comes with the teaching profession." (T2)  
 "I usually approach different types of students with compassion, love, and kindness." (T15)  
 "We tried to treat ourselves somehow during this period. Sometimes cooking feels like therapy to me. I deal with art outside of teaching, I do this professionally. During the pandemic period, there were online exhibitions and online auctions, and I created a working hour for myself to deal with them. There were classes in the morning and after dinner, I started painting on my own. I set a study hour for myself, and it became my therapy hour. Because it was a difficult process, both due to disease and pandemic conditions." (T3)  
 "I love reading books and it is an activity that really makes me feel good emotionally. It was good for me to have time to read books during the pandemic period." (T5)



**Theme 4: Teachers' Opinions on the Problems Regarding Emergency Distance Education**

The findings related to the opinions of participants on the problems they encountered regarding emergency distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Teachers' opinions on the problems regarding emergency distance education**

Sub-theme	Code	Participant
Technology-related problems	Internet infrastructure	T5, T6, T7, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19, T20
	Lack of hardware	T3, T5, T6, T7, T10, T12, T13, T14
	Health risks associated with prolonged screen time	T2, T4, T6
	Lack of technological knowledge	T5, T7
	Application-related problems	T3, T8
Student-related problems	Learning loss	T3, T4, T6, T8, T11, T12, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19
	Student absenteeism	T11, T12, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19
	Physical distance	T1, T2, T5, T6, T7, T11, T13, T18
	Behavioral problems	T2, T7, T8, T9, T10, T17
	Assessment problems	T1, T3, T9
	Screen addiction	T7, T15
	Young students	T3, T10
Inadequacy for distance education	T13	
Parent-related problems	Parental indifference	T9, T11, T12, T14, T15, T18
	Parent participation in the class	T3, T5, T6, T7, T10, T13
	Parents' subject preferences	T3, T7, T16, T17
	Educational level of parents	T6, T11
	Communication with parents	T13, T16
Administration-related problems	Administrative supervision	T1, T2, T6, T7, T8, T12
	Lack of administrative support	T2, T3, T4, T6, T7, T8
	Excessive expectation from the administration	T4, T5, T8
	Administration-related planning issues	T3, T17
Other problems	Increased workload	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T8, T9, T11, T15, T20
	Economic conditions	T1, T4, T5, T10
	Social distance	T4, T5, T17, T18
	Lack of appreciation	T1, T4, T6, T9
	Overtime work	T3, T4, T5, T6
	Geographical conditions	T14

As shown in Table 5, within the theme of participants' opinions on the problems they encountered regarding emergency distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic, five sub-themes emerged: "Technology-related problems", "Student-related problems", "Parent-related problems", "Administration-related problems" and "Other problems". Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

*"We couldn't conduct any online classes as students were not attending and there was no internet in the village." (T12)*

*"I was not provided with any hardware support, despite my repeated requests, including for an external camera." (T3)*

*"I suffered from health issues due to prolonged screen time, such as developing a hernia in my left leg caused by my skeletal weight." (T6)*

*"One of the difficulties is that we are not physically present with the students, which makes it challenging for them to express themselves comfortably." (T1)*

"At first, I found distance education to be effective, but after the pandemic, when I returned to school and reviewed the previous term's material, I noticed that many students had forgotten everything." (T3)

"A situation where a student can get a perfect score of 100 even if they do nothing in that class is, in my opinion, a situation that undermines equality." (T3)

"I conducted these lessons at my home, and my home was filled with papers, paints, and clutter...so I basically took over the house." (T3)

"My workload has significantly increased due to constantly giving digital assignments, checking them individually, and dealing with tests and video projects related to digital transformation. It has been quite challenging, to be honest." (T9)

"Being away from the children face to face, and being away from my friends had a great impact on me." (T4)

### Theme 5: Teachers' Opinions on the Factors that Contribute to their Resilience during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The findings related to the opinions of participants on the factors that contribute to their resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6. Teachers' opinions on the factors that contribute to their resilience**

Sub-theme	Code	Participant
Professional dimension	Professional commitment	T1, T4, T8, T9, T12, T14, T18, T20
	Proactive behavior	T16
Motivational dimension	Professional development	T1, T2, T4, T5, T6, T7, T13, T14, T16, T18
	Positivity	T2, T6, T8, T9
	Fighting spirit	T11, T12
	Taking initiative	T16, T20
	Determination	T9
Social dimension	Administrative support	T2, T8, T13, T18, T19
	Parental cooperation	T4, T5, T15, T20
	Collaboration with colleagues	T2, T4, T7
	Hardware support	T18, T20
	To be solution oriented	T19, T20
	Family support	T12
Emotional dimension	Hobby	T3, T4, T5
	Exercise	T4, T18

As shown in Table 7, within the theme of participants' opinions on factors contributing to their resilience in their profession, four sub-themes emerged: "Professional dimension", "Motivational dimension", "Social dimension" and "Emotional dimension". Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

"We received training from the school to make the students more engaged, especially with the use of Web 2.0 tools." (T1)

"So, let me put it this way for myself; we worked with parents who did not have internet access or a computer in distant conditions, and we held classes in school with teachers. Of course, I don't want to say it too much, it was forbidden at the time." (T20)

"We went along with our colleagues in perfect harmony." (T2)

"If we had any issues, we immediately talked to the administration... the problem was resolved somehow." (T8)

"I had very frequent conversations with parents" (T15)

### Theme 6: Teachers' Opinions on Leaving the Profession During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The findings related to the opinions of participants on leaving the profession during the COVID-19 pandemic are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7. Teachers' opinions on leaving the profession during the covid-19 pandemic**

Sub-theme	Code	Participant
Reasons for considering leaving	Devaluation of the teaching profession	T1, T4, T6, T9, T10, T17
	Economic conditions	T1, T2, T4
	Workload	T11, T15
	Decrease in professional competence	T5
	Distance Learning	T7
Reasons for not considering leaving	Professional dedication	T8, T12, T13, T14, T18, T20
	Fighting spirit	T19
	Economic conditions	T3

As shown in Table 8, within the theme of participants' opinions on leaving the profession during the COVID-19 pandemic, two sub-themes emerged: "Reasons for considering leaving" and "Reasons for not considering leaving". Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

*"If you live in Turkey, there is always the thought of quitting in every sense, especially as a teacher. Because I don't think it is given the necessary value. But yes, things got a little out of hand, especially during the pandemic period. So, when this did not have a more economically satisfactory aspect, it became an even bigger problem."* (T1)

*"I wish the value of teaching was known, that is, private schools were not seen only as a financial home but were truly valued spiritually. Even if they give 20 thousand 30 thousand for the work we do, there is no reward for it because we give a lot of ourselves. As we said, if we were supported both financially and morally, I would not leave the profession. But I don't think this will change from now on. "I want to be valued as a teacher."* (T10)

*"I was working in a private school in Eskişehir, I was struggling to make ends meet, but I was happy. I earn more here, but I'm not happy. Because I don't see value. Material goods are not very important to me, I do not see moral value... I remember from my own student life: I am 30 years old. I was in primary school in 2002 and I remember those times. We wanted to make sure that the teacher wouldn't leave us -in our time there was beating, it was allowed- but we wanted to see the good side of the teacher and not upset the teacher. When someone upset us, we would explode because we were bothering that child's teacher. There is no value on this side, I have already skipped the material part, what really upsets me is that spiritual value is not given."* (T17)

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### Theme 7: Teachers' Suggestions to Increase Teacher Resilience

The findings related to the suggestions of participants to increase teacher resilience are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. Teachers' suggestions to increase teacher resilience**

Code	Participant
Insufficient in infrastructure on internet	T6, T8, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T20
Hardware support	T2, T3, T8, T11, T13, T14, T20
Supporting professional development	T1, T4, T5, T8, T16
Parental awareness	T4, T5, T11, T15, T16
Economic support	T2, T5, T6, T7
Administrative support	T4, T5, T6, T7
Adherence to working hours	T1, T3, T7
Flexible holiday opportunity	T5, T17

As shown in Table 8, within the theme of participants' suggestions of participants to increase teacher resilience eight codes emerged. Some of the participant opinions regarding this theme are given below:

*"Lack of internet infrastructure was a big disadvantage for us while providing distance education during the pandemic period. When I compare this with Europe, for example, when we received training there, they told us what they did with various programs such as Google Meet and Zoom. When this was suggested to us, we said: 'Well, we know all of these, teach us other professional things, our problems are different'. When we explained our own problems, the following situation occurred: There was not a single individual among them who could not access the internet. When a student could not be reached, the police would personally go to that student's home to include him in education. We told them what we did in this regard. When we told them that we were broadcasting lectures on television, they said to us: 'We have nothing else to tell you, you have already done the best you can'. They were very surprised that we were broadcasting lectures on television, and I was very surprised at their surprise: How could they not think of making a cable broadcast from television? "How is communication possible in these villages in case of an earthquake or a natural disaster? It turns out that infrastructure is very important. There needs to be communication infrastructure, not just internet." (T16)*

*"We, as teachers need to learn new things and applications. It's easy actually, we just need to attend seminars and courses." (T1)*

*"I want the administrators to genuinely thank me for my efforts, not just a superficial one." (T4)*

*"Firstly, we want our institution to change its salary policy. We want salary increases." (T7)*

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study conducted a thorough examination of teachers' opinions on resilience, assessed their individual resilience metrics, analyzed the professional challenges encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic, and identified factors that bolstered resilience throughout this timeframe. In addition, it probed the motivations behind leaving the teaching profession and critically evaluated opinions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, while considering both existing literature and the opinions of the teachers.

The study's findings underscored that the participating teachers perceived the notion of teacher resilience as incorporating an array of facets including psychological resilience, professional competence, physical endurance, problem-solving skills, the teacher-administrator relationship, patience, professional dedication, coping with challenges, emotional exhaustion, and coping with parents. Within the confines of the study, the participating teachers rendered a self-assessment of their individual resilience levels, wherein 15 of them classified themselves as consistently resilient, three identified as lacking resilience, one fluctuated with occasional resilience, and yet another acknowledged a decrease in resilience level. Significantly, teachers displaying intermittent or reduced resilience, or declaring non-resilience, were solely from private schools, whereas among the self-identified resilient teachers, five worked in private schools, and ten in public schools.

This inquiry surfaced a myriad of professional challenges confronting teachers, associated with students, parents, administration, and the broader environment, with behavioral problems emergent as the dominant student-related issue -substantially contributing to instances of teacher burnout as corroborated by [Hastings and Bham \(2003\)](#). The study further recognized several student-associated difficulties such as low academic achievement, language problems, absenteeism, and self-care problems. Simultaneously, it underscored the pivotal role of teacher-parent relationships, notably highlighting the deleterious effects of negative parental attitudes towards teachers on students' learning outcomes ([Lekli & Kaloti, 2015](#)). Teachers in the study voiced concerns about parent's lack of interest, their educational level, economic level, alongside issues related to policies in private schools,

workload, attitudes of administration, and inadequate number of administrators. They also acknowledged challenges stemming from economical, geographical, work-related, and social problems.

The strategies deployed by teachers to surmount obstacles were meticulously examined and subsequently categorized within [Mansfield et al.'s \(2012\)](#) framework of "four dimensions of teacher resilience". As a result, teacher resilience, in its professional dimension, is characterized by professional dedication, adaptability, and competence; the motivational dimension incorporates a fighting spirit and initiative; the social dimension is defined by effective communication, collaboration, and support networks, while the emotional dimension underscores patience and empathy. [Brunetti \(2006\)](#) emphasizes that teacher resilience is a critical factor in sustaining professional commitment in the face of adversity, a sentiment echoed by [Day and Gu \(2014\)](#), who highlight the ability to adapt and recover efficiently.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, participating teachers confronted challenges that impinged on their resilience, with a bifurcation of difficulties into distance education-related and environmental problems, the former further disaggregated into technology-related, parent-related, student-related, and administration-related problems. Technology-related challenges, encompassing internet infrastructure, lack of hardware, health risks associated with prolonged screen time, lack of technological knowledge, and application-related problems, mirrored the findings of [Pınarcıoğlu et al.'s \(2021\)](#) study which highlighted widespread negative experiences with internet access and technological tools among university students in Batman, Turkey. [Pokhrel and Chhetri \(2021\)](#) and [Kurt et al. \(2021\)](#) have similarly noted the abrupt transition to remote education, emphasizing the resulting technological challenges faced by both educators and students.

Complementarily, the research by [Pokhrel and Chhetri \(2021\)](#) highlighted the quandary of students subjected to excessive screen utilization during the COVID-19 pandemic, mirroring [Winter et al.'s \(2021\)](#) study, which emphasized the obstacles caused by teachers' limited technological adeptness. This synchronization of findings underscores the intertwined nature of educational challenges during the pandemic, wherein both students and teachers grappled with distinct yet interconnected technological difficulties. During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers confronted a spectrum of student-related problems, encapsulating learning loss, student absenteeism, physical distance, behavioral problems, assessment problems, screen addiction, student's age, and inadequacy for distance education. These challenges align with [Brooks \(1994\)](#) and [Linville's \(1987\)](#) discussions on the psychological and physical impacts of stress on educators, which can exacerbate student-related issues. In the Dutch context, where internet accessibility is nearly universal, [Engzell et al. \(2020\)](#) unmasked a substantial educational deficit among socioeconomically disadvantaged families, complemented by the delineation of ethical conundrums within the realm of remote instruction as emphasized by [Levent and Şallı \(2022\)](#). Emerging from the study's findings, teachers contended with parent-related problems notably, parents' participation in class and communication problems with parents, underlining the multifaceted challenges intrinsic to their professional realm. As [Akat and Karataş \(2020\)](#) note, the psychological impact of the pandemic on parents likely exacerbated communication issues and their engagement in their children's education. During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers experienced administration-related problems such as administrative supervision and administration-related planning issues, a dilemma resonating with [Xun et al.'s \(2021\)](#) study where newly inducted teachers expressed struggles linked to administrative supervision. Within the realm of distance education, teachers grappled with an increased workload and insufficient class space, a predicament that echoes the findings of [Banal and Ortega-Dela Cruz \(2022\)](#) which also underscored how such augmented workload during the COVID-19 pandemic can impinge upon the performance and well-being of active teachers. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers confronted multifarious environmental impediments encompassing parent-related problems attributed to parental indifference

and parent's financial and educational level, administration-related problems delineated by insufficient support, excessive workload, and excessive expectations from the administration, coupled with additional environmental obstacles, namely economic conditions, transportation problems, social distance, lack of appreciation, and geographical conditions.

The multifaceted contributors to teacher resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic, as revealed by the study, were structured based on Mansfield et al.'s (2012) "Four dimensions of teacher resilience" paradigm: professional, motivational, social, and emotional. Within the professional dimension, elements such as professional dedication, proactive behaviour, professional development, and positivity bolster resilience, a finding corroborated by studies conducted in Vietnam (Pham, 2021) and Lagat's (2021) research, both emphasizing the significance of a positive outlook. This aligns with Gu and Day's (2013) research, which stresses that resilience is not a static trait but one that can be cultivated through appropriate environmental support. Regarding the motivational dimension, manifestations of resilience among teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic were notably hinged on qualities such as fighting spirit, initiative, and determination. Within the social dimension, the salience of administrative support emerged as a cardinal element in bolstering teacher resilience. The practice of cooperation with parents and colleagues was identified as a pivotal strategy that enables teachers to effectively circumnavigate hardships, an assertion that is substantiated by the works of both Fauzi and Khusuma (2020), Lu and Hua (2022). Furthermore, participants in the current study affirmed the essential role of hardware support in aiding their efforts to overcome challenging circumstances.

The study disclosed a prevalent inclination among teachers to consider leaving their profession during the COVID-19 pandemic, with economic conditions, increased workload, declining professional competence, and the shift to distance education acting as catalysts. However, teachers demonstrating enduring commitment emphasized their dedication and fighting spirit. The study revealed that while most teachers demonstrated resilience through professional and personal growth during the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact varied widely, with some individuals exiting the profession due to exacerbated challenges. The study, therefore, underscores the pressing need to address the devaluation of the teaching profession, ameliorate working conditions, and bolster resources to reinforce teacher resilience, thereby mitigating potential attrition.

From the perspective of the teacher participants, an immediate rectification in the internet infrastructure was seen as a vital means to amplify teacher resilience and provide equitable education. Teachers were particularly burdened by students' inadequate internet access, a fact accentuating the rural-urban divide, as Pınarcıoğlu et al. (2021) corroborate. This digital chasm, an intensification of pre-existing educational disparities, has been spotlighted in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic as per Chakraborty et al. (2020). The enhancement of teacher resilience, as recommended by the participants, hinges on ensuring equal access to hardware support and digital technology for comprehensive remote education. This necessitates a collaborative approach between public and private institutions, as endorsed by Telli and Altun (2021), to bridge the digital divide. Professional development, as emphasized by the teachers and affirmed by Chaturvedi et al. (2021), along with Henderson and Milstein (2003), is a critical component for growth and addressing pedagogical challenges. This study also underscores the economic tribulations faced by private school teachers, which aligns with Sönmezer and Eryaman's (2008) findings on job satisfaction discrepancies due to salary differences. Moreover, the findings point to a heightened need for robust administrative support amidst the unique complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The conclusions of this investigation lead to several pivotal recommendations for the bolstering of the educational milieu in Turkey the global health crisis. Primarily, the promulgation of policy changes aimed at the enhancement of the country's technological infrastructure is of utmost necessity. Such provisions would necessitate that the indispensable technological accoutrements

required for both teachers and students are procured and disseminated by the respective school administrations, thereby solidifying an egalitarian access to education across all strata.

Moreover, in the pursuit of bolstering teacher resilience and fostering professional development, the implementation of comprehensive in-service training programs is strongly advocated. Concurrently, the assumption of leadership roles by administrations that exemplify a proficiency in providing substantial support during challenging circumstances is recommended. Addressing the economic difficulties experienced by teachers within private schools, as illuminated by this study, necessitates targeted fiscal improvements. The induction of real-world professional scenarios into university curricula could significantly augment the resilience of prospective teachers, thus, better preparing them for future challenges.

The purview of this study was primarily centered on teachers within specific private and public institutions in Istanbul and the Hınıs district of Erzurum province. Future inquiries would benefit from an extension of the geographical scope to encapsulate a broader swath of Turkey's educational landscape. The methodological underpinnings of this investigation rest within the framework of qualitative phenomenology. Subsequent studies could explore a more comparative analysis between urban and rural areas, possibly utilizing a larger sample size. Lastly, the conceptualization and institution of a comprehensive scale to gauge teacher resilience in pandemic context is crucial. This tool can serve as an invaluable mechanism for tracking development and identifying areas demanding targeted attention.

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