
Beyond Individual Grit: A Multi-Level Framework For Systemic Judicial Resilience

Yinnon Dryzin-Amit*

Modern judicial systems face escalating challenges from mounting caseloads, rising public expectations, and crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. While resilience programs often focus on individual judges, this study develops an empirically grounded, multi-level framework for systemic judicial resilience based on longitudinal research in the Israeli judiciary (2018–2024). Using grounded theory methodology and a mixed-methods design, we integrated qualitative data from 412 judges (via stratified focus groups) with performance metrics (e.g., clearance rates) and benchmarking across six public and private sector organisations. Findings reveal that resilience emerges not in isolation but through dynamic interactions between individual, team, and organizational domains. Key drivers include psychological safety, algorithmic workload balancing, and intergenerational mentorship. The framework was associated with measurable improvements in judicial efficiency (e.g., 107.5% clearance rate in 2020) and provides insight into how courts can navigate institutional strain while safeguarding legitimacy. The study challenges individual-centric approaches and offers a scalable model for resilience-building in courts, with implications for administrative design, leadership development, and public trust in legal institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

The judiciary, a cornerstone of democratic governance, faces unprecedented pressures from rapid technological change, escalating public expectations, and global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ These shifts demand new skillsets from judges and court administrators, including adaptability to digital workflows and resilience to sustain public service continuity amid disruptions. Resilience – the capacity to recover and bounce forward from adversity – has emerged as a critical competency for judicial systems worldwide.² However, conceptualising resilience as merely an individual trait overlooks systemic barriers, such as resource shortages and bureaucratic inefficiencies, that undermine judicial effectiveness.³

Current judicial resilience initiatives predominantly target individual judges through stress

* Dr Yinnon Dryzin-Amit is an expert in organizational development and public sector leadership. He served as Deputy Director General for Organizational Development in the Israeli judiciary. He currently teaches at the School of Public Administration & Policy and the Department of Sociology at the University of Haifa. He is also the founder of PublicWise.online, a knowledge platform that connects research, policy, and practice in the fields of public management, legal systems, and institutional design. This article is based on publicly available information and reflects the personal opinions of the author. The views expressed herein should not be considered as representing the official policy or position of the Israeli judiciary. The author gratefully acknowledges the invaluable contributions of several individuals to the development of the framework described in this article: Hon Senior Judge A Ashkeloni, Dr. O Setter, Dr. Y. Horin, and Mrs R Shkrel. Their expertise, insights, and dedication were instrumental in shaping the framework and ensuring its relevance and potential impact. Email: amityinnon@gmail.com

¹ G Aviv and D Arental, *Judicial Workload in the Israeli Court System* (Judicial Authority Research Department, July 2021) 1 <https://www.gov.il/he/pages/research_27072021_a>.

² S Southwick, GA Bonanno, AS Masten, C Panter-Brick, and R Yehuda, (2014). “Resilience Definitions, Theory, and Challenges: Interdisciplinary Perspectives” (2014) 5(1) *European Journal of Psychotraumatology* 25338 <<https://www.doi.org/10.3402/ejpt.v5.25338>>.

³ S Hartmann et al, “Resilience in the Workplace: A Multilevel Review and Synthesis” (2020) 69(3) *Applied Psychology* 913 <<https://www.doi.org/10.1111/apps.12191>>.

management training or mindfulness programs.⁴ While such efforts acknowledge the high-stress nature of judicial work – marked by heavy caseloads, complex legal dilemmas, and public scrutiny – they neglect the interconnected roles of teams and organizational structures in fostering resilience.⁵ This gap is particularly acute in contexts like Israel, where judges navigate not only universal stressors but also unique challenges such as security crises and rapid societal transformation.⁶ Without holistic strategies addressing all levels of the judicial ecosystem, systemic inefficiencies risk perpetuating burnout and eroding public trust.⁷

A growing debate in judicial administration contrasts individualised resilience frameworks with systemic approaches. Proponents of systemic resilience argue that organizational factors, such as leadership practices and resource allocation, are pivotal to sustaining judicial resilience and performance.⁸ Critics, however, caution that overemphasising structural reforms may dilute accountability for individual well-being.⁹ This tension underscores the need for a balanced model that integrates psychological, team-based, and organizational strategies.

This study addresses the question: *How does systemic resilience emerge within the Israeli judiciary, and how can it be developed to enhance effectiveness and legitimacy?* Given the exploratory nature of this inquiry and the limited theoretical integration of resilience across organizational levels in judicial contexts, we employed grounded theory methodology to develop a framework inductively from participants' experiences.¹⁰ This approach allowed theoretical constructs to emerge from the data rather than imposing existing frameworks that might not capture judiciary-specific dynamics.

Drawing on mixed-methods data – including benchmarking with 6 organisations, focus groups with 412 Israeli judges, and quantitative analysis of clearance rates (2018–2024) – we systematically analysed how resilience practices and perceptions evolved across individual, team, and organizational levels. Through iterative cycles of data collection, coding, and analysis, theoretical concepts emerged regarding the interplay between resilience dimensions and their relationship to judicial performance and well-being.

Our findings reveal how psychological safety facilitates resilience across organizational levels, the critical role of algorithmic workload balancing in reducing judicial stress, and the significance of intergenerational mentorship for bridging emerging value differences between judicial cohorts. The framework demonstrates how systemic resilience improved judicial efficiency (achieving a peak clearance rate of 107.5% in 2020) while identifying persistent challenges that require structural rather than individual interventions. While the resulting multi-level resilience framework requires further empirical validation, it provides a theoretically grounded model for future research and practical implementation that can guide judicial systems worldwide in balancing independence with administrative effectiveness.

The remainder of this article is organised as follows: First, we review the evolution of resilience theory and its application in judicial contexts. Next, we outline our grounded theory methodology and mixed-methods data collection approach. We then present our findings, beginning with insights from

⁴ DM Swenson, J Bibelhausen, B Buchanan, D Shaheed, and K Yetter, (2020). "Stress and Resiliency in the US Judiciary" (2020) *Journal of Professional Lawyer* 1-45.

⁵ M Vera, AM Rodríguez-Sánchez and M Salanova, "May the Force Be With You: Looking for Resources that Build Team Resilience" (2017) 32(2) *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health* 119-138. <<https://www.doi.org/10.1080/15555240.2017.1329629>>.

⁶ Aviv and Arental, n 1.

⁷ A Boin and MJ Van Eeten, "The Resilient Organization" (2013) 15(3) *Public Management Review* 429-445. <<http://www.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2013.769856>>.

⁸ AM Rodríguez-Sánchez, (2021). "Yes, We Can Boost Resilience: Human Resource Management Practices to Build Resilience in the Workplace" in Gisa Todt, Julia Backmann, and Matthias Weiss (eds), *Work Life After Failure?: How Employees Bounce Back, Learn, and Recover from Work-related Setbacks* (Emerald Publishing Ltd, 2021) 83-98.

⁹ A Brafford and RW Rebele, "Judges' Well-being and the Importance of Meaningful Work" (2018) 54 *Court Review* 60.

¹⁰ B Glaser and A Strauss, "The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research" in K Charmaz (ed), *Constructing Grounded Theory* (Sage, 2nd ed, 2014).

cross-sector benchmarking and judicial focus groups, followed by implementation of the framework and quantitative performance analysis. The article continues with the presentation of eight theoretical propositions that emerged from our analysis. In the discussion section, we explore theoretical implications, practical lessons for global judicial systems, and methodological contributions. We conclude by addressing limitations and suggesting future research directions, while emphasising the critical link between judicial resilience, institutional legitimacy, and public trust.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE EVOLUTION OF RESILIENCE

Resilience, originally a concept borrowed from the natural sciences, emerged in social sciences during the early 20th century as a psychological construct centered on individual adaptability.¹¹ Over time, scholars redefined resilience from a static trait to a dynamic process that organisations can actively nurture through leadership development, resource optimisation, and systemic interventions.¹² This conceptual shift frames resilience as a multi-level phenomenon, encompassing individuals, teams, and organisations, each contributing to systemic adaptability.¹³

A. Individual Resilience

Individual resilience refers to the capacity to recover from adversity while sustaining well-being and performance. Research highlights personality traits such as optimism, autonomy, and problem-solving skills as foundational to resilience.¹⁴ Environmental factors, including supportive leadership and opportunities for skill development, further enhance this capacity.¹⁵ A critical advancement in this domain is the concept of psychological flexibility – the ability to adapt perspectives and behaviors during crises.¹⁶ However, individual-focused models often neglect systemic stressors prevalent in high-stakes professions like judging, such as unsustainable workloads or resource shortages.¹⁷

B. Team Resilience

Team resilience arises from collective efficacy and shared mental models. Vera et al. (2017) emphasise leadership trust, confidence in colleagues' competencies, alignment on shared objectives, and organizational support as critical drivers.¹⁸ Psychological safety – a climate where members freely express ideas without fear of judgment – serves as a cornerstone for resilient teams.¹⁹ In judicial settings, this translates to collaborative decision-making and open dialogue among judges, clerks, and staff, ensuring cohesive interpretations of law under pressure.

C. Organizational Resilience

Organizational resilience hinges on adaptive capacity to anticipate, respond to, and learn from disruptions. Challenges include overcoming cognitive biases to accurately assess risks, developing strategic contingency plans, navigating political barriers to resource allocation, and updating

¹¹ GA Bonanno, "Loss, Trauma, and Human Resilience: Have We Underestimated the Human Capacity to Thrive After Extremely Aversive Events?" (2004) 59(1) *American Psychologist* 20. <<https://www.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.59.1.20>>.

¹² E Seville, D Van Opstal and J Vargo, "A Primer in Resiliency: Seven Principles for Managing the Unexpected" (2015) 34(3) *Global Business and Organizational Excellence* 6. G Hamel and L Valikangas, "The Quest for Resilience" (2004) 81(9) *Harvard Business Review* 52.

¹³ Hartman, et al, n 3.

¹⁴ CS Carver, "Resilience and Thriving: Issues, Models, and Linkages" (1998) 54(2) *Journal of Social Issues* 245. <<https://www.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1998.tb01217>>. Bonanno, n 11.

¹⁵ JR Kuntz, S Malinen and K Näswall, "Employee Resilience: Directions for Resilience Development" (2017) 69(3) *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research* 223.

¹⁶ TB Kashdan and J Rottenberg, "Psychological Flexibility as a Fundamental Aspect of Health" (2010) 30(7) *Clinical Psychology Review* 865.

¹⁷ Aviv and Arental, n 1.

¹⁸ Vera et al, n 5.

¹⁹ AC Edmondson and Z Lei, "Psychological Safety: The History, Renaissance, and Future of an Interpersonal Construct" (2014) 1(1) *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior* 23.

perceptual frameworks to reflect evolving realities.²⁰ Practices such as organizational learning and ambidexterity — balancing procedural efficiency with innovative adaptation — enable institutions like courts to navigate crises without compromising judicial integrity.²¹

D. Resilience in Judicial Contexts

Courts operate under unique pressures: heavy caseloads, public scrutiny, and rigid procedural frameworks. While individual resilience helps judges manage stress, systemic resilience demands coordinated efforts. Team resilience ensures consistent legal interpretations across judicial panels, while organizational agility — such as adopting digital workflows — reduces backlogs and enhances responsiveness. Equitable resource distribution is equally critical, particularly in addressing generational disparities in workload allocation.²² Existing models, however, often fail to integrate these levels, leaving judiciaries vulnerable to compound crises like pandemics or political instability.²³

E. Understanding the Stress-Burnout-Resilience Nexus in Judges

The judicial profession, characterised by immense responsibility and high-pressure decision-making, places judges at significant risk of chronic stress. Stress arises from a perceived mismatch between professional demands — such as heavy caseloads, legally complex disputes, and limited institutional resources — and an individual's capacity to cope.²⁴ Left unmanaged, this stress can escalate into burnout, marked by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and diminished professional efficacy.²⁵ Burnout not only jeopardises judges' physical and mental health²⁶ but also undermines cognitive functioning and judicial decision-making quality, thereby eroding public trust in legal institutions.²⁷

The relationship between stress and judicial performance is nonlinear. Moderate stress can enhance focus and productivity. However, prolonged exposure to excessive stress — or conversely, insufficient stimulation — disrupts this balance, leading to disengagement or burnout.²⁸ This dynamic depletes both individual resilience and organizational capacity, necessitating interventions that address the full spectrum of stress experiences.²⁹

The landscape of judicial resilience programs critically needs a paradigm shift from narrow, individual-focused interventions to more comprehensive, systemic approaches (see Table 1).

²⁰ Hamel and Valikangas, n 12.

²¹ CA Lengnick-Hall, TE Beck and ML Lengnick-Hall, "Developing a Capacity for Organizational Resilience through Strategic Human Resource Management" (2011) 21(3) *Human Resource Management Review* 243. S Ducheck, S Rietze and I Scheuch, "The Role of Diversity in Organizational Resilience: A Theoretical Framework" (2020) 13(2) *Business Research* 387.

²² Hartman et al, n 3.

²³ Boin and van Eeten, n 7.

²⁴ S Folkman, RS Lazarus, RJ Gruen, and A DeLongis (1986). "Appraisal, Coping Health Status, and Psychological Symptoms" (1986) 50(3) *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 571. Aviv and Arental, n 1.

²⁵ C Cherniss, *Staff Burnout: Job Stress in The Human Services* (Sage Publications, 1980). DM Flores, MK Miller, J Chamberlain, JT Richardson and BH Bornstein, "Judges' Perspectives on Stress and Safety in the Courtroom: An Exploratory Study" (2009) 45 *Court Review* 76.

²⁶ H Selye, "The Stress of Life" in Rev. McGraw Hill, JE Driskell and E Salas (eds), *Stress and Human Performance* (Psychology Press, 2013).

²⁷ T Hagen and S Bogaerts, "Work Pressure and Sickness Absenteeism among Judges" (2014) 21(1) *Psychiatry, Psychology, and Law* 92.

²⁸ RM Epstein and MS Krasner, "Physician Resilience: What It Means, Why It Matters, and How to Promote It" (2013) 88(3) *Academic Medicine* 301.

²⁹ MF Crane and BJ Searle, "Building Resilience through Exposure to Stressors: The Effects of Challenges versus Hindrances" (2016) 21(4) *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* 468. <<https://www.doi.org/10.1037/a0040064>>.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Judicial Resilience Initiatives Worldwide

Country	Organisation	Program Components	Focus Level	Key Features	Reference
United States	National Judicial College	Mindfulness courses, Research initiatives, Collaborative networks, Stress surveys	Individual	Emphasis on personal stress management techniques and individual coping strategies	Swenson et al, 2020
	Federal Judicial Center	Recorded programs, Blogs, Webinars, Resource libraries	Individual	Digital-first approach with on-demand resources accessible nationwide	Swenson et al, 2020
	National Center for State Courts	Mental health guides, External support resource directories, Organizational linkages	Individual / Limited Team	Some recognition of court staff needs alongside judicial officers	Swenson et al, 2020
New Zealand	Institute of Judicial Studies	Two-day intensive program, Stress management training, Risk awareness education, Peer support skill development	Individual / Team	Emphasis on equipping judges to support colleagues, suggesting movement toward team-level intervention	Chin et al, 2020

TABLE continued

Country	Organisation	Program Components	Focus Level	Key Features	Reference
United Kingdom	Judicial College London	Self-assessment questionnaires, Targeted resilience tools, Recommended meditation apps, External support referrals	Individual	Technology-supported self-help approach with focus on personal assessment	—
Australia	Judicial College of Victoria	Mental health guides, Trauma and grief resources, Work-life balance strategies, Self-care toolkits, University research partnerships	Individual / Research	Comprehensive individual resources combined with academic research to inform future programs	Schreiver et al, 2021

Despite these efforts, systemic challenges persist. Judges in emotionally demanding roles, such as family or criminal law, report disproportionately high burnout rates due to inadequate resources and institutional inertia.³⁰ Current research highlights significant gaps in addressing team dynamics, organizational structures, and cultural nuances within systems.³¹ While existing programs predominantly target individual coping mechanisms, there is an urgent need to develop holistic strategies that integrate leadership development, early risk identification, and specialised secondary trauma interventions.³² The theoretical framework proposed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004)³³ underscores the importance of understanding job demands and resources, suggesting that effective resilience programs must move beyond reactive models to proactive, data-driven support systems that recognise the complex challenges faced by professionals.

F. Enhancing Judicial Resilience in Israel: Current Initiatives and Identified Gaps

Following the global trend of recognising the importance of judicial resilience, the Israeli judiciary has implemented various initiatives to promote resilience among its members. These efforts are

³⁰ Aviv and Arental, n 1. PG Jaffe, CV Crooks, BL Dunford-Jackson, and JM Town, (2003) "Vicarious Trauma in Judges: The Personal Challenge of Dispensing Justice" (2003) 54(4) *Juvenile and Family Court Journal* 1.

³¹ Vera et al, n 5.

³² Edmondson and Lei, n 19.

³³ W B Schaufeli and A B Bakker, "Job Demands, Job Resources, and Their Relationship with Burnout and Engagement: A Multi-sample Study" (2004) 25(3) *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior* 293.

coordinated through several key divisions, including the Center for Judges Evaluation and Training (CJET), the Division of Judges and Registrars, the Division for Organizational Development (YAPA), and Human Capital divisions responsible for administrative staff and legal assistants.

The Israeli judiciary's approach to resilience-building encompasses a range of activities. Training programs, including workshops and peer groups, aim to enhance resilience skills for judges, registrars, and staff. At a systemic level, the establishment of a "court excellence model"³⁴ promotes resilience-building practices across the organisation. Management development initiatives provide consulting and training for chief justices, focusing on fostering individual resilience. Additionally, court-level interventions, such as workload balancing strategies, address specific stressors within the judicial environment.

While these efforts demonstrate the Israeli judiciary's commitment to fostering resilience, several limitations hinder their effectiveness. The integration of these initiatives across departments appears inconsistent, potentially resulting in uneven implementation of resilience-building practices within individual courts. Variations in the type, frequency, and content of programs across different divisions raise concerns about accessibility and standardisation, potentially limiting their overall impact.

The voluntary nature of participation in many training activities presents another challenge. This approach leaves room for questions regarding the reach of these initiatives and their ability to address the individual needs of all members within the judiciary. Furthermore, the absence of a robust evaluation process makes it difficult to assess the actual contribution of these efforts to building resilience within the organisation.

Addressing these limitations is crucial for maximising the impact of the Israeli judiciary's resilience-building efforts. The development of a comprehensive framework that outlines standardised practices and includes robust evaluation mechanisms could ensure consistent implementation across all levels of the judiciary. Such a framework would enable the tracking of initiative effectiveness, contributing to a more holistic and targeted approach to building resilience. Ultimately, this would strengthen the well-being and performance of all members within the Israeli judiciary.

By acknowledging these challenges and working towards a more integrated and evaluated approach, the Israeli judiciary can build upon its existing initiatives to create a more resilient and adaptive organisation, better equipped to face the evolving demands of the legal landscape. This comprehensive understanding of the stress-burnout-resilience nexus in judges, along with the global landscape of judicial resilience programs, sets the stage for developing hypotheses about effective interventions and organizational strategies to enhance judicial resilience.

G. Initial Conceptual Framework

Before beginning data collection, we developed a preliminary conceptual orientation to guide our initial exploration, while remaining open to emergent concepts and relationships as consistent with grounded theory methodology.³⁵ This preliminary framework drew from various theoretical perspectives, including positive psychology,³⁶ cognitive-behavioral approaches,³⁷ mindfulness,³⁸ and human resource management,³⁹ while acknowledging these existing theories might require substantial modification when applied to judicial contexts.

³⁴ E Richardson, P Spencer and DB Wexler, "The International Framework for Court Excellence and Therapeutic Jurisprudence: Creating Excellent Courts and Enhancing Well-being" (2016) 25 JJA 148.

³⁵ J Corbin and A Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (Sage, 4th ed, 2015).

³⁶ ME Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. (Simon and Schuster, 2004).

³⁷ CA Padesky and KA Mooney, "Strengths-based Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy: A Four-Step Model to Build Resilience" (2012) 19(4). *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy* 283.

³⁸ SL Keng, MJ Smoski and CJ Robins, "Effects of Mindfulness on Psychological Health: A Review of Empirical Studies" (2011) 31(6) *Clinical Psychology Review* 1041. <https://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2011.04.006>.

³⁹ AM Saks, "Caring Human Resources Management and Employee Engagement" (2022) 32(3) *Human Resource Management Review* 100835.

Our initial conceptualisation considered resilience as potentially spanning multiple organizational levels, consistent with recent scholarship suggesting interconnections between individual, team, and organizational resilience.⁴⁰ We tentatively identified possible dimensions of resilience at each level based on existing literature, while remaining open to how these might manifest differently in judicial settings.

At the individual level, prior research has suggested resilience might involve emotional regulation, positive reframing, self-awareness, finding meaning in work, and effective coping mechanisms.⁴¹ Psychological flexibility — the ability to adapt perspectives and behaviors during crises — has also been identified as potentially relevant.⁴² However, we recognised that judicial work might present unique stressors requiring distinctive coping strategies.

At the team level, initial sensitising concepts included collective efficacy, shared mental models, and psychological safety. Prior research by Vera et al (2017)⁴³ highlighted leadership trust, confidence in colleagues' competencies, alignment on shared objectives, and organizational support as potential contributors to team resilience.⁴⁴ The concept of psychological safety — a climate where members freely express ideas without fear of judgment — has been suggested as important for resilient teams,⁴⁵ but its relevance and manifestation in judicial contexts remained to be explored.

At the organizational level, concepts from strategic human resource management and organizational behavior theories offered potential insights, including adaptive capacity, organizational learning, and strategic human resource practices.⁴⁶ Recent studies have highlighted organizational ambidexterity — balancing exploration (innovation) with exploitation (efficiency) — as potentially important for resilience.⁴⁷

While these concepts provided initial sensitising concepts, our grounded theory approach allowed us to remain open to how these dimensions might manifest differently in judicial settings, what additional dimensions might emerge as significant, and how the relationships between dimensions might operate in the unique context of court systems. As we collected and analysed data, this preliminary framework evolved substantially, with some concepts gaining prominence while others receded in importance.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to develop and evaluate a comprehensive framework for building systemic resilience in the Israeli judiciary. The research design combines quantitative performance metrics with qualitative insights to provide a holistic understanding of resilience at individual, team, and organizational levels, with implications for judicial systems globally.

We describe our sampling plan, all measures in the study, and we adhered to the *Journal of Applied Psychology* methodological checklist. No observations or interviews were excluded from the research samples. This study incorporated multiple samples, including at its peak focus groups with 412 judges from across the Israeli judiciary system — a unique and rare population not commonly accessed in the literature. Due to the exceptional access granted, we operated under strict confidentiality protocols

⁴⁰ Hartman et al, n 3.

⁴¹ MA Cohn, BL Fredrickson, SL Brown, JA Mikels, and AM Conway, "'Happiness Unpacked: Positive Emotions Increase Life Satisfaction by Building Resilience'" (2009) 9(3) *Emotion* 361. BD Rosso, KH Dekas and A Wrzesniewski, "On the Meaning of Work: A Theoretical Integration and Review" (2010) 30 *Research in Organizational Behavior* 91.

⁴² TB Kashdan and J Rottenberg, "Psychological Flexibility as a Fundamental Aspect of Health" (2010) 30(7) *Clinical Psychology Review* 865.

⁴³ Vera et al, n 5.

⁴⁴ Vera et al, n 5.

⁴⁵ Edmondson and Lei, n 19.

⁴⁶ CA Lengnick-Hall, T E Beck and M L Lengnick-Hall, "Developing a Capacity for Organizational Resilience through Strategic Human Resource Management" (2011) 21(3) *Human Resource Management Review* 243. L Xiao and H Cao, "Organizational Resilience: The Theoretical Model and Research Implication", Vol 12, (ITM Web of Conferences, EDP Sciences, 2017) 04021.

⁴⁷ Duchek et al, n 21.

mandated by the Israeli judicial authority. Focus group protocols and transcripts are classified as confidential to protect the anonymity and security of participating judges, whose candid discussions of professional challenges required absolute confidentiality assurances. Qualitative data analysis was conducted using traditional manual coding methods as described by Corbin and Strauss (2015),⁴⁸ deliberately avoiding digital analysis software for information security reasons, as stipulated by judicial authority guidelines. This manual approach, while labor-intensive, ensured compliance with confidentiality requirements while maintaining methodological rigor, similar to the approach taken by Schrever et al (2019)⁴⁹ in their groundbreaking study of judicial stress and well-being in Australia. The raw qualitative data cannot be shared due to these strict confidentiality requirements, though the coding framework developed through our analysis and the quantitative performance metrics are available upon reasonable request, with identifying information removed. This study was not preregistered as it employed an emergent grounded theory methodology where the research approach evolved through iterative cycles of data collection and analysis, adapting to the constraints and opportunities of this sensitive research context. Quantitative data retrieved from the Israeli Judiciary website, were analysed using SPSS 29 (IBM, 2023) in a secure computing environment.

A. Research Design Rationale

The longitudinal design spanning 2018-2024 was deliberately chosen to capture the evolutionary implementation and cumulative effects of the resilience-building framework in the Israeli judiciary. Using 2017 as a baseline enables meaningful comparison and assessment of interventions over time. This approach aligns with resilience scholarship that conceptualises organizational resilience not as a static property but as a dynamic capability that develops through sustained practice and adaptation.⁵⁰

The mixed-methods approach serves several critical functions in this study. Quantitative metrics provide objective performance indicators that reflect systemic efficiency, while qualitative assessments capture the experiential dimensions of resilience that are essential for understanding contextual factors, implementation challenges, and emergent adaptations. This integration of methods addresses a significant gap in judicial resilience research, which has traditionally relied heavily on either performance metrics or self-reported experiences without connecting these domains.⁵¹

B. Multi-Phase Data Collection Strategy

The study employed a sequential multi-phase approach to data collection, systematically building understanding through three complementary phases:

1. External and Internal Benchmarking (2018-2019)

The initial phase established a foundation for framework development through systematic mapping of resilience factors and practices. This involved:

- (a) Comparative analysis of resilience initiatives across diverse organizational contexts, including the Ministry of Health, Israel Defense Forces, Bank of Israel, Israeli Police, General Attorney's office, and SodaStream Ltd. (representing the private sector)
- (b) Structured meetings with 45 judges representing all Israeli court types to identify judiciary-specific resilience factors
- (c) Content analysis of benchmarking data conducted by three organizational development consultants with doctoral qualifications, following established qualitative research protocols (Malterud, 2001).⁵²

⁴⁸ Corbin and Strauss, n 35.

⁴⁹ C Schrever, C Hulbert and T Sourdin, "The Psychological Impact of Judicial Work: Australia's First Empirical Research Measuring Judicial Stress and Well-being" (2019) 28(3) JJA 141.

⁵⁰ Lengnick-Hall et al, n 21, Duchek et al, n 21.

⁵¹ Swenson et al, n 4. Schrever et al, n 49.

⁵² K Malterud K, "Qualitative Research: Standards, Challenges, and Guidelines" (2001) 358(9280) *The Lancet* 483.

This benchmarking phase enabled the identification of transferable resilience practices while accounting for the unique characteristics of judicial work, particularly the tension between administrative efficiency and judicial independence that distinguishes courts from other organisations.

2. Longitudinal Qualitative Assessment (2019-2024)

Following the implementation of the resilience framework, a longitudinal qualitative assessment tracked its impact amongst judges through:

- (a) Biannual “Voices from the Field” focus groups (2019, 2021, 2024)
- (b) Stratified sampling ensuring representation by legal specialty, seniority, gender, and ethnicity
- (c) Approximately 80-110 judges participated in each biannual cycle, with 12-20 focus groups per cycle
- (d) Total participation of 412 judges across the three cycles
- (e) Appreciative Inquiry methodology⁵³ employed to facilitate constructive dialogue focused on solutions rather than deficits

This longitudinal approach enabled the researchers to track shifting perceptions of resilience initiatives over time and identify emergent challenges, particularly the generational differences that became increasingly salient by 2024.

3. Quantitative Performance Analysis (2017-2023)

The study analysed official judiciary performance metrics to assess the relationship between resilience initiatives and system effectiveness:

- (a) Annual clearance rates (CR) for Supreme Court, District Courts, Labor Court, and Magistrates’ Courts
- (b) Staffing levels (judges and registrars) across court types
- (c) Implementation timing of specific resilience initiatives
- (d) External contextual factors (eg, COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical events) that influenced judicial operations

This quantitative analysis allowed for the assessment of resilience in terms of system performance under varying conditions, including crisis situations that test organizational adaptability.

C. Grounded Theory Coding and Analysis Process

Following grounded theory methodology⁵⁴ data collection and analysis occurred concurrently in an iterative process, allowing emerging concepts to inform subsequent data collection. The analysis of qualitative data from focus groups proceeded through three systematic coding phases:

1. **Open Coding** - Initial line-by-line coding of focus group transcripts was conducted to identify key concepts related to judicial resilience, remaining close to participants’ own language and experiences. This process yielded approximately 120 initial codes capturing various dimensions of resilience challenges and strategies (eg, “*feeling isolated in decision-making*,” “*peer support as emotional buffer*,” “*workload uncertainty*”). Constant comparison between codes and raw data ensured grounding in participants’ experiences.
2. **Axial Coding** - The initial codes were grouped into broader categories by identifying relationships between concepts. This phase resulted in the emergence of three primary axes requiring managerial attention: judicial career management, skills development, and interface management. During this phase, relationships between categories were explored through diagramming and memoing to understand how different aspects of resilience interconnected.

⁵³ DL Cooperrider and S Srivastva, “Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life” in R Woodman and W Pasmore (eds), *Research in Organizational Change and Development* (JAI Press, 1987) Vol 1, 129.

⁵⁴ Corbin and Strauss, n 35.

3. **Selective Coding** - In this phase, core theoretical categories were identified and relationships between them were established, resulting in the multi-level resilience framework. This included identifying the central phenomenon (systemic resilience) and its dimensions across individual, team, and organizational levels. Theoretical integration occurred as we identified the processes through which resilience at one level influenced other levels.

D. Theoretical Sampling and Saturation

The focus of our investigation evolved based on emerging theoretical constructs, embodying the principle of theoretical sampling. Initial focus groups in 2019 explored broad experiences of judicial stress and resilience. Based on patterns identified through initial coding, subsequent focus groups in 2021 were directed toward exploring specific dimensions including organizational transparency, leadership responses, and adaptation to pandemic conditions. The 2024 focus groups specifically investigated the generational differences that had emerged as a significant factor in previous analyses.

Theoretical saturation was assessed by examining whether new focus group sessions generated novel concepts or merely confirmed existing theoretical categories. By the final round of focus groups in 2024, no significant new dimensions of judicial resilience emerged, suggesting theoretical saturation had been achieved for the core components of our framework, though the generational differences identified suggest potential for future theoretical development.

E. Memoing and Theoretical Development

Throughout the analysis process, theoretical memos were maintained to document emerging insights, analytical decisions, and conceptual relationships. These memos facilitated the transition from descriptive codes to theoretical constructs and helped in developing the hierarchical model of resilience that emphasises the cascading effects across different organizational levels.

F. Integration of Grounded Theory with Quantitative Analysis

The integration of grounded theory findings with quantitative analysis occurred through a deliberate process designed to both develop and validate the emerging theoretical framework:

1. **Theory Development Through Qualitative Analysis:** The grounded theory analysis of focus group data led to the identification of key theoretical constructs (eg, psychological safety as a moderator of team resilience) and their relationships, forming the foundation of our multi-level resilience framework.
2. **Hypothesis Generation:** Based on the theoretical constructs and relationships identified through grounded theory analysis, we formulated testable hypotheses about the relationships between individual, team, and organizational resilience.
3. **Quantitative Validation:** Statistical analysis of court performance metrics was used to examine relationships between variables operationalising our theoretical constructs. For example, the hypothesis regarding cascading effects from individual to organizational resilience was examined through correlation analyses of performance indicators across different court levels.
4. **Triangulation for Theoretical Refinement:** Quantitative findings were compared with qualitative insights to refine the theoretical framework. Where statistical relationships aligned with qualitative patterns, theoretical constructs were strengthened; where discrepancies emerged, additional theoretical sampling was conducted to resolve contradictions.

This mixed-methods integration represents a methodological advancement in resilience research by combining the theory-building strengths of grounded theory with the validating potential of quantitative analysis. The approach enabled us not only to identify what factors influence judicial resilience but also to explain how these factors interact across organizational levels — critical insights for developing transferable principles for judiciaries globally.

G. Methodological Limitations and Controls

Several methodological limitations were addressed through specific controls:

1. **Participation bias:** Voluntary focus group participation was balanced through stratified sampling and rolling participation to ensure diverse representation

2. **External validity:** The extended observation period (2018-2024) encompassed both routine operations and crisis situations, enabling assessment of resilience under varying conditions
3. **Confounding variables:** Statistical analysis controlled for external factors, including staffing levels and major system disruptions
4. **Causality limitations:** The research acknowledges the difficulty of establishing direct causality between specific resilience initiatives and performance outcomes, addressing this through temporal alignment of interventions with performance changes and triangulation with qualitative insights

This methodological approach not only provides a robust foundation for assessing Israel's judicial resilience framework but also establishes a replicable model for studying resilience in judicial systems globally, particularly in contexts where courts must balance independence with administrative effectiveness under resource constraints.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Mapping Resilience Determinants: Insights from Cross-Sector and Judicial Benchmarking

The Israeli judiciary's systemic resilience framework emerged from a rigorous comparative analysis of resilience practices across diverse organizational contexts. This dual-perspective approach — incorporating both external organizational models and internal judicial experiences — revealed the complex interplay of factors that shape resilience in high-pressure professional environments.

1. External Benchmarking

The external benchmarking phase, conducted in 2019, engaged senior executives from organisations including the Ministry of Health, Israel Defense Forces (IDF), Bank of Israel, Israeli Police, General Attorney's office, and SodaStream Ltd. Analysis of these benchmarking meetings revealed three interdependent dimensions of organizational resilience that transcend sector-specific boundaries: guiding principles, operational processes, and evaluation mechanisms (see Appendix B).

Organisations consistently emphasised that sustainable resilience requires a fundamental shift in organizational culture that prioritises well-being alongside performance metrics. This cultural orientation was characterised by statements such as: *"We prioritize employee well-being as much as productivity"* (Bank of Israel representative) and *"Our resilience program addresses emotional, mental, and physical aspects"* (IDF representative). Significantly, organisations that had successfully integrated resilience into their operations viewed teams as both support systems and resilience-building units, with executives actively championing these initiatives.

The implementation methodology consistently followed a phased approach, beginning with pilot programs before system-wide scaling. This gradual implementation was supported by multidisciplinary expertise, including psychologists and organizational consultants, and emphasised transparent communication regarding the rationale behind resilience initiatives. As one participant noted: *"We ensure all employees understand the 'why' behind our resilience initiatives"* (SodaStream representative).

Operational processes emphasised leadership development at multiple levels, with mid-level managers trained to serve as resilience role models. This approach was accompanied by the integration of resilience metrics into performance evaluation systems and strategic redesign of workspaces to promote well-being. Organisations reported streamlining bureaucratic processes to reduce unnecessary workload — a finding particularly relevant to justice systems often constrained by procedural requirements.

Evaluation methodologies combined organizational surveys, program implementation metrics, and individual resilience assessments. Several organisations employed innovative approaches, including biofeedback to measure physiological indicators of stress reduction. Collectively, these findings provided a robust foundation for developing a judiciary-specific resilience framework while highlighting the importance of addressing structural and procedural factors rather than focusing exclusively on individual capacity-building.

2. Internal Stakeholder Engagement: The Judicial Perspective on Resilience

Following the external benchmarking, focus groups with judges (N=45) during the last quarter of 2019 mapped the judiciary-specific stressors that influence resilience. These sessions employed Appreciative Inquiry methodology⁵⁵ to identify not only challenges but also potential solutions. Content analysis revealed three critical axes requiring managerial attention: judicial career management, skills development, and interface management.

The judicial career management axis highlighted transition points as particularly challenging for resilience, including initial appointment, movement between legal specialties or courts, and retirement preparation. These transitions create discontinuities that require significant adaptation resources, yet participants noted the judicial system had historically provided limited structured support during these critical periods.

Skills development emerged as the second critical axis, with judges emphasising the need for capabilities beyond legal knowledge, including workload management, hearing efficiency, judgment writing under time constraints, and management of high-profile cases. Notably, the ability to navigate the inherent solitude of judicial decision-making emerged as a crucial skill, with one participant noting: *“The Bench can be the loneliest place in the legal system; we need strategies to preserve perspective while maintaining independence”* (District Court judge).

The third axis, interface management, revealed the importance of relationships and interactions for judicial resilience. This included managing judicial teams (legal assistants, typists, secretaries), navigating bureaucratic interfaces with court administration, responding constructively to appellate critique, and managing public scrutiny, including social media criticism. The complexity of working in judicial panels (formations) also emerged as a significant factor requiring specific competencies.

Analysis of these findings, summarised in Table 2, highlighted the critical role of improved interfaces as a significant source of resilience. This suggests that enhancing judges’ ability to navigate various relationships and interactions could substantially impact their overall resilience and well-being.

⁵⁵ Cooperrider and Srivastva, n 53.

Table 2: Axes for Resilience Development of Judges in Israel

Management of Judicial Career	Skill Development	Management of Interfaces
• On boarding • Transition between positions, areas of law and courts • Retirement	• Ability to meet workload goals • Conduct and management of legal hearings • Writing judgments • Management of mega/publicised cases • Dealing with loneliness	• Managing the judicial team (legal assistant, typist, secretary, etc) • Interface with the secretariat • Dealing with criticism from the appellate court • Dealing with shaming on social networks • Dealing with the Ombudsman inquiries about judges • Dealing with the complexity of working in judicial formations

B. Implementation of the Israeli Judiciary's Systemic Resilience Framework

Building upon insights from external benchmarking and internal stakeholder engagement, the Israeli judiciary implemented a comprehensive resilience-building framework from 2019 to 2024. This implementation was embedded within a broader system-wide development process that began with establishing a Courts Excellence Model in 2018, based on international standards.⁵⁶ This model incorporated the judiciary's mission, core values, vision, and strategic goals, providing a coherent foundation for the resilience framework.

The implementation strategy addressed resilience systematically across individual, team, and organizational levels, reflecting the understanding that sustainable judicial resilience requires coordinated interventions throughout the system rather than isolated programs targeting individual judges. Appendix A illustrates summary of components and tools for resilience development, and Appendix C presents the Israeli Judiciary's Framework for Building Resilience.

1. Organizational-Level Implementation

At the organizational level, the judiciary focused on developing resilience knowledge, optimising processes, and preparing for crisis situations. A signature initiative was the integration of resilience modules into leadership development programs for chief justices, vice-chief justices, and senior administrators from 2019 to 2024. These modules included "Attentive Leadership" (based on Barger)⁵⁷ and "Leading through Crisis" (drawing on Donthu & Gustafsson),⁵⁸ providing senior judiciary leaders with evidence-based approaches to supporting resilience in their courts.

⁵⁶ Courtexcellence.com.

⁵⁷ BE Barger, *A Study of Novice Assistant Principals: Dilemmas of Working with Discipline* (Indiana University, 1998).

⁵⁸ N Donthu and A Gustafsson, "Effects of COVID-19 on Business and Research" (2020) 117 *Journal of Business Research* 284 <<https://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.008>>.

The organizational implementation also included structural modifications to address workload distribution — a critical stressor identified in the benchmarking phase. An algorithm for case allocation was developed to ensure more equitable distribution based on case complexity rather than simple numeric counts. Additionally, by 2022, all courts had implemented protected “writing days” when judges could work remotely on judgments without interruption, addressing the tension between hearing schedules and judgment writing that had emerged as a significant stressor.

2.Team-Level Implementation

Team resilience initiatives emphasised fostering positive relationships and aligning shared values. Annual team-building retreats, introduced in 2019, focused on developing communication skills and conflict resolution capabilities within court teams. By 2021, all district and magistrate courts had established regular peer consultation forums where judges could discuss challenging cases and share coping strategies in a psychologically safe environment.

A particularly innovative approach was the implementation of cross-departmental learning workshops, where judges from different legal specialties shared best practices and problem-solving approaches. This practice addressed the isolation often experienced within specialised legal departments and fostered knowledge transfer across traditional boundaries.

Individual-Level Implementation

Individual resilience strategies included systematic skill acquisition, social support development, and targeted interventions for vulnerability periods. Basic resilience courses were integrated into the onboarding process for newly appointed judges, with all new appointees completing a “Resilience Fundamentals” course by 2023. Additionally, a “Judicial Mentorship” program paired experienced judges with newer colleagues, addressing the loneliness identified as a significant stressor in the focus groups.

For judges handling emotionally demanding cases (particularly in family, juvenile, and criminal courts), specialised secondary trauma prevention programs were implemented beginning in 2020. These programs combined psychological education with practical coping strategies and structured peer support.

C. Court Performance Analysis: Quantitative Assessment of Systemic Resilience

The implementation of the resilience framework coincided with notable changes in court performance metrics (see Table 3), providing quantitative indicators of systemic resilience under varying conditions.

Table 3: Number of Judges/Registrars and Clearance Rates in Israeli Courts*

Court Level	Year	Number of Judges and Registrars	Cases Opened	Cases Closed	CR
Supreme Court	2017	16	10,102	9,470	97.40%
	2018	16	10,203	11,160	109.30%
	2019	16	10,502	11,088	105.60%
	2020	16	10,820	11,812	109.30%
	2021	16	11,026	11,484	104.40%
	2022	16	11,208	11,416	101.80%
	2023	13	11,540	11,900	100.30%

TABLE continued

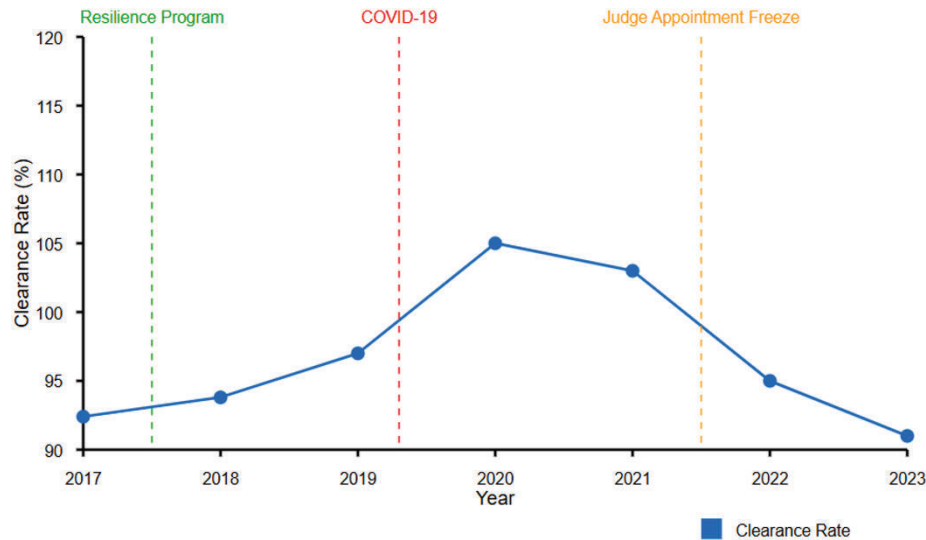
Court Level	Year	Number of Judges and Registrars	Cases Opened	Cases Closed	CR
District Courts	2017	200	40,036	34,920	87.30%
	2018	201	41,012	37,802	92.20%
	2019	201	42,501	46,665	109.80%
	2020	205	43,804	54,126	123.70%
	2021	222	45,002	55,485	123.30%
	2022	222	46,211	53,163	115.10%
	2023	222	47,508	52,475	110.50%
Labor Court System	2017	66	20,023	20,220	101.10%
	2018	68	21,070	21,504	102.40%
	2019	66	22,502	23,872	106.10%
	2020	68	23,801	24,058	101.10%
	2021	69	25,003	25,550	102.20%
	2022	70	26,202	27,511	105.10%
	2023	70	29,518	27,500	93.20%
Magistrates' Courts	2017	445	721,123	730,373	101.30%
	2018	454	723,003	713,901	98.70%
	2019	453	725,016	741,125	102.50%
	2020	472	744,027	695,040	93.50%
	2021	474	737,002	752,477	102.10%
	2022	496	754,038	756,016	100.40%
	2023	498	800,167	738,400	92.30%

*Data retrieved from: <https://www.gov.il/he/departments/the_judicial_authority/govil-landing-page>.

1. Clearance Rate Trends and External Events

Analysis of clearance rate (CR) data from 2017-2023 revealed a pattern that corresponds with the implementation timeline of resilience initiatives. Figure 1 illustrates the overall judiciary CR trend, which showed improvement from 93.7% in 2017 to a peak of 107.5% during the primary implementation period of resilience-building activities.

Figure 1: Israeli Judiciary Clearance Rate Trends



This performance improvement is particularly significant considering the challenges faced during this period, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced rapid adaptation to remote and hybrid court operations. The judiciary's ability to not merely maintain but improve case clearance rates during this unprecedented disruption suggests enhanced systemic resilience.

However, since 2021, there has been a notable decline in CR to 93.48%, corresponding with a significant reduction in judicial appointments, with approximately 200 positions (20% of total judgeships) remaining unfilled. This staffing constraint has created substantial pressure on existing judges, providing an unplanned "stress test" of the resilience framework under resource scarcity conditions.

2. Statistical Relationships Between Performance Indicators

Statistical analysis of court performance data revealed several significant correlations that provide insights into the systemic nature of resilience within the judiciary. At the judiciary-wide level, a strong positive correlation between Average CR and Total CR ($r = .92$, $p < .05$) indicates that improved performance occurred across the system rather than being limited to specific courts (Table 4). Additionally, a strong negative correlation between CR Variability and both Total CR ($r = -.76$, $p < .05$) and Average CR ($r = -.82$, $p < .05$) suggests that as overall performance improved, there was less variability across court types — indicating more consistent system-wide resilience rather than isolated pockets of excellence.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix for Judiciary-Wide Variables (2017-2023)

Variable	Total CR	Total Judges	Year	Avg CR	CR Variability
1. Total CR	—				
2. Total Judges	.71	—			
3. Year	.32	.96*	—		
4. Avg CR	.92*	.61	.20	—	
5. CR Variability	-.76*	-.29	-.01	-.82*	—

* $p < .05$

At the tribunal level (see Table 5), analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between District Courts CR and Total Judges ($r = .83$, $p < .05$), suggesting that adequate staffing has a particularly significant impact on District Courts' performance. However, the absence of significant correlations between CR percentages across different court types indicates that performance patterns may be influenced by court-specific factors, highlighting the importance of customised rather than one-size-fits-all approaches to resilience building.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix for Tribunal-Level Variables (2017-2023)

Variable	Supreme CR	District CR	Labor CR	Magistrates CR	Total Judges
1. Supreme CR	—				
2. District CR	.30	—			
3. Labor CR	.42	.16	—		
4. Magistrates CR	-.09	-.52	.48	—	
5. Total Judges	-.16	.83*	-.26	-.68	—

* $p < .05$

D. Evolving Perceptions and Generational Divides: Qualitative Insights from Focus Groups

The “Voices from the Field” focus groups conducted in 2019, 2021, and 2024 provide a longitudinal perspective on how judges' experiences and perceptions of resilience initiatives evolved over time. These qualitative insights complement the quantitative performance data by revealing the experiential dimension of resilience and identifying emerging challenges not captured in performance metrics.

1. Early Implementation Phase (2019)

The 2019 sessions revealed generally positive reception of crisis management, burnout reduction, and secondary trauma prevention initiatives. Judges expressed appreciation for the organisation's attention to their well-being, with one participant noting: “*This is the first time I've felt the system recognizes that judges are human too*” (Magistrate Court judge). However, concerns about loneliness, workload imbalances, and communication clarity persisted, indicating that the initial implementation had not yet fully addressed these foundational issues.

2. Mid-Implementation Phase (2021)

By 2021, focus group discussions centered on three key areas: support staff conditions, judicial training effectiveness, and policy transparency. Mentions of inadequate support staff and high workload had increased significantly, reflecting growing awareness of systemic factors that influence individual resilience. Despite these challenges, judges reported notable improvements in organizational transparency, openness to feedback, and leadership responsiveness. Professional development initiatives received particular praise, including the leadership training for chief justices, mentorship programs for new judges, and the judiciary's rapid adaptation to pandemic conditions through remote work options.

3. Advanced Implementation Phase (2024)

The 2024 focus groups revealed the most significant findings regarding the long-term evolution of resilience within the judiciary, including the emergence of pronounced generational differences that had not been evident in earlier sessions. These generational divides manifested in several domains:

- (a) *Work Flexibility Expectations*: Younger judges (appointed after 2015) expressed stronger preferences for flexible work arrangements, including remote work options and non-traditional scheduling. As one participant noted: *"The next generation of judges expects the court system to accommodate modern work practices; the traditional model of being physically present in chambers from 8 to 6 is unsustainable"* (District Court judge, appointed 2017).
- (b) *Personal-Professional Integration*: Generational differences emerged regarding boundaries between personal and professional life. Younger judges more explicitly prioritised family needs and work-life balance, while senior judges often expressed concerns about maintaining traditional judicial availability and commitment. This tension created friction in some courts regarding scheduling practices and coverage expectations.
- (c) *Ethical Norms Application*: Perhaps most significantly, generational differences appeared in the interpretation and application of ethical norms governing judicial conduct. While core values remained consistent, younger judges tended to emphasise transparency and public engagement, while senior judges prioritised reserve and separation from public discourse. This difference became particularly evident in discussions about social media boundaries and public communication during crisis periods.
- (d) *Technology Adaptation*: Significant variance emerged in attitudes toward technological solutions for resilience challenges. Younger judges generally viewed technology as essential for workload management and court efficiency, while some senior judges expressed skepticism about technology's ability to address fundamental systemic issues.

These generational differences represent both a challenge and opportunity for judicial resilience. They create potential friction points within court teams, but also bring fresh perspectives that may enhance the judiciary's adaptive capacity to changing societal expectations. They highlight the importance of intergenerational dialogue and mentorship programs that allow for knowledge transfer while acknowledging evolving professional norms.

Beyond generational differences, the 2024 focus groups also revealed increased concerns about judicial independence amid societal polarisation. Judges reported heightened anxiety about external pressures on the judiciary, reflecting broader societal tensions. This finding underscores the critical relationship between judicial independence, institutional legitimacy, and individual resilience — judges' psychological well-being cannot be separated from the institutional conditions that enable their core function.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that the Israeli judiciary's resilience framework has yielded measurable improvements in system performance and individual well-being, particularly during crisis periods. However, they also highlight persistent challenges, including resource constraints, workload management, and emerging generational differences that require continued adaptation of resilience strategies. These insights provide valuable lessons for court systems globally as they develop contextually appropriate approaches to building judicial resilience.

E. Emergent Theoretical Propositions

Through our grounded theory analysis, several key theoretical propositions emerged from the data regarding the nature and development of resilience in judicial contexts. These propositions represent patterns identified through constant comparative analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, and offer potential explanatory power for understanding resilience in judicial systems globally.

1. Proposition 1: Individual-Team Resilience Relationship

Our analysis suggests that individual judge resilience contributes to and is enhanced by team resilience in a reciprocal relationship. Quantitative data showed a modest improvement in overall clearance rates from 2017 to 2021, while focus groups revealed judges' appreciation for well-being and professional development initiatives, though concerns about workload persisted. This suggests that while individual resilience initiatives yield benefits, their efficacy is constrained when not supported by team and organizational structures.

2. Proposition 2: Team Resilience as Foundational

Team resilience emerged as particularly significant in the judicial context, despite the profession's traditionally individualistic nature. The strong positive correlation between District Courts' CR and staffing levels ($r = .83$, $p < .05$), combined with positive qualitative assessments of team-building initiatives, suggests that team-level interventions produce substantial benefits in judicial settings. This extends team resilience theory⁵⁹ into a profession characterised by high individual autonomy.

3. Proposition 3: Multi-Level Cascading Effects

Our data suggests a cascading effect across resilience levels, where changes at one level influence other levels. The strong positive correlation between Average CR and Total CR ($r = .92$, $p < .05$) and decreased variability across court types suggests system-wide improvements rather than isolated pockets of excellence. This supports the theoretical concept of resilience as an emergent property that scales across organizational levels.⁶⁰

4. Proposition 4: Resilience-Burnout Relationship

The relationship between resilience and burnout appears more complex than a simple inverse correlation. While judges reported improved well-being from burnout reduction initiatives, workload concerns persisted. This suggests that resilience and burnout may be related but distinct constructs in high-pressure judicial contexts, with multiple mediating factors influencing their relationship.

5. Proposition 5: Psychological Safety as Facilitator

Psychological safety emerged as a critical facilitating condition for resilience development across levels. Qualitative data revealed that initiatives fostering transparent communication and non-judgmental feedback created environments where judges felt safer expressing challenges and seeking support. This extends psychological safety theory⁶¹ into judicial contexts, where traditional professional norms have emphasised certainty and self-sufficiency.

6. Proposition 6: Resource Constraints as Limiting Condition

Systemic resource constraints emerged as a significant limiting condition for resilience development. The decline in clearance rates after 2021, coinciding with approximately 200 unfilled judicial

⁵⁹ Hartman et al, n 3.

⁶⁰ R Bhamra, S Dani and K Burnard, "Resilience: The Concept, a Literature Review and Future Directions" (2011) 49(18) *International Journal of Production Research* 5375.

⁶¹ A Newman, R Donohue and N Eva, "Psychological Safety: A Systematic Review of the Literature" (2017) 27(3) *Human Resource Management Review* 521.

positions, demonstrates that resilience initiatives cannot fully compensate for severe resource shortages. This highlights the need for adequate structural support alongside psychological and team-based interventions.

7. Proposition 7: Disruptions as Catalysts

External disruptions were found to function as catalysts that can ultimately strengthen systemic resilience when appropriate structures are in place. The judiciary's ability to maintain high clearance rates during COVID-19 and other crises suggests that well-designed resilience frameworks can enhance performance even during significant disruptions.

8. Proposition 8: Generational Dynamics as Moderator

Generational differences emerged as an important moderating factor affecting resilience development. The 2024 focus groups revealed substantial differences in how judges from different generations conceptualise work boundaries, professional identity, and ethical norms, suggesting that resilience strategies must adapt to these evolving expectations.

These theoretical propositions emerged inductively from our data and provide a foundation for understanding the complex, multi-level nature of resilience in judicial systems. While further research is needed to test and refine these propositions across diverse judicial contexts, they offer significant explanatory power for understanding how resilience develops and functions within court systems.

V. DISCUSSION

The research presents a transformative understanding of judicial resilience that fundamentally challenges existing theoretical frameworks. By employing a rigorous grounded theory methodology, the study reveals resilience as a dynamic, multi-dimensional ecological system of professional adaptation and sustainability, transcending traditional individualistic conceptualisations.

The methodological approach stands as a significant contribution to organizational research. Unlike conventional studies that impose pre-existing frameworks, this research developed theoretical constructs inductively from judges' lived experiences. The mixed-methods design, combining quantitative performance metrics with in-depth qualitative analysis, addresses a critical limitation in existing resilience literature. The six-year implementation timeline provides an uncommon longitudinal perspective, capturing the evolutionary nature of resilience development that most short-term studies overlook.

The use of clearance rates as a nuanced resilience measurement tool represents a methodological innovation. By correlating specific resilience initiatives with performance metrics, the study offers a judiciary-specific approach to understanding institutional adaptation. This methodology acknowledges the challenges of measuring resilience in professional environments where controlled experiments are rarely feasible, providing a novel model for future research.

Theoretical insights emerge most profoundly in the complex interplay between individual autonomy and systemic resilience. The research illuminates a critical tension inherent in judicial systems: balancing decisional independence with organizational effectiveness. This dynamic manifests in three pivotal domains: information sharing versus decisional autonomy, standardisation versus individual discretion, and accountability versus protection from external influences.

Psychological safety emerged as a transformative mechanism for resilience transfer across organizational levels. The study demonstrates how creating supportive, non-judgmental environments can fundamentally reconfigure institutional adaptive capacities. In a profession historically characterised by emotional restraint, this represents a novel approach to understanding professional well-being, extending theoretical work on organizational psychology.

Generational dynamics revealed another profound theoretical contribution. The 2024 focus groups uncovered significant variations in professional identity, ethical conceptualisation, and institutional engagement across judicial generations. This finding extends beyond existing research on organizational adaptation, demonstrating how professional norms dynamically evolve through intergenerational interactions.

Practical interventions derived from the research offer sophisticated solutions to systemic challenges. The algorithmic workload balancing system exemplifies this approach, moving beyond traditional case allocation methods. By incorporating factors such as case complexity, emotional demands, and individual cognitive capacities, the research provides a comprehensive blueprint for judicial system optimisation.

The intergenerational mentorship model stands out as an innovative intervention strategy. By creating bidirectional knowledge transfer mechanisms, the approach addresses generational differences while fostering institutional adaptability. This mechanism transcends traditional mentorship models, creating a dynamic learning ecosystem capable of evolving with changing professional expectations.

Crisis response protocols represent another critical practical contribution. The Israeli judiciary's approach during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated how pre-established protocols incorporating psychological well-being can significantly enhance resilience. Unlike many court systems that focus exclusively on operational continuity, this approach explicitly addressed judges' psychological needs alongside procedural adaptations.

The establishment of protected "writing days" offers a simple yet powerful intervention addressing the cognitive demands of judicial work. By creating structural supports for deep thinking, this approach directly confronts the cognitive load challenges identified in judicial stress research.

Quantitative analysis provides empirical support for the study's theoretical propositions. The strong positive correlation between Average Clearance Rates and Total Clearance Rates substantiates the interconnected nature of resilience across different court levels, extending existing theoretical frameworks on job demands and resources.⁶²

The research reveals significant limitations of individual-focused resilience interventions. While individual initiatives showed modest benefits, their effectiveness was substantially constrained by underlying structural challenges. This finding aligns with emerging scholarship suggesting that resilience-building efforts focused solely on individual capacity yield diminishing returns without corresponding system-level interventions.⁶³

Practical implications for judicial leaders are profound and globally relevant (see Appendix D). The research suggests differentiated approaches to resilience-building, recognising that different court types require distinct strategies based on their specific stressors and organizational characteristics. Critical recommendations include: developing sophisticated workload metrics, creating environments of psychological safety, addressing generational transitions, balancing judicial independence with organizational efficiency, and enhancing leadership capabilities in crisis management and change adaptation.

The broader significance extends far beyond the judicial context. The study offers a holistic model for understanding how complex professional systems develop adaptive capacities that transcend individual capabilities. It presents resilience not as a fixed attribute, but as a living, evolving ecosystem capable of sustaining human potential amid increasing complexity and uncertainty.

Limitations notwithstanding, the research provides a comprehensive framework for reimagining professional resilience. It challenges us to move beyond individualistic models, presenting resilience as a dynamic, multilevel process of continuous adaptation. Ultimately, this research offers both a theoretical framework and practical interventions that can transform how we conceptualise and support professional well-being in critical institutional contexts, providing a blueprint for institutions seeking to develop adaptive, sustainable, and human-centered organizational systems.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

While our grounded theory approach provides a robust foundation for theory development, several methodological limitations warrant consideration. First, the co-occurrence of data collection with implementation of resilience initiatives creates challenges in distinguishing spontaneous theoretical

⁶² Schaufeli and Bakker, n 33.

⁶³ Boin and van Eeten, n 7.

insights from those influenced by the framework's implementation. Future research should consider employing multiple researchers with varying degrees of exposure to the implementation process to enhance analytical triangulation. Second, although theoretical saturation appeared to be reached within our sample, the judiciary's distinctive professional culture may limit transferability to other contexts. Comparative grounded theory studies across different judicial systems would enhance the robustness of the theoretical framework. Finally, our grounded theory analysis primarily focused on process-oriented aspects of resilience development rather than the content of specific stressors, which may vary considerably across judicial systems. Future research should expand the theoretical framework to more explicitly incorporate contextual variations in stressors and their implications for resilience strategies.

The focus on the Israeli judiciary, while providing a valuable case study, limits generalisability to other legal systems or cultural contexts. Future research should include cross-cultural comparisons and studies in diverse judicial systems to identify universal principles and context-specific factors.

The reliance on clearance rates as a primary performance metric, while practically necessary, provides an incomplete picture of judicial effectiveness. Future studies should incorporate additional outcome measures including quality indicators and public trust metrics to develop a more comprehensive assessment of system resilience.

The absence of standardised resilience measures specific to judicial contexts represents another limitation. Future research should develop and validate judiciary-specific resilience scales that capture the unique challenges of judicial work and enable more precise measurement of intervention impacts.

The potential for self-selection and social desirability biases in focus group data suggests the need for future studies employing anonymous surveys and objective performance observations to complement qualitative insights.

Finally, while this study spans seven years, even longer longitudinal research would provide valuable insights into the sustainability of resilience initiatives across judicial careers and system cycles. Future research should aim for extended follow-up periods with multiple data collection points to capture the dynamic nature of resilience over time.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study presents a novel approach to judicial resilience, demonstrating that effective institutional adaptation transcends individual coping mechanisms. By examining the Israeli judiciary from 2018-2024, the research reveals resilience as a multi-level, interconnected phenomenon spanning individual, team, and organizational dimensions.

The key findings challenge traditional resilience models by highlighting the critical interdependence between personal well-being and systemic institutional structures. Individual resilience—comprising emotional regulation and effective coping – proves insufficient without supportive team and organizational frameworks. Team resilience, characterised by psychological safety emerges as a potential mediator between individual capacities and institutional outcomes.

Three fundamental insights emerge from the research. First, judicial systems must carefully balance institutional efficiency with individual judicial independence, creating structures that respect professional autonomy while fostering collaborative problem-solving. Second, generational differences present both a challenge and an opportunity, requiring adaptive approaches that maintain core institutional values while accommodating evolving professional norms. Third, judicial resilience is intrinsically linked to institutional legitimacy, with judges' psychological well-being potentially connected to public trust.

The implementation of the resilience framework demonstrated measurable performance improvements, particularly during challenging external events like the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the research also revealed that resilience initiatives cannot fully compensate for severe resource constraints, highlighting the need for context-sensitive strategies.

As judicial systems face increasing pressures from technological disruption, resource constraints, and societal complexities, this multi-level approach to resilience offers a critical framework for sustaining

institutional effectiveness. The research demonstrates that investing in judicial resilience is not merely an organizational development initiative, but an essential contribution to maintaining the rule of law and democratic governance. The Israeli judiciary's experience provides a blueprint for building systemic resilience through sustained commitment, evidence-based interventions, and continuous adaptation. While implementation must be tailored to local contexts, the fundamental principles of multi-level resilience development offer a universal approach to navigating institutional challenges.

VIII. DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this work, the author used Claude.ai to assist with editing the wording, formatting tables, and refining the language of this manuscript. After using this tool, the author reviewed and edited all content as needed and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

X. APPENDIX A

A. Summary of Components and Tools for Developing Resilience

Level	Component	Tools to develop resilience
The individual	Emotional regulation	- Emotional processing of experiences in an individual or group process - Bio-feedback - Cognitive psychology - CBT - BasicPh "4 Box" breathing
	Positive thinking	- Positive reframing "Thank you" journal - Avoiding negative ruminations
	Self-awareness	- Personal development - Meditation - Yoga
	Sense of meaning	- Meaning of work - Involvement in projects and forums - Spirituality and beliefs - Volunteering and contributing to the community
	Self-efficacy	- Vocational training - Role expanding - Empowerment - Growth mind set - Problem solving ability - Life and professional experience - Creativity - Taking on additional responsibilities - Knowledge sharing - teaching and training

Level	Component	Tools to develop resilience
	Social relationships	• Strengthening a social network • Strengthening relationships at work • Development of empathy skills • Compassion and self-compassion
	The individual	
	Correct perception of reality	• Feedback • Ability to correctly understand reality • Flexibility in interpreting reality
	Time management	• Identifying priorities in life, prioritising tasks • Work/life balance • Developing hobbies
	Physical health	• Mindfulness • Physical training • Diet • Sleep • A trip in the wild • Routine physical check-up for preventive medicine • Annual vacation
Team	Leadership & manager's style	• Leadership development programs for managers • Attentive and participative leadership approach
	Team efficacy	• Clear perceptions of roles so that it is possible to replace people when they are absent • Mutual trust in the ability to meet challenges • Celebrate team successes
	The quality of the team's work	• The existence of a common goal and mutual dependence for its fulfillment • Lessons learned and implemented • Fairness and transparency in decision making and resource allocation • Team building programs • Collaborations in the team and its interfaces • Providing time/space for emotional expression in team meetings • Policies and Procedures • Management routines: meetings and team meetings

Level	Component	Tools to develop resilience
	Organizational policy	• Connecting to the values and vision of the organisation and strengthening the values of transparency and cooperation in emphasis • Job descriptions • Clear work processes • Work/life balance • learning processes • Open communication
Organisation	Strategy	• Development of managerial concepts that include defining a mission, values, vision and goals for the organisation • Challenge mapping and scenarios building • Multi-year strategic work plan • Organizational structure fit for goals
	Human capital	• Development of human capital with an emphasis on core employees • Development of management and leadership skills for executives • Developing readiness for change • Learning and development
	Work process	• Decentralisation of powers according to expertise • Organizational learning and knowledge management • Balancing loads and streamlining work processes • Intra-organizational communication is managed to convey messages and updates regarding the concern for the individual in the organisation
	Work environment	• Creating we-work spaces for meeting • Designing an inspiring work environment that allocates a post/room, a place for gathering and physical training • Reducing equipment gaps and providing work support equipment (eg, ergonometry).

Level	Component	Tools to develop resilience
	Culture design	• Creating organizational engagement • Culture of people development - providing feedback and building personal development plans • Information sharing - knowledge management • Encouragements of initiatives and learning • Locating individual distresses and providing a response to individuals • Expressing concern and caring for employees • Improvement of interfaces in the eco-system

XI. APPENDIX B

A. Key Learnings: Resilience Programs in Various Organisations

1. Guiding Principles for Developing Resilience:

- Shift organizational culture:* Focus on reducing burnout and increasing resilience through resource allocation and cultural change. Target employee attitudes towards job demands, meaning, control, work-life balance, social support, organizational values, work processes, and resource availability.
- Individual-level training:* Offer training in value, emotional, mental, social, and physical (eg, for IDF combatants) dimensions of resilience.
- Team as a resource:* Leverage teams as both coping mechanisms and strengthening forces by developing them across tasks, relationships, and values.
- Training axes:* Utilise exposure to build perceptions of capability and skills training based on behavioral science to offer generic knowledge and tools for individual resilience.
- Senior management leadership:* Appoint senior managers to lead resilience-building initiatives within their units.
- Phased approach:* Conduct need assessments, define specific goals, initiate pilot programs, expand based on learnings.
- Professional support:* Utilise change agents like psychologists or organizational consultants.
- Transparent communication:** Ensure planned communication and readily available information tailored to different audiences.

2. Work Processes and Tasks:

- Focus on mid-level and senior management:* Develop their abilities as change leaders, role models, and clear communicators to empower and energise their teams.
- People-oriented culture:* establish a vision, values, planning, promotion, communication, performance evaluation, reward, and financial incentive system that prioritises employee well-being.
- Integrate resilience into infrastructure:* Embed resilience considerations into planning environments and work settings.
- Reduce workloads:* Identify bottlenecks, reduce bureaucracy, and improve user experience in technology.
- Invest in human capital:* Increase autonomy, personal and professional development opportunities, and meaning and well-being.
- Promote collaboration:* Improve inter-sector communication and integration, fostering partnership and unity.

3. **Evaluation Methods and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):**

- (a) *Organizational survey*: Measure factors and systemic gaps impacting employee resilience and burnout.
- (b) *Input indicators*: Track program existence and participant numbers.
- (c) *Output indicators*: Utilise self-report questionnaires and manager assessments of employee resilience. For specific programs, consider biofeedback to monitor physiological changes before and after interventions.

XII. APPENDIX C

A. The Israeli Judiciary's Framework for Building Resilience

The Israeli judiciary's resilience framework outlines various tasks targeted at judges, employees, and managers at organizational, court, and individual levels. This comprehensive approach is guided by established principles and encompasses potential activities, implementation strategies, and an evaluation process to assess effectiveness. Through this unifying framework, the judiciary can holistically manage and evaluate its diverse resilience-building efforts based on data-driven insights.

1. **Core Areas for Intervention:**

- (a) *Develop and embed resilience knowledge*: Integrate resilience training into leadership and teamwork programs for managers and organic teams.
- (b) *Equip individuals with tools*: Offer generic resilience tools through basic courses and onboarding processes.
- (c) *Optimise organizational processes*: Streamline processes to bolster overall resilience.
- (d) *Prepare for crisis situations*: Develop protocols and training for handling various crises.

2. **Principles for Assimilating New Processes:**

- (a) *Leadership*: Assign a senior manager or judge to lead each resilience initiative.
- (b) *Multi-level approach*: Design tasks for individual, team, manager, and organizational levels.
- (c) *Pilot and evaluate*: Implement new initiatives as pilots, assess their impact, and integrate them with existing programs.
- (d) *Targeted focus*: Prioritise judges and staff handling sensitive cases (crime, family, juvenile) for initial interventions.
- (e) *Tailored communication*: Inform different sectors about available support and resources.

3. **Guiding Principles for Individual Resilience:**

- (a) *Systematic skill acquisition*: Integrate generic resilience tools into existing training programs throughout careers.
- (b) *Foster social support*: Tackle loneliness by building strong support networks within the organisation.
- (c) *Identify and address vulnerabilities*: Use diagnostics to map potential areas of vulnerability and provide targeted interventions.
- (d) *Offer individual support*: Equip individuals with tools and training, and offer referrals for professional help when needed.

4. **Guiding Principles for Team Resilience:**

- (a) *Focus on three key axes*:
 - (i) **Team mission**: Define goals, processes, skills needed, and task division.
 - (ii) **Positive relationships**: Foster positive climate, conflict resolution skills, and coping mechanisms for uncertainty.
 - (iii) **Shared values**: Align team values with organizational values for effective stress management.

5. Guiding Principles for Senior Resilience:

- (a) *Leaders as resilience generators*: Instill responsibility for building team and individual resilience.
- (b) *Role models of resilience*: Showcase personal resilience in routine, learning, and crisis situations.
- (c) *Effective communication*: Convey messages that bolster self-efficacy and renewed strength.

6. Knowledge Base for Resilience Programs:

- (a) *Behavioral science*: Positive psychology, mindfulness, CBT, Caring.
- (b) *Stressors and competencies*: Mapping of potential stressors and required skills throughout a judge/employee's career (detailed in Appendix A).

7. Capabilities to Develop:

- (a) *Professional*: Responsibility and authority within the role.
- (b) *Emotional*: Managing mental load.
- (c) *Cognitive*: Systemic thinking, flexibility, critical thinking, problem-solving.
- (d) *Motivational*: Engagement and career development commitment.
- (e) *Ethical*: Sense of mission, meaning, and alignment with organizational values.
- (f) *Social*: Belonging, cohesion, and support networks.

8. Team Level:

- (a) *Team Building*: Workshops led by senior managers, focused on collaboration and communication.
- (b) *Transition Support*: Assistance during courthouse relocations to minimise disruption.
- (c) *Cross-Sector Collaboration*: Roundtables to improve inter-team communication and understanding.
- (d) *Learning Workshops*: Debriefing sessions after significant events or crises to extract lessons and build coping mechanisms.
- (e) *Social Activities*: Planning and funding events to foster team cohesion and relaxation.

9. Manager Level:

- (a) *Personal Coaching*: Ongoing consulting for chief justices throughout their term.
- (b) *Onboarding Support*: Management consulting for newly appointed vice—chief justices and executives.
- (c) *Leadership Development*: Programs focusing on resilience-building and stress management for senior leaders.
- (d) *Evaluation and Feedback*: Incorporating resilience indicators into manager assessments based on employee and judge feedback, followed by personalised development plans.
- (e) *Teamwork Training*: Workshop specifically for judges presiding in judicial formations.
- (f) *Recruitment and Promotion*: Updating processes to emphasise interpersonal skills and resilience alongside professional qualifications.

10. Organizational Level:

- (a) *Workload Management*: Implementing workload norms for judges, ensuring work-life balance through allocated case handling time, weekly writing days from home, and flexible work hours.
- (b) *Career Development*: Establishing clear career paths and opportunities for promotion and professional growth.

- (c) *Courthouse Design*: Renovating or designing courts to address judges' needs for interaction and stress relief, including dedicated spaces for meetings, social activities, and relaxation (eg, kitchenettes, dining rooms, gyms).

Tasks to increase Resilience at the Individual level

Population	Organizational activities	Court level activities
All Judges and Registrars	• Monitoring and balancing workloads • Vocational training combined with windows for learning generic tools to increase resilience. • Developing of professional forums in the various fields of law as a source of learning and professional support for judges. • Managed internal organizational communication. • Organizational events, ceremonies and conferences. • Training and accompanying threatened and defamed judges and their family members. • Locating and treating judges experiencing life crises. • Conducting a periodic survey to map gaps in the work environment, in equipment and infrastructure, and in the adjustment of computer systems, all to create an optimal user experience and work environment. • Exhibitions and publications e.g., "Creative Judges and Registrars" - giving expression to hobbies and talents.	• Management routines: work meetings, personal meetings, departmental judges' meetings, etc. • A process for improvement and lessons learned. • Team building workshops. • Meetings for peer consultation. • Planning vacations and sabbaticals. • A process for encouraging initiative and innovation. • Personal-professional assessment conversations (ie, feedback) for judges and registrars. • Activities to increase resilience: health promotion, mindfulness, ergonomics, etc. • Annual excursion. • Volunteering in the community.

TABLE *continued*

Population	Organizational activities	Court level activities
Judges and registrars with seniority up to three years	• Orientation seminar. • Introductory workshop. • Mentoring program for newly appointed judges and registrars. • Clinical training facilitated by psychologists for criminal judges from district courts, family and juvenile judges.	• Guidance and support from the president and vice president. • Planning the allocation of incoming cases to each judge and registrar. • Peer group for newly appointed judges and registrars.
Judges and registrars who are about to retire	• A personal meeting to process the judicial journey and emotional preparation for retirement. • A four-day retirement workshop with spouses. • Recognition ceremony in the capacity of the President of the Supreme Court at an annual organizational conference.	• Balancing workloads in accordance with retirement planning. • Recognition of retirees at events. • Departmental social gathering for retirees and their colleagues.
Retired judges and registrars	• Annual cultural event.	• Mentoring a judge voluntarily with the approval of the president.

TABLE *continued*

Population	Organizational activities	Court level activities
The administrative staff	• Orientation days upon entering the position. • Vocational training. • Annual conference for employees. • Individual care by social workers. • Recognition of outstanding employees in an annual ceremony at the supreme court. • Workshops to increase resilience for employees at risk of secondary trauma. • Workshop for presidents' secretaries to increase awareness of the judge's challenges. • A 4-day study tour for employees in Eilat.	• Management routines. • Annual feedback and performance evaluation. • Personal accompaniment of employees in crisis situations. • Appointment of organizational engagement trustees. • Volunteering in the community.

XIII. APPENDIX D

A. Lessons for Global Judicial Systems

The Israeli judiciary's experience with implementing a multi-level resilience framework offers valuable insights for court systems worldwide, particularly those operating in contexts characterised by resource constraints, social polarisation, or frequent external disruptions. These lessons extend beyond the specifics of the Israeli context to address universal challenges facing judiciaries globally.

1. Algorithmic Workload Balancing Systems

A critical resilience intervention in the Israeli courts was the development and implementation of sophisticated workload-balancing algorithms that transcended simple case counting to more accurately assess judicial burden. Traditional approaches to judicial workload management often rely on basic quantitative metrics (cases assigned or completed) without accounting for the significant variation in complexity, emotional demands, and time requirements across case types. The Israeli system evolved to incorporate multiple factors including:

- (a) Case complexity based on legal and factual elements
- (b) Required expertise and specialisation
- (c) Estimated hearing time requirements
- (d) Judgment writing demands
- (e) Public attention and scrutiny levels
- (f) Procedural complexity

This approach resulted in more equitable distribution of judicial labor and significantly reduced perceptions of unfair workload allocation — consistently identified as a primary stressor in judicial focus groups. Court administrators globally can adapt this approach by:

- (i) *Developing nuanced complexity metrics*: Working collaboratively with judges to identify factors that meaningfully differentiate case difficulty beyond traditional case-type categories
- (ii) *Implementing transparent allocation systems*: Creating visible and understandable algorithms that judges perceive as fair, rather than opaque distribution processes that can breed mistrust
- (iii) *Regularly auditing workload equity*: Implementing ongoing monitoring systems that can identify and address emerging imbalances before they create burnout risks
- (iv) *Incorporating judicial input*: Ensuring judges participate in the development and refinement of workload metrics to enhance both accuracy and buy-in
- (v) *Balancing specialisation with diversification*: Creating rotation systems that allow for efficiency through specialisation while preventing burnout from continuous exposure to emotionally demanding case types

The Israeli experience demonstrates that such systems require substantial investment in data infrastructure and ongoing refinement based on user feedback. However, they yield significant returns in terms of judicial satisfaction, reduced burnout, and more consistent performance across court divisions.

2. Intergenerational Mentorship Programs

The generational differences identified in the 2024 focus groups highlight the value of structured intergenerational mentorship beyond traditional new-judge orientation. The Israeli judiciary's experience suggests that bidirectional mentorship — where senior judges provide institutional knowledge while newer judges share technological adaptations and contemporary perspectives — creates resilience through knowledge transfer and cultural evolution.

Court systems can implement similar programs by:

- (a) *Creating formal pairing systems* that extend beyond immediate orientation periods, with relationships lasting 2-3 years to allow for meaningful development and adaptation
- (b) *Establishing mutual learning objectives* where both mentor and mentee identify skills and knowledge to exchange, acknowledging that wisdom flows in both directions
- (c) *Providing regular structured reflection opportunities* for mentorship pairs to process challenges and successes in a psychologically safe environment
- (d) *Recognising mentorship as a core judicial responsibility* through workload allocation adjustments and performance recognition systems
- (e) *Facilitating cross-specialty mentoring* to broaden perspectives and reduce siloing within specialised court divisions

Such programs address multiple resilience challenges simultaneously: they reduce isolation (particularly important for courts in rural or remote locations), facilitate knowledge transfer, create psychological safety through trusted relationships outside formal reporting structures, and help bridge generational divides that might otherwise create tension within courts.

The Israeli experience demonstrates that effective mentorship programs require thoughtful matching processes that consider personality, work styles, and career aspirations beyond simply pairing senior and junior judges. The most successful mentorship relationships were those characterised by mutual respect and reciprocal learning, rather than hierarchical knowledge transmission.

3. Crisis Response Protocols with Judicial Well-being Components

The Israeli judiciary's response to multiple crises — including the COVID-19 pandemic and security emergencies — demonstrated that pre-established crisis protocols incorporating judicial well-being considerations significantly enhance resilience during disruptions. Unlike many court systems that focused exclusively on operational continuity, the Israeli approach explicitly addressed judges' psychological needs alongside procedural adaptations.

Court administrators can develop similar capabilities by:

- (a) *Creating crisis response teams* that include well-being specialists alongside operational experts to ensure psychological considerations are integrated into emergency planning
- (b) *Developing tiered support protocols* that escalate psychological resources alongside operational responses as crisis duration or intensity increases
- (c) *Implementing regular simulation exercises* that practice not only procedural adaptations but also well-being interventions and support mobilisation
- (d) *Establishing clear communication channels* specifically for well-being concerns during crises, separate from operational updates
- (e) *Building external partnerships* with mental health providers who can be rapidly mobilised during crises to provide specialised support
- (f) *Creating peer support networks* specifically trained in psychological first aid and crisis response to supplement professional resources

While most court systems have developed operational continuity plans following various natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, far fewer have integrated psychological support components. The Israeli experience suggests this integration significantly improves both individual coping and system adaptability during prolonged disruptions.

Of particular note was the Israeli judiciary's approach to communication during crises, which balanced transparency about challenges with messaging that reinforced collective efficacy and institutional resilience. This communication strategy — which acknowledged difficulties while emphasising capacity to overcome them — supported both individual and organizational resilience.

4. Protected Time Policies and Cognitive Load Management

A simple but powerful intervention in the Israeli system was the establishment of protected “writing days” when judges could work remotely without hearings or administrative meetings. This addressed the fundamental tension between the public-facing aspects of judicial work (hearings) and the reflective work required for judgment writing.

Courts globally can implement similar approaches by:

- (a) *Formalising schedule protection* through institutional policies rather than leaving it to individual judge preferences or negotiation
- (b) *Creating physical or virtual “quiet zones”* where interruption-free work can occur, recognising the cognitive demands of judicial decision-making
- (c) *Educating court users and staff* about the cognitive demands of judicial work to reduce resistance to protected time policies
- (d) *Implementing technology solutions* that support focused work by minimising unnecessary interruptions and notifications
- (e) *Strategically scheduling hearing blocks* to create natural periods for reflection and writing, rather than fragmenting schedules

This approach directly addresses the cognitive load challenges identified in judicial stress research worldwide⁶⁴ by creating structural supports for the deep thinking judicial work requires. It recognises that quality judicial decision-making requires not just legal knowledge but also the cognitive space to apply that knowledge effectively.

The Israeli experience suggests that protected time policies yield multiple benefits beyond increased productivity, including improved decision quality, reduced stress, and enhanced work satisfaction. Importantly, these policies were most effective when implemented as system-wide norms rather than individual accommodations, which removed the stigma that might otherwise be associated with requesting reduced hearing schedules.

⁶⁴ M K Miller, J Reichert, BH Bornstein, and G Shulman, “Judicial Stress: The Roles of Gender and Social Support” (2018) 25(4) *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law* 602 <<https://www.doi.org/10.1080/13218719.2018.1469436>>. Schrever et al, n 49.

5. Digital Transformation with Human-Centered Design

The Israeli judiciary accelerated its digital transformation during the study period, but approached technology implementation with a distinctive focus on human-centered design and well-being considerations. Rather than introducing technology primarily for efficiency, each digital initiative was evaluated for its impact on judicial cognitive load, stress levels, and work quality.

Court systems pursuing digital transformation can adopt similar principles by:

- (a) *Involving judges in technology design* from conception through implementation, rather than imposing solutions designed solely by technical experts
- (b) *Evaluating technology impact on cognitive load*, not just efficiency metrics, recognising that poorly designed systems can increase rather than decrease judicial stress
- (c) *Implementing gradual adoption pathways* that allow for learning and adaptation rather than abrupt transitions
- (d) *Creating technology champions* within the judicial community who can provide peer support and translate between technical and judicial perspectives
- (e) *Prioritising integration across systems* to reduce the fragmentation that often characterises court technology environments

The Israeli judiciary's approach to case management system redesign exemplifies these principles. The system was developed through multiple iterations with judicial input, focused on reducing cognitive friction points that contributed to stress, and implemented with extensive peer support networks to assist with transition challenges.

6. Psychological Safety Initiatives

Perhaps the most fundamental resilience building block in the Israeli judiciary was the systematic development of psychological safety — creating environments where judges felt able to discuss challenges, admit uncertainties, and seek support without fear of damaging their professional standing. This represented a significant cultural shift in a profession traditionally characterised by expectations of certainty and self-sufficiency.

Courts seeking to enhance psychological safety can implement several approaches validated in the Israeli context:

- (a) *Leadership modeling of appropriate vulnerability*, with court chief justices and senior judges openly discussing challenges they face and strategies they employ
- (b) *Structured non-judgmental debriefing processes* following difficult cases or critical incidents, focused on learning rather than blame
- (c) *Creation of confidential peer consultation forums* where judges can discuss challenging situations or decisions without fear of formal evaluation
- (d) *Reframing help-seeking as professional responsibility* rather than weakness, emphasising that effective judges recognise their limitations and seek appropriate support
- (e) *Training supervisors in supportive response techniques* to ensure that when judges do share challenges, they receive constructive rather than critical responses

The Israeli experience demonstrates that psychological safety serves as a foundation for other resilience initiatives by creating the conditions where judges can authentically engage with support resources rather than projecting an image of invulnerability. This cultural shift — while perhaps the most difficult to measure — may represent the most fundamental contributor to judicial resilience.

These lessons from the Israeli judiciary's experience offer concrete, adaptable approaches that court systems worldwide can implement to enhance judicial resilience while respecting the unique characteristics of judicial work. While specific implementations must be tailored to local legal cultures and resource constraints, these core strategies address universal challenges facing judiciaries in an era of increasing demands and complexity.