Spring 05-31-2023

Promoting University Teacher Resilience through Teaching Philosophy Development

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Abstract

Teaching in today's complex and competitive university environment has become increasingly demanding as teachers try to respond to the stress and burnout negatively impacting their work performance. In this environment, it is more important than ever that university teachers build resilience to overcome stress and burnout and continue a career-long commitment to teaching effectiveness. The initial phase of this research systematically identified 39 empirical studies of school teacher resilience, and seven studies of university teacher resilience, to identify key resilience-building factors. The second phase, in-depth interviews, probed nine Australian and seven Canadian university teaching Fellows about their writing of their teaching philosophy. A close review of the outcomes of each phase prompted recognition of the similarity of resilience-building factors reported in the resilience literature and the benefits of developing a teaching philosophy reported by the university teaching Fellows. The similarities suggest that the benefits of developing a teaching philosophy could contribute to building university teacher resilience.

Enseigner dans l'environnement universitaire actuel complexe et concurrentiel est devenu de plus en plus exigeant alors que les professeurs et les professeures tentent de répondre au stress et à l'épuisement professionnel qui affectent négativement leur performance au travail. Dans cet environnement, il est plus important que jamais que les professeurs et les professeures d'université renforcent leur résilience afin de surmonter le stress et l'épuisement professionnel et continuent l'engagement qu'ils ont pris tout au long de leur carrière en faveur d'un enseignement efficace. La phase initiale de cette recherche identifie systématiquement 39 études empiriques de la résilience d'enseignants et d'enseignantes des écoles ainsi que sept études portant sur la résilience des professeurs et des professeures d'université, afin d'identifier les facteurs clés qui mènent au renforcement de leur résilience. Durant la seconde phase, qui consiste d'entrevues approfondies, nous avons enquêté auprès de neuf professeurs et professeures d'université d'Australie et sept du Canada sur la préparation de leur philosophie d'enseignement. Un examen minutieux des résultats de chaque phase a mené à l'identification de similarités entre les facteurs de renforcement de la résilience rapportés dans les publications ainsi qu'à la reconnaissance des avantages qu'il y a à développer une philosophie d'enseignement rapportés par les professeurs et les professeures d'université. Les similarités suggèrent que les avantages qui existent à développer une philosophie d'enseignement pourraient contribuer à renforcer la résilience des professeurs et des professeures d'université.

"Successive waves of neoliberal reforms to higher education have taken their toll on the academy" (Ryan, 2012, p. 3). Commodification, corporatisation, internationalisation, massification, accountability, quality control and quantification have negatively impacted academics and their labour. For example, these characteristics have played a role in the alienation of individuals from each other and from their teaching through the fragmentation of the teaching–research nexus that has moved institutions' focus towards research and concurrently away from teaching (Gallego et al., 2017). In this environment, growth in the number of overburdened, disenchanted, demoralised, stressed and burned out academics suggests a need to investigate university teacher resilience and its relationships with stress and burnout (Gillespie et al., 2001; Richards et al., 2016; Watts & Robertson, 2011).

Academics experience high levels of job-related stress through work-life stressors that include excessive work hours, unexpected increases in workload, need to interact with large numbers of students, unsatisfactory work relationships, consistently working a high number of unpaid hours, job insecurity, poor leadership, and management (Arnup & Bowles, 2016; Chang, 2009; Day et al., 2011; Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Salimzadeh et al., 2017; Tait, 2008). The most common adverse consequence of these stressful experiences is burnout (Salimzadeh et al., 2017). As described by Maslach and Leiter (2008), burnout manifests itself in three dimensions: (a) emotional exhaustion (e.g., psychological distress and chronic fatigue), (b) depersonalisation (e.g., cynicism, indifference, and negative self-evaluation), and (c) reduced personal accomplishment (e.g., diminished feeling of on-the-job competence and achievements, insufficient recognition and reward). A high level of resilience helps teachers cope with stress and ward off emotional exhaustion (Arnup & Bowles, 2016; Chang, 2009; Tait, 2008), thereby encouraging them to focus on resilience would be a more productive approach then focusing on the stress(es) (Day et al., 2011).

Resilience: Capability Building for Teachers

Resilience is an important teacher capability, particularly as a positive factor when universities undergo change and struggle with complexity (Richards et al., 2016). It has been suggested that one value of resilience lies in preparing teachers to adjust to frequently changing conditions (Bobek, 2002; Gu & Day, 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2002). During this adjustment, resilience becomes a buffer to growing stresses associated with teaching (Le Cornu, 2009). The literature on K-12 educators identified high levels of resilience helping teachers to cope with stress and burnout (Arnup & Bowles, 2016; Richards et al., 2016). International evidence links school teacher resilience with teacher effectiveness (Day et al., 2011; Day & Gu, 2014; Drew & Sosnowski, 2019) to promote positive outcomes for students academically, emotionally and socially (Arnup & Bowles, 2016; Day & Gu, 2014). Teacher resilience research also provides evidence that indicates school teacher resilience is positively, and significantly, correlated with occupational well-being and negatively correlated with burnout (Arnup & Bowles, 2016; Brouskeli et al., 2018; Polat & Iskender, 2018). Resilient qualities can protect teachers from burnout and increase their satisfaction with their job (Polat & Iskender, 2018). Resilience also plays a positive role enabling teachers to flourish and sustain effectiveness (Gu & Day, 2007). Resilience plays a positive role enabling teachers to flourish and sustain effectiveness (Gu & Day, 2007). This positions resilience as "ever-growing collaborative and capacity-building practice" rather than a one-time, quick end state (Cooperrider, 2018, p. xv).

Teaching Philosophy: Shaping a Personal Reflective Identity

A teaching philosophy (TP) is the "cornerstone of reflective and scholarly practice in teaching and learning" (Coppola, 2002, p. 448). It is an intensely personal narrative of an

evolutionary journey towards an understanding of one's self as a learner and as a teacher. At the heart of this narrative is a core of beliefs, values and professional assumptions that express one's identity as a teacher (Schönwetter et al., 2002). Growing an individual's self-identity as a teacher through an evolving TP promotes on-going personal professional development that:

- reveals the motivation that propels an individual to teach;
- guides decision-making by codifying thinking at a particular time;
- increases teacher authenticity by triggering reflection that deepens understanding of ideals and beliefs and helps an individual to hold steadfastly to their core beliefs; and
- defines parameters of effective teaching and encourages their dissemination, for example, through professional conversations with colleagues, students, or their institution (Kennelly et al., 2013; McCormack & Kennelly, 2011).

By making implicit views on teaching and student learning explicit, a TP becomes a resource for self-appraisal, continuous reflection, and renewal. Reviewing and revising a TP helps teachers reflect on their personal and professional growth and to renew their dedication to their values, beliefs and goals. It "not only helps an individual reflect about his or her teaching, but also helps him or her to stay focused on good days as well as days that remain challenging and difficult" (Browne, 2017, p. 59). Teaching across all levels not accompanied by inquiry and reflection is teaching unlikely to be underpinned by a TP. This is of relevance to higher education, where TP research and practice emphasises the importance and value of the TP for the individual's personal development, awards or requirement for promotion and long-term tenure in the higher education academy (Fitzmaurice & Coughlan, 2007; Montell, 2003; Ruge et al., 2021; Yeom et al., 2018).

The foci of this study involved two phases. The first undertook a systematic literature review on teacher resilience that identified key resilience-building factors. The second phase explored through in-depth interviews with university teaching Fellows the values and benefits of writing their teaching philosophy.

Research Design

In this research, resilience is conceptualised as a complex, multi-dimensional social construct of personal, professional, and environmental factors where, both within each factor and between factors, multiple dynamic relations exist. Emotions are at the heart of these interrelationships. Gu and Day (2007) suggested that such a definition "provides a promising perspective to understand the ways that teachers manage and sustain their motivation and commitment in times of change" (p. 1302).

This research was undertaken in two phases. The initial phase systematically identified 39 empirical studies of school teacher resilience and seven studies of university teacher resilience to identify key resilience-building factors. The second phase, in-depth interviews, probed nine Australian and seven Canadian university teaching Fellows for the benefits of writing their TP. Teaching Fellows in both countries (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia 1 [HERDSA], 2022a, 2022b; and Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 1 [STLHE], 2022a, 2022b) were selected based on a number of criteria which included being nominated by their institution as actively engaged with TP as an educator, and from a diversity of disciplinary background, age, and career pathways.

The outcomes of each of these phases were probed for relationship between resilience-building factors identified in Phase 1 and the benefits of developing a TP identified in Phase 2.

Phase 1: Empirical Studies Sample

Sample Selection Criteria

Identification of resilience-focused empirical studies involved an online literature search using Google Scholar, ResearchGate and online databases including Emerald Insight, Research Online, and Sage Journals. In addition to these sources, a snowball technique was used to identify publications indicated in the reference lists of the articles retrieved from the database search. The title of each chosen article, keywords (identified by the article author(s)), abstract or findings, included at least one of the following keywords: resilience, resilient or resiliency, and the word teach. The keywords, sustainment, plateauing, renewal, and retention, each contributed one article. Searching was limited to English language literature. The 46 empirical study references (included in the Appendix and identified by an *) were published between 2002 and the end of 2019.

Sample Characteristics

Most studies were undertaken in either primary/elementary schools or secondary/high schools. The experience level of school teachers mentioned in the sample studies ranged from early childhood to K-12 teachers and early career to veteranteachers. Only seven university/tertiary sector-based studies emerged from the database search. All publications in the sample had been peer reviewed and included journal articles ($n=36$), edited book chapters ($n=7$), and refereed conference presentations ($n=3$). Literature reviews were not included in the sample. They were, however, consulted in relation to findings and discussion sections of the paper.

The 46 studies included in the Phase 1 sample provided an international perspective on teacher resilience as indicated by their study locations. Nearly three quarters of the empirical studies in the sample (74%) were undertaken in four countries (e.g., Australia, Canada, UK, USA). The remaining 26% of empirical studies were undertaken in nine countries: China, Germany, Greece, Iran, Malta, Portugal, Russia, South Africa and Turkey. Just over half (59%, $n=27$) of the sample had been published between 2014 and late 2019. Just under half (41%, $n=19$) of the sample articles had been published between 2002 and the end of 2013.

A majority of the empirical study authors approached their research from a qualitative perspective ($n=27$). Quantitative approaches were employed for eight studies. Mixed method approaches were also applied in 11 studies. The majority of qualitative studies used semi-structured interviews to gather data. Other qualitative methods included: reflective journals, narrative portraits, significant moment stories, vignettes, World Café sessions, and focus groups.

Data Gathering

The first author carefully examined each empirical study identified by the sample selection criteria. For each study, this author highlighted information about the study location, participant characteristics, methodology and method(s), and resilience building factors identified in the abstract, listed keywords, highlights and findings sections of each of the 46 studies. Tables were compiled to summarise this information for each of the empirical studies. Table 1 is an example of data recorded for one of the empirical studies.

Table 1

Example of a Data Summary Table Constructed for One of the Phase 1 Empirical Studies

Study Description	Study Keywords/Word Groupings
Author: Kutsyurub et al. (2019)	Motivation, do your best for the kids, passionate about helping students, love children.
Location: Canada	Optimism, nurturing a positive mindset, positivity, perseverance, proactive, open-minded, flexible, being positive.
School type: Public school	
Methodology & Method: Qualitative, phenomenology	Reflective inquiry, self-reflective practice, critical self-reflection, problem-solving through reflection, committing to reflective practice, self-reflective practice, learning from reflection, personal or collaborative reflection, sharing for problem-solving, uncovering values & beliefs, collaborative inquiry.
Telephone interview phase of a multi-phase, multi-year, pan-Canadian research study (N=1343)	Work-life balance, well-being, self-care, self-efficacy, confidence, & overcome self-doubt.
	Consult (ask for help).
Interviewees (N=36); early career teachers within their first five years of employment	Connect (building relationships, belonging, sense of community).
From 9 provinces and 3 territories	Collaborate (learning community network) formal (e.g., mentoring, internship or induction program) or informal relationships with like-minded colleagues at own or another school or with experienced colleagues, family wisdom, connecting with students or principals/vice-principals, parents.
9 males & 27 females	
Age range: 24–55 years	Trust, hope, enthusiasm, eagerness, love, passion, humility.

Data Analysis

Resilience-related factors identified in Phase 1 were organised into groupings of like words/phrases that were then grouped again, this time into like themes. Groups of like themes formed four resilience-building dimensions: motivation to teach, motivation as a teacher (personal focus), motivation as a teacher (professional focus), and supportive relationships. Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the Findings section of this paper show, for each of the four identified dimensions, the relevant themes and keywords encompassed within each theme and dimension.

Phase 2: Teaching Philosophy Interview Sample

Phase 2 of this research was conducted within the ethical research framework approved by the University of Canberra (HREC 17–252).

Sample Selection

Participants were identified via the public listing of HERDSA and 3M Fellows websites (N=47, HERDSA 2, n.d.; N=247, STLHE 2, n.d.). A purposive sample across varying universities, geographic locations, range of disciplines, and length of academic experiences were then contacted via email. This provided the research project description, ethical research

approval, and consent forms with an email invitation for voluntary interview participation (for more detail please refer to Ruge et al., 2021). Sixteen Fellows (nine Australian and seven Canadian) agreed to participate. All participants had written a TP as a component of their successful fellowship application awarded between 2004 and 2017.

Sample Description

Volunteers presented a diversity in length of time in the higher education sector. Of the nine Australian Teaching Fellows, one had been a higher education teacher for less than 10 years, two Fellows had taught in higher education for 11-20 years, three Fellows taught for 21-30 years, and another three Fellows had taught for over 30 years. Of the seven 3M Fellows, all had been in higher education positions for between 16 and 35 years. Participants represented a variety of higher education disciplines including Chemistry, Mathematics, History, Academic Development and Leadership, Psychology, Languages and Linguistics, Law, Business, International Relations, Organisational Behaviour, Music, and Speech Pathology.

Data Gathering

In-depth interviews made sense in this context because writing a TP is an autobiographical exploration. Consistent with the research framework, the researchers adopted the definition of an in-depth interview advocated by Minichiello et al. (1990): "a conversation between researcher and informant focusing on the informant's perception of self, life and experience, and expressed in his or her own words" (p. 87). Interview conversations ranged across three broad areas to capture beliefs and values as well as practice and performance experiences: (a) the research context, motivation and value of a TP, (b) experience of writing a TP, and (c) application of a TP. Key questions about these areas were followed up with probes to prompt each participant to elaborate on their experiences. Concluding questions provided space for the interviewee to expand on aspects touched upon earlier in the conversation, to share specific TP-related examples, or to invite broader reflection and comment. Interviews generally lasted 40–60 minutes.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Maguire and Delahunt (2017), was employed in this study. Thematic analysis involves "searching across a data set…to find repeated patterns of meaning" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 15). As an inductive process, thematic analysis was driven by the data itself. The Phase 2 data sample comprised 16 interviewees, nine of whom were Australian HERDSA Fellows and seven Canadian 3M Fellows. The thematic analysis undertaken by the first author involved the following steps for each interviewee's transcript, adapted from a guide for thematic analysis by Maguire and Delahunt (2017).

1. Data familiarisation through "open reading." Become familiar with the data by reading and re-reading each interview transcript to acquire a feeling for the meaning(s) the interviewee wishes to convey.
2. Initial data coding and analysis: Read each transcript again to identify resilience-related significant statements, keywords, and phrases.
3. Search for themes: Organise significant statements, keywords, and phrases in a meaningful way, grouping commonalities into themes of interest and importance in relation to the Phase 2 research question.

4. Group common themes into over-arching dimensions: The four dimensions identified in Phase 1 analysis—motivation to teach, motivation as a teacher (personal focus), motivation as a teacher (professional focus), and supportive relationships—were affirmed in the Phase 2 analysis.
5. Formulate meaning under each dimension: Return to the interview transcripts and identify participant text that speaks to a particular dimension and theme(s).
6. Review themes: Return to each dimension and its themes to consider whether participant quotes form a coherent "story."

Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the Findings section illustrate the relevant themes and keywords encompassed within each dimension for each of the four identified dimensions.

Limitations

The 16 Phase 2 interviewees represent a snapshot of HERDSA Fellows and of 3M Fellows with experience of writing a TP as part of their fellowship application. The grouped sample for this study were identified by their institution as exemplary teachers and had demonstrated active engagement with their teaching philosophy. Their experience may be different from academics who have written a TP for another purpose such as a promotion or job application. Future research could expand these insights across a broader sample, including a diversity of backgrounds and experiences. The small purposive sampling can be expanded in future studies with larger sample sizes or specific cohorts of educators. Although small, this research has identified gaps for on-going exploration of university teacher resilience to further current understandings and open new possibilities likely to be relevant to teachers in all education sectors.

Findings

The findings below are contained in Tables 2-6 and Figures 1-2, and they included both phases of this research. Phase 1 reflects the resilience-building factors whereas Phase 2 captures an individual's value of developing a TP.

Resilience-building Factors by Dimension, Theme, and Keyword

This section looks across and within, and brings together the data sources from the two research phases. Tables 2-5 each present one of the four dimensions as part of research Phase 1. In research Phase 2, as captured by Figures 1 and 2, and Table 6, the associated resilience-related themes and the most commonly occurring keywords for each of the teaching contexts were introduced.

Table 2

Dimension: Motivation to Teach by Teaching Context, Resilience-related Themes and Keywords

Teaching Context	Themes and Keywords/Word Groupings
School teachers, *n*=39	**Inner vocation to teach**: sense of vocation, call to teach, ethical and moral purposes, sense of purpose, altruistic beliefs, make a positive difference in the lives of children/young people. **Showing persistence**/perseverance/determination. **Commitment** to students' learning and achievements, serve/give back to society.
University-Tertiary teachers, *n*=7	**Inner vocation to teach**: sense of vocation, mission to educate young people, endeavour, quest, call to teaching, make a positive difference in the lives of children/young people, promote student achievement. **Showing persistence/**perseverance/determination. **Commitment** to promote students' achievements, ethic of care, committed to teaching, working towards improvement for own satisfaction, contribute to successful academic outcomes, personal commitment to promote student achievement.
University national teaching Fellows, *n*=16	**Inner vocation to teach**: love of teaching and learning, from deep within, at the very core, I teach who I am, I've always described myself as a teacher, make a positive difference in students' lives, what I was put on the earth for, teaching is a sacred thing. **Showing persistence**/perseverance/determination/commitment: driven to focus on students' experiences & learning, I love the pursuit of an academic career, I've always loved being in the classroom, always captivated by student learning, never be able to stop teaching.

Table 3

Dimension: Motivation as a Teacher (personal) by Teaching Context, Resilience-related Themes and Keywords

Teaching Context	Themes and Keywords/Word Groupings
School teachers *n*=39	**Strong sense of self-efficacy**: confidence, competence and commitment, agency, effectiveness, recognition, autonomy, achievement, self-belief. **Sense of identity as a teacher**: personal awareness, self-understanding as a teacher, sense of identity as a teacher.
University/ Tertiary teachers, *n*=7	**Strong sense of self-efficacy**: competence, emotional competencies, self-esteem, self-improvement, self-accomplishment, recognition, agency, achievement, confidence, empowerment, and commitment. **Sense of identity**: self-awareness, sense of self, self-improvement, self-understanding, emotional awareness of self and others, emotional competencies, self-assessment, recognition, self-evaluation.
University national teaching Fellows, *n*=16	**Strong sense of self-efficacy** competence, confidence, recognition, achievement, self-improvement, institutional credibility, self-belief (internal credibility). **Sense of identity as a teacher:** self-awareness, self-discovery, know myself as a teacher, know what's important to me as a teacher and why it's important, my TP and my life philosophy align a better understanding of my teaching self.

Table 4

Dimension: Motivation as a Teacher (professional) by Teaching Context, Themes and Keywords

Teaching Context	Themes and Keywords/Word Groupings
School teachers *n*=39	**Being reflective:** critical self-questioning, reflective teaching, reflective attitudes. **Clear picture of professionalism:** responsibility, enthusiasm for the profession, knowledge acquisition, socio-cultural awareness, professional goals and purposes, classroom skills (e.g., organizational and planning, time management, problem-solving). **Sense of optimism**: being positive, managing emotions positively, experiencing positive feelings. **Sense of well-being**: work-life balance, self-care, emotional intelligence.
University /Tertiary teachers, *n*=7	**Being reflective**: on key experiences, reflecting on areas of strength, self-reflection, professional reflection, reflection, meditation/reflection, learn through dialogue and questioning, engage in constructive self-reflection, reflection to make changes, opportunity to reflect, transformative growth. **Clear picture of professionalism** involves: a *sense of professional connection* (recognition of personal and professional values, a sense of responsibility to students); *structuring work as a professional* involves personal/professional development, working towards improvement for own satisfaction, emotional intelligence, resilience training, and peer driven faculty development; *professional work skills and strategies* such as clear time structure, organisational planning, plan ahead, and *classroom strategies:* classroom management, good content knowledge, time management. **Sense of optimism** looking for the bright spots, seeing problems as opportunities, sense of positivity, positive attitudes, finding a different way, plan ahead, positive emotions, comfortable with change, letting go things you can't control, don't take things personally, initiative, adaptable, flexible, take advantage of new opportunities, positive self-talk, positive mindset, proactive, positive feeling.
University national teaching Fellows, *n*=16	**Being reflective**: importance of reflection, self-questioning (Who? What? How? Why?), personal reflection, thinking/digging very deeply about what it was to be a teacher/what I was actually doing, mindfulness, thinking very deeply. transformative growth. **Professionalism**: socio-cultural awareness, teaching/learning knowledge and skills, organizational skills (e.g., planning), organization, professional goals and purposes, enthusiasm for my profession (discipline).

Table 5

Dimension: Supportive Relationships by Teaching Context, Themes and Keywords

Teaching Context	Theme and Keywords/Word Groupings
School teachers n=39	**Connections**, **Collegiality** and **Collaboration** built through teacher conversations with: Colleagues, students, friends & family, school leaders, mentors, students' parents. Peer groups/networks, administrators, teachers' aide, sense of belonging, community beyond school. Consulting: ask for help, seek & receive support.
University /tertiary teachers, n=7	**Belonging**: sense of community of peers, social and emotional support, institutional rituals. **Connectedness**: professional and social networks, connection, connectedness, building connection. **Consulting**, formal/informal mentoring, guidance, role models. **Collaborating** with colleagues as critical friends, sharing problems, supportive relations with peers, interactions with colleagues, experts, students, school environment, family and friends, teachers as care givers, willing to seek help from colleagues, ask for/give help to others in order to receive help.
University national teaching Fellows, n=16	**Collegial conversation with others**: mentoring and being mentored; elevator/corridor conversations; networks, communities of practice, workshops/seminars/professional development programs where teaching philosophy statements are exchanged for feedback, with editing and writing support; whole of faculty meetings structured as reflective conversations about learning and teaching; connecting with students, for example, ask students to prepare a learning philosophy.

Value of Developing a TP for University Teaching Fellows

The following four anecdotes (Figures 1 and 2), composed by the first author using teaching Fellows' own words, complement the data presented in Tables 2, 3, 4 and 5. They increase the visibility and depth of understanding of university teaching Fellows' personal and professional experiences of writing a TP. Importantly, this opportunity for deeper reflection exposes the interconnections of the benefits of a TP for resilience-building.

Figure 1

Value of a TP for University Teaching Fellows by Dimension and Theme

Title: I'll never stop loving teaching
Dimension: Motivation to teach
Theme: Inner vocation to teach

I wrote my first TP as a teaching assistant and graduate student. Following my first ever teaching occasion I realised I just loved it. It was one of those rare moments in your life when you realise that you really love something a lot. It's the weirdest thing. Everything else comes and goes, but no matter what, I've always love being in the classroom. It's one of those moments where you can use the word 'calling' as a sort of accurate descriptor. Teaching comes from deep within. It is sacred, and always should be.

Title: Understanding myself as a teacher
Dimension: Motivation as a teacher (personal)
Theme: Sense of identity

My sense of self evolved from guide, through facilitator to more of a partner and so did my TP. I have also got to know myself better as a teacher and as a professional. My TP has given me a medium for others to understand me and relate to me. It gives me a lens to understand people around me. My description of why I teach the way I teach has become more critical. Now I am more conscious of my role, who I am being whilst I'm teaching. I find my TP really useful in terms of getting my head around who I am as a teacher. The biggest benefit for me is an internal benefit to help me understand why and where I'm coming from as a teacher and that helps me to be more competent as a teacher.

Figure 2

Value of a TP for University Teaching Fellows by Dimension and Theme

Title: Increase confidence and credibility as a teacher
     Dimension: Motivation to teach as a teacher (personal)
         Theme: Sense of self-efficacy

The main benefit I find from writing a TP is that it increases my confidence as a teacher. When I am challenged or when I am facing a difficult decision or even an easy one with my teaching, I often think well does this fit in with me as a good teacher and that helps me to be more competent as a teacher. The TP has kind of acted like a rudder for me in my career, it guides me along. In addition to increased confidence, writing a TP gave me belief that what I was doing was evidenced-based. It gave me a language and framework to defend good practice in teaching and learning. That gave me credibility in my institution knowing what I know about how I teach and how it's linked to theory and evidence in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Title: Digging into assumptions
     Dimension: Motivation as a teacher (professional)
         Theme: Being reflective

A TP is a reflection on values that I hold, that when I started teaching were mostly subconscious. To tease those out and to make them meaningful takes a great deal of personal reflection, almost meditation. The question I always have in my mind is 'Why'. Just ask 'Why am I doing it this way'? What are the alternatives? What other ways are there go about it? and What is it about the approaches that I am not using, that I like or don't like, and why? I'm digging down to those assumptions. It's a process of self-discovery as much as a process of writing. One big, big, value of a TP is better understanding of who you are as a teacher and who your learners are. A TP has allowed me to be a much better self-reflective teacher.

Relationship between Resilience-Building Factors and the Value of TP Development

A close review of the themes identified in each of the two research phases (Table 6) prompted recognition of the similarity of resilience-building factors reported in the school and university empirical teacher studies and the benefits of developing a TP reported by the national university teaching Fellows. The first six and the last two resilience-building factors (themes) listed in column 1, Table 6, were identified by the school teacher sample and by both samples of university teachers. "Embracing positivity" was less frequently mentioned by the university teaching Fellows than by the school and university empirical study authors.

Table 6
Key Resilience-building Factors by Teaching Context

Resilience-building Factors	School Teachers *n*=39	University Teachers *n*=7	University Teaching Fellows *n*=16
Inner vocation to teach	*	*	*
Showing persistence/perseverance/determination	*	*	*
Commitment to students' learning and achieving	*	*	*
Strong sense of self-efficacy	*	*	*
Sense of identity as a teacher	*	*	*
Being reflective	*	*	*
Embracing positivity	*	*	x
Being professional	*	*	*
Connect/collaborate through collegial conversations	*	*	*

Note. An asterisk (*) indicates the occurrence of the named resilience-building factor in that particular teaching context. A cross (x) indicates the theme was not named in that teaching context.

The similarities—strong intrinsic motivation to teach, motivation as a teacher through high self-efficacy, being reflective through self-questioning, and conversations constructing safe, supportive relationships—suggest that benefits of developing a TP could contribute to building university teacher resilience and be a valuable resource for inclusion in resilience-focused professional development. As noted by Browne (2017),

> [a] philosophy provides direction during tough times, when one begins to doubt what he or she is doing and why, and it keeps the educator from becoming enslaved by external demands, pressures and views that may diminish his or her agency or devalue who he or she is as a teacher. (p. 62)

Going across and within the research, brings together a picture of the development of a TP that could potentially be supporting and promoting of university teacher resilience.

Discussion

Findings from this research complement and broaden the existing teacher resilience knowledge base to include university teachers' resilience experiences and, as well, new knowledge for teaching practice that suggests the benefits of developing a TP could contribute to building university/tertiary teacher resilience. Emerging research possibilities have been identified to facilitate on-going exploration of university teacher resilience.

Complement and Broaden the Teacher Resilience Knowledge Base

School teachers have been the prime focus of teacher resilience research to date (Beltman et al., 2011). Missing from the growing field of teacher resilience research are the personal experiences of university teachers, as they, like their school-based colleagues, try to "thrive rather than just survive in the profession" (Beltman et al., 2011, Introduction line 4). The breadth of this gap in knowledge of university teachers' resilience is illustrated by the difference in the number of school teacher sample studies (39 studies) and the number of university teacher sample studies (seven studies) included in this research. With its focus on university teachers, the research presented here contributes new knowledge to the slow-to-emerge literature on university teachers' resilience as well as complementing existing knowledge in the wider field of teacher resilience.

Positioning Teaching Philosophies within existing Resilience Resources

Development, application, and evaluation of professional learning experiences and resources focusing on promoting teacher resilience have "received less emphasis" (Mansfield & Beltman, 2019, p. 584) from researchers than other aspects of teacher resilience such as attrition and retention or occupational stress and burnout. Some scholarly-based, face-to-face, online, or blended professional programs have been developed (e.g., Mansfield et al., 2016; Silva et al., 2018). However, few programs have been assessed in relation to their value for university and other tertiary teachers. And even fewer have been developed to include university teachers, a recent exception being Hegney et al. (2020). The findings of this research suggest that professional learning programs to promote resilience for university teachers need to embed time for participants to discuss personal motivation including teaching and learning beliefs and values; provide opportunities for self-questioning through reflection; opportunities to develop a clear sense of professionalism and positive attitudes that promote optimism, and develop their sense of identity as a teacher. Further, the findings also suggest that a TP could be a key personal and collaborative resource for teacher learning across education sectors.

Emerging Research Directions

Extension of this research to explore cohorts of university teachers beyond a group of national teaching Fellows—the focus of this research—is needed to continue to reflect on other possible links between teacher resilience building blocks and the value of a TP for career development. For example, exploration of teacher characteristics such as gender, professional life phase, and cultural identities would be valuable emerging fields of research through which to extend knowledge of university teacher resilience.

The potential benefits for individuals and institutions having a better understanding of the resources and strategies that could support university teacher resilience need to be investigated through systematic and on-going evaluation at personal and program levels. This research highlighted the important unexpected benefits of TP spanning beyond the often formulaic application for promotion and tenure, to deep, reflective, intrinsic, and transformative values for the individual. In essence, their value might shift from being strategic to being authentic.

Research focusing on promoting resilience for university teachers through professional learning experiences needs to be re-imagined and re-framed to meet the changing needs of university teachers in today's teaching environment where universities no longer provide the low-stressed working environment they once did (Erickson et al., 2020; Watts & Robertson, 2011).

In today's challenging higher education context, the impacts of beliefs, values, and practices related to university teachers' TPs have received little attention (Arroyo et al., 2015; Schönwetter et al., 2002). It is now timely to increase this attention by drawing on newly emergent teacher resilience research ideas. Further, in-depth investigation of the inter-relationships between teacher resilience-building factors and the value of constructing a TP over time are needed. Longitudinal research that follows university teachers' TP development and their on-going career paths would provide new insights. Few researchers have explored "ways in which a teachers' capacity to be resilient may be sustained, nurtured and extended over time" (Gu & Day, 2013, p. 22). This focus is necessary to advance the depth and breadth of knowledge of university teachers' resilience and to continually highlight new directions for future scholarship.

Conclusion

This research brought together internationally recognised school teacher resilience research, a topic that has become well researched over the past 15 years (Mansfield & Beltman, 2019) and the newly emerging research area of university teacher resilience. Resilience of university teachers is becoming an important contributor to teaching quality and a builder of personal and professional critical capacities for career advancement. Of particular interest to resilience researchers in the current university environment, where academics work under increasing levels of occupational stress and burnout, is the recognition of the need to promote resilience through professional learning experiences such as formal university professional development courses, face-to-face workshops, online learning modules, and engagement with resources new to the field of resilience, but not necessarily new to the broader field of learning and teaching, such as a TP.

Recognition of the similarity of resilience-building factors reported in the school teacher resilience literature and the benefits of developing a TP, as experienced by a sample of Australian and Canadian national teaching Fellows, was the key insight arising from this research. The identified similarities suggest that developing a TP and reviewing it over a career could contribute to building university teacher resilience and as such may also be a valuable resource for inclusion in resilience-focused teacher professional development. The focus moves from the strategic to the authentic, from a formulaic practice towards a deeply transformative journey.

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Appendix

Empirical Studies, Phase 1

This appendix includes only the empirical studies used in Phase 1 of this research. Other references used in this article are recorded under the References heading above.

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