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ENTREE



ENhancing Teacher REsilience in Europe

Selected Annotated Bibliography 19 key papers

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Background

In this document we present a selected annotated bibliography with 19 selection key papers on teacher resilience. This document includes annotated theoretical and empirical articles and book chapters that have examined the key concepts of Teacher Resilience; Emotions in Teaching; Self-efficacy; Teacher retention/attrition; Beginning Teachers; Teacher Training; and Professional Development. Each annotated entry outlines the aim of the paper, research methodology, findings (if that is an empirical study), discussion, and implications for future actions/research. A focus was given to papers/articles and books published from 2010-2014. The annotated bibliography is available in the five languages of the project: English, German, Portuguese, Maltese and Czech. On the ENTREE website there will be a complete annotated bibliography in English (www.entree-project.eu).

Beltman, S., Mansfield, C., & Price, A. (2011). Thriving not just surviving: A review of research on teacher resilience. *Educational Research Review*, 6, 185–207. DOI: 10.1016/j.edurev.2011.09.001

This article provided a review of empirical studies on teacher resilience. In this thorough examination of 50 studies, an overview of the methodological approaches of resilience research was provided, which revealed that interviews were the most frequently used method of data collection and the largest group of participants comprised early career teachers. The paper also shed light on how the construct of resilience was conceptualised in the literature. In general, it was pointed out that most resilience studies appeared to outline common definitions of teacher resilience, which could be summarised as “a dynamic process or outcome that is the result of interaction over time between a person and the environment” (p. 188). Particularly, self-efficacy, confidence and coping strategies were often reported to be the major components that constitute teacher resilience. Added to this, a review of risk factors and protective factors found in the resilience literature was discussed in detail, showing that negative self-beliefs and classroom management/disruptive students were the most common personal and contextual risk factors, while protective factors included personal attributes, self-efficacy, coping skills, teaching skills, professional development, self-care as well as support from school administration, colleagues, students, mentors, family and friends. Implications for pre-service teacher education programmes were also explored. Through the review, it was contended that several issues and challenges emerged with regard to a concise yet comprehensive definition of teacher resilience, research methodology, and the context that influences teacher resilience. Future research was recommended to explore the use of intervention strategies to promote teacher resilience and to understand the role of pre-service programmes and of teachers in fostering resilience. It was also suggested that teacher resilience should be examined from a cross-cultural perspective.

Cefai, C., & Cavioni, V. (2014). From neurasthenia to eudaimonia: Teachers’ well-being and resilience. In *Social and emotional education in primary school: Integrating theory and research into practice* (Chapter 8, pp. 133-148). New York: Springer Science + Business Media. DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-8752-4.

Teaching is an inherently vulnerable profession, and emotional stress may arise from organisational issues as well as the extensive interpersonal aspects of the work. A negative impact on their work and well-being is likely. Addressing staff health and well-being through an “interactionist” approach is the topic of this book chapter. It is important to focus both on promoting individual teacher personal resilience through developing social and emotional competence, as well as on creating a caring community that will support staff well-being. Improving both these

areas will also impact positively on student well-being, behaviour and learning. Personal competencies could be developed by initial teacher or in-service education through strategies such as increasing knowledge of child development and classroom management, developing the competencies to teach social and emotional education (SEE), mindfulness training, and enhancing teachers' self-efficacy. Caring professional communities can be developed through using strategies such as providing appropriate professional learning, structures that enable staff collaborations and active participation in decision making, celebrating strengths and achievements, and mentoring. Examples of successful programs and strategies are provided and a comprehensive table of staff well-being indicators is presented as a self-evaluation checklist for identifying intervention targets and for planning and monitoring these.

Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2010). Resilience counts. In *The new lives of teachers* (Chapter 9, pp. 156-176). London: Routledge.

In this book chapter, resilience is characterised as “the capacity to continue to ‘bounce back’ to recover strengths or spirit quickly and efficiently in the face of adversity” (p. 156). Resilience is theorised as a psychological construct as well as a multidimensional, socially constructed concept. Through the examination of three case studies of three teachers, the authors found that resilience is fostered from a sense of vocation, the call to teach, a sense of rewards from students' progress, support from the school leadership and colleagues, personal support, and successful management of work-life tensions. Based on these findings, two resilience concepts were recommended: relational resilience, which is about drawing strengths from each other, and organisational resilience, which stresses the importance of leadership in promoting teacher resilience.

Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2014). *Resilient teachers, resilient schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.

This book on teacher resilience examines how teachers and schools sustain the quality of their teaching, passion and commitment through good and bad times, as well as factors that may prevent them from doing so. The book has nine chapters that elaborate on three main sections: the nature of resilience, how to build resilience in teachers, and the importance of teacher resilience. Drawing on international research and illustration from practice, the book discusses some major issues: teachers learn to bounce back from adversity; their resilience is formed over time, as they become efficient problem solvers; when they feel competent and supported in the workplace, their resilience is fostered. Moreover, the book also points out positive associations between teachers' self-efficacy, well-being, commitment, and emotional energy with resilience. As directions for future for research, Day and Gu (2014) argue that, rather than concentrating on stress factors, future

studies should target understanding what teachers, schools and organisations can do to build teachers' resilience capacity.

Ebersöhn, L. (2012). Adding 'flock' to 'fight and flight': A honeycomb of resilience where supply of relationships meets demand for support. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, 27(2)*, 29–42. Retrieved from <http://repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/32120?show=full>

This article examines the role of relationships in promoting teacher resilience. The article drew on an eight-year longitudinal study that used multiple methods, i.e. focus groups, semi-structured interviews, informal conversational interviews, observations, photographs, videos, and transcripts of colloquium presentations. Data collected from 74 teachers working at 12 schools revealed that relationships from school and family are central protective resources, constituting a way to mitigate the effects of adversity. Relationships can also reconfigure a risk ecology and predict positive adaptation, which helps teacher avoid hopelessness, distress, burnout, depression, aggression and withdrawal. The findings of the study were asserted to have important implications for the restructuring of the ecology of adversity. A Relationship Resourced Resilience model was also proposed.

Ee, J., & Chang, A. (2010). How resilient are our graduate trainee teachers in Singapore? *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 19(2)*, 321-331.

The study is located in the context where schools in Singapore face high teacher burn-out and attrition due to many educational initiatives from the Ministry of Education and the demands from parents. Within the article, resilience is characterised as “the capacity to take risks and adapt even when one faces adversity or negative life conditions” (p. 321). With an aim of identifying the resilience traits of graduate trainee teachers in Singapore, 109 trainee teachers were asked to complete a resilience questionnaire with the subscales of impulse control, empathy, emotion regulation, optimism, self-efficacy, causal analysis, and reaching out. Statistical analyses indicated that self-efficacy, emotional regulation, empathy and optimism were predictors of resilience. The article is maintained to have two important implications for future research and practice. First, early career teachers should be assisted to recognise and discuss resilient responses to stressful events to enhance their sense of efficacy. Second, novice teachers should be encouraged to work with scenarios, videos, or actual classroom observations of challenging situations they encounter to improve their resilient thinking and coping strategies.

Fleming, J. L., Mackrain, M., & LeBuffe, P. A. (2013). Caring for the caregiver: Promoting the resilience of teachers. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of Resilience in Children* (pp. 387-397). New York: Springer Science+Business Media.

This book chapter explores the adverse factors that affect teachers' health and well-being and proposes measures to promote teacher resilience. A review of the literature showed that common and unique stressors experienced by teachers include work stability, salary, severe time constraints, children displaying problem behaviours, lacking motivation, or coming to school sleep-deprived, school reform efforts, inadequate administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in school decision making, the burden of paper-work, lack of resources, family responsibilities and relationships. These multiple stressors lead to burnout, lower quality interactions with students, and lack of emotional availability to students. The writers then suggested resilience programs to enhance the well-being and resilience of teachers such as the Inner Resilience Program, The Emotional Intelligent Teacher Program, the Personal Resilience and Resilient Relationships (PRRR) worksite training program, all of which are available in the United States. To conclude, the authors stressed that "supporting teachers' resilience is a promising practice that is critical to educational planning efforts at the national, state, and local levels" (p. 394).

Gu, Q., & Day, C. (2013). Challenges to teacher resilience: Conditions count. *British Educational Research Journal*, 39(1), 22-44. DOI: 10.1080/01411926.2011.623152

This article reported the findings of a part of the VITAE (variations in teachers work, lives and effectiveness) project. In this study, resilience is conceptualised as an unstable construct that may be learned, acquired, or changed over time. Examining data collected from semi-structured face-to-face interviews with 300 primary and secondary teachers at 100 schools in the UK, the study found that teachers' perceptions of resilience are dependent on not only their background and education values, but also the personal, relational and organisational conditions of their work and lives. The resilience of the majority of the participants was reported to be challenged by poor relationships with leaders and colleagues, students' deteriorating behaviour, absence of parents' support, changes of government policies and unexpected events in their personal lives. Apart from these factors, teachers' resilience was also found to be influenced by the socio-economic status of the school as well as the school cultures created by the school leadership. In addition, comparing three groups of teachers, early career teachers (0–3 and 4–7 years of experience), middle career teachers (8–15 and 16–23), and late career teachers (24–30 and 31+) the study revealed that

early and middle career teachers are more likely to sustain their capacity of resilience than late career teachers.

Gu, Q., & Li, Q. (2013). Sustaining resilience in times of change: Stories from Chinese teachers. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(3), 288-303. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2013.809056>

In this article, Gu and Li explored how 568 Chinese primary and secondary teacher sustained their resilience and commitment in the context of a government that has implemented many new top-down education policies. From data collected through a questionnaire and in-depth semi-structured interviews, the authors found that the current definition of resilience as teachers' capacity to bounce back from adversity is inadequate to describe teacher resilience. Rather, teacher resilience should be reconceptualised in a way that takes into account such factors as teachers' sense of vocational commitment, wellbeing, efficacy, and job fulfilment. Other factors that correlated with teacher resilience included school conditions (working hours, workload, pressure and responsibility, and salary) and workplace relationships (e.g. teachers trust in the head, colleagues, students, and parents). The paper concludes by stressing that "the nature and sustainability of resilience in teachers is not innate, but influenced by individual qualities in interaction with contextual influences in which teachers' work and lives are embedded" (p. 300).

Hong, J. Y. (2012). Why do some beginning teachers leave the school, and others stay? Understanding teacher resilience through psychological lenses. *Teachers and Teaching*, 1-24. DOI:10.1080/13540602.2012.696044.

In this article, resilience is defined as "the process of, capacity for or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging circumstances" (p. 419). Examining the factors that enabled some teachers to survive and be more competent while others left, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with seven stayers and seven leavers. While both groups of teachers reported strong intrinsic interest in teaching the subject matter and helping the students to learn, the leavers showed weaker efficacy beliefs in handling misbehaving students and held strong beliefs about their roles as knowledge givers that led to stress and emotional burnout. The stayers, on the other hand, believed the responsibility to learn lay in the students' hands, and set clear emotional boundaries with the students so they did not get burnt out by their problems. The study also reported different amounts of guidance and scaffolding provided to stayers and leavers from school administration that added to the increase or decrease of their resilience. The article concluded with several implications and suggestions, including the provision of systematic opportunities for teachers to reflect on their internal drive; adequate and timely feedback and

mentoring from experienced teachers; provision of professional development with regard to handling disruptive behaviours; provision of professional development that challenges teachers' existing inadequate beliefs; and helping teachers to set emotional boundaries with students.

Jennings, P. A., Snowberg, K. E., Coccia, M. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2011). Improving classroom learning environments by Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE): Results of two pilot studies. *Journal of Classroom Interaction, 46(1), 37-48.*

Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) is a professional development program aiming to reduce stress and enhance teachers' efficacy. The purpose of this article was to examine whether CARE could improve teachers' social-emotional skills and well-being and consequently improve their ability to develop their resilience. The article drew on the findings of two studies; the first one involved 31 educators from a high-poverty urban setting while the second one involved 33 suburban/semi-rural student teachers and 10 mentors. The participants were given questionnaires prior to and after the CARE program to assess changes in well-being, motivational orientation/efficacy, and mindfulness. Moreover, focus group conversations with the participants in study one were conducted while observations and self-reports were additional data collection methods in study two. The results indicated that the teachers in study one demonstrated improvements for pre-post intervention in well-being and found the program enjoyable and beneficial for their teaching. Overall, they were satisfied with the program due to an improvement of their classroom management skills and relationships with students. In particular, urban teachers were able to self-regulate to find balance in work and life, whereas suburban/semi-rural teachers did not report such a high level of satisfaction. Moreover, suburban/semi-rural participants did not find the intervention program very engaging or beneficial. The discrepancies in the findings suggested that CARE may be more effective in supporting teachers working in high-risk settings.

Johnson, B., & Down, B. (2013). Critically re-conceptualising early career teacher resilience. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 34(5), 703-715.*

This article offers a critique of the literature of teacher resilience with regard to reductionism, hyper-individualism and normativity. As to reductionism, Johnson and Down question the examination of resilience in relation to risk and protective factors, arguing that this practice reduces the complexity of the construct into concrete dependent and independent variables that examine aspects of life in isolation. As an alternative, the authors suggest that human subjectivity and human mental life as a whole should be emphasised while resilience should be studied within the broader social, political and economic context of the teaching profession. In regard to hyper-individualism, the authors

critique studies that individualise human problems and their adaptive solutions. Instead, the authors propose that researchers should step back to examine how early career teachers overcome adversity from a socio-cultural /ecological perspective. In relation to normativity, Johnson and Down maintain that the current concept of resilience is heavily regulated by the biased norms of middle class and Western cultural values. The authors then recommend a shift in the conceptualisation of teacher resilience that steers away from such constructs as risk factors, traits, and personalities, to place the teacher in a wider context of institutional and cultural conditions, to link their 'private troubles' to 'public issues'.

Le Cornu, R. (2013). Building early career teacher resilience: The role of relationships. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(4), 1-16.

Being a part of a larger project, the study employed the theoretical framework of relational resilience, in which teacher resilience is characterised as occurring not in the separate individual but in relationships with students, teaching colleagues, peers, family, teachers themselves, professional staff, leaders and parents. As such, resilience is discussed in relation to mutuality, empowerment and the development of courage. Through two semi-structured interviews with 60 beginning teachers and their principals, it was found that positive relationships provided the early career teachers with passion, pleasure, enthusiasm and fuel to sustain their career and consolidate their sense of self-worth, connection and belongingness, whereas negative relationships triggered anxiety, self-doubt, confusion and uncertainty. The article concluded by emphasising the significant role that personal and professional relationships play in promoting beginning teachers' resilience.

Mansfield, C. F., Beltman, S., Price, A., & McConney, A. (2012). "Don't sweat the small stuff:" Understanding teacher resilience at the chalkface. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 28, 357-367.

This study explored graduating and early career teachers' perceptions of teacher resilience. Within the study, resilience was argued to involve "dynamic processes that are the result of interaction over time between a person and the environment and is evidenced by how individuals respond to challenging or adverse situations" (p. 358). A survey included an open ended question about a resilient teacher. The analysis of the content and emerging themes indicated the multi-dimensional nature and complexity of resilience. The participants perceived resilience as a process of development happening over time and as a combination of motivational, professional, emotional and social strengths. From that, a four dimensional framework of teacher resilience was proposed. The data also highlighted the significance of both the individual and the context in cultivating teacher resilience. The article concluded with a number of implications for teacher education, e.g.

emotional development, professional development materials for building teacher resilience, and a multidimensional approach for resilience building.

Morgan, M. (2011). Resilience and recurring adverse events: Testing an assets-based model of beginning teachers' experiences. *The Irish Journal of Psychology*, 32(3-4), 92-104.

This article drew on two empirical studies to examine the factors that foster beginning teachers' resilience. In the first study, the analysis of 80 beginning teachers' responses to an open-ended questionnaire indicated three main assets that facilitated the teachers' resilience: personal strengths (commitment to teaching), social support (support of colleagues and support from outside school) and coping skills. Among these three factors, coping strategies were the most frequently mentioned. The findings of the first study were then used to inform the questionnaire for the second study, which was administered to 408 teachers. The result of the second study supported an assets-based model of resilience. Based on the results of the two studies, the author suggested that the assets model has important implications for understanding interventions that address teachers' capacity to recover from adversity, and that, instead of trying to reduce the level of stress at the workplace, an assets approach may be more beneficial for early career teachers.

Papatraianou, L. H., & Le Cornu, R. (2014). Problematising the role of personal and professional relationships in early career teacher resilience. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(1), 100-116.

Drawing on two qualitative studies, one of which was funded by the Australian Research Council, the article explored how different forms of informal support provided to teachers by their 'personal' and 'professional' relationships contribute to the sustainability of resilience. With data collected from semi-structured interviews, open-ended interviews, an online survey, and the development of a social networking site to gather teachers' reflections on their everyday experiences, the researchers found that teachers' informal significant relationships with colleagues, leaders, support staff, students, parents of students and family and friends appeared to play a significant role in sustaining resilience. Seven types of support afforded by these relationships were reported: 1. Listening support; 2. Emotional support; 3. Tangible assistance; 4. Task appreciation; 5. Reality confirmation; 6. Emotional challenge; and 7. Task challenge. The article concluded with several suggestions for future research and action: the need to explore the role that different types of support play in promoting teacher resilience; gender differences in resilience; the need to promote informal staff interaction; the provision of informal support and learning opportunities for early

career teachers; and the development of elements in teacher education programs to help student teacher develop strong supportive networks.

Pearce, J., & Morrison, C. (2011). Teacher identity and early career resilience: Exploring the links. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 36(1), 48-59.

This article is a part of a project that involves three Australian universities and eight industry partners. In this paper, resilience is defined as a process, not an outcome, which is located within the wider social, cultural, political and relational contexts of the teaching profession. Data collected from interviews with 60 early career teachers showed that beginning teachers' conscious engagement in the construction of professional identities can have a positive impact on the development of resilience. By engaging in professional conversations with teaching and non-teaching colleagues, interactions with peers and others about teaching, exchanges with students and students' parents, the beginning teacher's identity is shaped and strengthened, which in turn enhances his/her ability to cope with negative experiences to become more resilient.

Peters, J., & Pearce, J. (2012). Relationships and early career teacher resilience: A role for school principals. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 18(2), 249-262.

The article reported the findings of a part of a longitudinal study (2008-2012) funded by the Australian Research Council and industry partners. It concerns the role principals play in promoting early career teachers' resilience, which is conceptualised with regard to the broader social, economic and political contexts. Data collected from school leaders and first year teachers from 59 primary and secondary schools across two states in Australia indicated that, with support from the school principals, the beginning teachers found teaching enjoyable and rewarding. On the other hand, the lack of appropriate support was reported to add to beginning teachers' sense of incompetence, as well as create a feeling of isolation and alienation, which eventually resulted in the teachers' decision to leave the school after a short period of working. The findings consolidate the crucial role principals play in fostering early career teachers' resilience and retention.

Price, A., Mansfield, C., & McConney, A. (2012). Considering 'teacher resilience' from critical discourse and labour process theory perspectives. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33(1), 81-95.

In this paper, resilience development among early career teachers is discussed as a measure to address the issue of high teacher attrition rate in Australian schools. The views presented in the paper originated from the professional conversations in which the authors engaged as they reviewed the literature of teacher resilience for the Keeping Cool project (2009). Factors that

constitute teacher resilience, such as altruism, self-efficacy, confidence and coping strategies, were mentioned, while the relationship between teacher identity and resilience was also discussed. Added to this, a significant proportion of the paper was devoted to the analysis of contextual factors such as risk factors and protective factors that affect resilience. Finally, the paper concluded with a discussion of resilience implications for pre-service teacher education. In particular the authors argue “that complex constructs like ‘teacher resilience’ should be carefully considered as they have the potential to shape teacher identity and the nature of teachers’ work, particularly if they are simplistically embedded in teacher professional standards documents and teacher education curriculum” (p. 91).