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HOW TEACHER TRAINEES' DEFINES MORAL RESILIENCE THROUGHOUT THEIR TEACHER EDUCATORS?

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Abstract

The current study aims to present how teacher trainees' defines Moral resilience of their teacher educators while teaching processing. A total of One-hundred-and-twenty-three participants (11 men and 112 women) completed a questionnaire that has been designed especially for the current study. The questionnaire was administered online. Two major themes emerged in trainees' conceptualizations of the notion of moral resilience: The first theme connected to the place of curriculum and programs, which create knowledge during the process learning. The second related to the lecture as a model type while noticing his behaviour and his attitude as a persona to be imitate. Attaining an understanding or a conceptualization of the notion of moral resilience could serve as an instrument for constructing a model of the process of building the lecture's resilience and then integrating the individual within the broader system (the meso level) of the school, as a way of creating (macro-level)community resilience.

Keywords: Moral Resilience; Teacher Trainee; lecture; modelling

1. Introduction

1.1. Resilience and Moral Resilience

In recent years, there has been a rapid development in research on resilience (Herrman et al., 2011); nevertheless, no single comprehensive definition has been found, and attempts to define resilience have relied on other disciplines, such as psychology, sociology and, recently, the field of genetics. Most of the definitions consider the sources of resilience to be associated with the personal, biological, and

environmental aspects or a combination of all or part of these factors, and they rely on associated terms such as mental resilience, communal resilience, and national-social resilience. In a previous article Baratz (2015) described Teacher Trainees' values and believes components as might strength them during learning process. This article adds how teacher Trainees' perceived the role of lecturer empowering the moral strength of their training process and the degree of awareness and the influence of moral resilience in the process of teaching.

The term 'resilience' or 'resilient' is used in everyday language and so it is important to clarify what 'resilience' means in the context of the teaching profession. Early definitions of resilience focused on identifying the particular risk and protective factors that enabled or constrained resilience and particular traits that characterized resilient individuals. Definitions of resilience have included not just recovery from stress to a previous level of health but of sustained growth because of a healthy response to stressful situations (Reich, Zautra, & Hall, 2010). For some learners, this also involves being able to recognise, endure and mediate the tension between inclusion and exclusion. A contextual approach to resilience is helpful in considering the interrelationship between the individual learner and their environment in managing and sustaining resilience (Jordan, 2012). Understanding one's own learning and reactions to learning contexts is essential in developing metacognitive capacity as part of resilience. Finally, in supporting resilience building, meaningful and authentic assessment is necessary to promote adaptive resilience; an important element of this is supporting learners to maximise feedback seeking and using opportunities (Evans, 2015).

According to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2009), mental resilience is not a characteristic with which one is born, but rather a combination of thoughts, behaviours, and activities, that can be learned by the individual. The APA (2009) mention ten strategies for building mental resilience: developing positive relationships, taking a different view of unsolved problems, accepting change as part of life, setting goals and pursuing them, acting with determination, seeking opportunities for self-discovery, believing in one's abilities, viewing things in perspective, maintaining hope, practicing self-preservation, and seeking additional ways to build personal resilience. Taplin (2011) suggested and demonstrated four main components that constitute mental resilience, the most prominent of which is based on organic components, such as beliefs, values, and skills, which are derived from the individual's personality and manifested in the individual's thoughts and behaviours. Ogman (2012) notes that the process of resilience building is an individual matter that combines elements derived from biology, the environment, and learning.

Moral resilience comes to the forefront in situations that question pre-existing and accepted conventions, the beliefs that define one's (or a group's) understanding of what is right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate. Moral resilience is manifested when there is a sense of commitment and the willingness to act according to these convictions. Often, a major component of moral resilience is a feeling of communality and solidarity, which may lead one to assume responsibility and look after those who are under one's care (Ofer, Rix, & Harel, 2008). One way to understand and identify moral resilience is by describing its opposite, i.e. by considering scenarios that juxtapose complex moral issues with weak personal ethics and then analysing the manner in which the leadership handles the situation (Ofer, Rix, & Harel, 2008). According to Yizhar (1990, p. 116), "there is no need to teach values – nor is it possible."

His opinion is based on a perspective, according to which modern society does not inculcate values, but rather nurtures individuals to be able to select the moral principles that they find suitable and worthy, according to the varying situations and roles. In 2013, the Ministry of Education presented a document that discussed the need to educate students in Israel about moral values (Barandes, & Isaschar, 2013). The document encompassed a wide range of questions on this issue, such as, 'are there moral principles which are "absolute"?' 'Do morals depend on a particular educational theory?' The teaching of moral principles is affected by particular worldviews and by the interests of social groups that aim to influence the educational process in general, and the process of educating for values, in particular, such groups include parents, politicians, employers, or ideological sects in society. Ethical or moral conflicts and debates are an integral part of any society. Some suggestions about content and learning experiences in teacher education have been made (Castro, Kelly, & Shih, 2010), but studies of teacher resilience at the pre-service level are limited. While it is acknowledged that the resources teachers use to enable resilience are influenced by life experience and career stage, there seems to be agreement that teacher education may play a critical role in the resilience process (Baratz, 2015). Day and Gu (2014) noted that, efforts to increase the quality of teaching and raise standards of learning and achievement for all pupils must focus on efforts to build, sustain and renew teacher resilience, and that these efforts must take place in initial teacher training. In the context of the teaching profession, resilience may be conceptualised as a capacity, a process and as an outcome.

Resilience involves the capacity of an individual teacher to harness personal and contextual resources to navigate through challenges. The dynamic process whereby characteristics of individual teachers and their personal and professional contexts interact over time as teachers use particular strategies, to enable the outcome of a teacher who experiences professional engagement and growth, commitment, enthusiasm, satisfaction, and wellbeing (Beltman, 2015). Teacher trainees' may develop capacity for resilience through building personal resources (e.g. motivation; social and emotional competence), (Day & Gu, 2014; Johnson et al., 2014). Understanding ways to mobilise contextual resources (e.g. relationships, support networks), and developing a range of adaptive coping strategies (e.g problem solving, time management, maintaining work-life balance) to manage challenges with a view to maximising adaptive, resilient outcomes (e.g. commitment, job satisfaction, wellbeing, engagement).

A key aim of resilience pedagogies must be to support individuals to develop resilience capability for themselves. As part of this, it is essential for learners to explore the nature of their interrelationships with others and their capacity to maintain and enhance connections (Gu, Q., & Day, 2013). Only a few studies have examined teachers' resilience in general or their moral resilience in particular (Mayer, 2014). Most teachers believe that it is important to help students to develop personal attributes such as resilience so they can cope with the challenges and changes of contemporary society, teachers and students caught up with the demands of the curriculum and the stress of exams to be able to attend to the development of personal values. The contribution of the current study is in examining the perceptions of teachers-in-training regarding the concept of moral resilience, in order to raise consciousness of this concept, and to incorporate it in the training process.

2. Methodology

2.1. The Goal of the Study

The goal of the study is to examine teacher trainees' perceptions of the notion of moral resilience of their advisor (lecture), and to understand the ways in which they conceptualise it.

2.2. Population

The reason for selecting teacher trainees' was that on the one hand, its members are the product of an educational system that attempted to form them into who they are, and on the other hand, they chose to become those who would help form the next generation. A total of One-hundred-and-twenty-three participants (11 men and 112 women) completed the questionnaire. The study was conducted in a multicultural college, attended by Israeli students – both Jews and Arabs. Participants were preparing to become teachers in one of the following fields: sciences, special education, or humanities. The number of students was selected to serve as a representative sample of the student body at the college.

2.3. Research Tools

The research tool was a study questionnaire designed especially for the current study. It was distributed online anonymously. The questionnaire included demographic details as well as open-ended questions regarding the essence of the concept of moral resilience. Two experts in the field of education validated the questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of open-ended questions, presented in a systematic order (Spradley, 1979). Questions begin with a broad and general inquiry about moral resilience, followed by questions that relate to local situations and incidents and requests for examples.

2.4. Data Analysis

Analysis of the statements was conducted inductively (Goetz & Le Compt, 1984), the investigator uses an interpretive approach to identify and mark the relevant statements. Analysis of the statements was conducted in three stages: discovery, examination, and conclusion drawing (Weber, 1985). The research relied on the interpretive approach to identify and outline components within the answers that were relevant to moral resilience, and then include grouping the verbal content, in order to identify meaningful units in the text. This interpretive process led to the sorting of meaningful units into grounded categories, which could be used to discern additional meanings in the sections that remained. In the third stage, a new array of meaningful factors was constructed, by establishing the existence of recurring connections and relationships between units of meaning, identified via repetition of statements in the data.

2.5. Ethics in Research

Throughout the research, emphasis on the rights of the participants was meticulously observed, for upholding professional ethical standards and to avoid invading the privacy of the individual participants.

3. Findings

Teacher trainee describes two important situations, which reflect resilience in their lecture teaching process: The first theme relates to the place of curriculum and programs (or subject matter) and the second related to the lecture as a model type as it reflects in his attitude and way of acting while teaching process.

The first theme contains the choices of texts or topics that are present in classroom discourse: whether all these are included in the syllabus or just mentioned during teaching process. In addition, are all those discussed freely, reflecting the freedom of mind? Are chosen texts a wide range of opinion, not just the "main stream": or could it lead critical thinking even if it creates discord awareness or cognitive dissonance mainly due to the social climate or cultural climate. (Like 'Nacba' or peace: what is 'multiculturism', or can I talk about moral acting? etc.).

One of the teachers trainees referred to 'the ability to be consistent and stable when presenting your own set of principles and values… to present them to the students in a clear and concise manner… to select the relevant and proper texts.'

• Moral resilience in the teaching process means that values are absorbed on the way, as part of the learning process, whether indicated by the teacher or by the students with the help of the teacher. Developing moral values creates a sense of confidence and the ability to cope with situations of severe failure. (Do I take a part in a demonstration? Should I help one who is considers being my enemy? (st. 36)

• Moral resilience is a strong foundation related to the array of values that are accepted as social norms, positive values, which serve to organize, educate, and help us become good people or become a good citizenship. In the education process, moral resilience can be expressed either overtly or covertly through the contents of the activities.(st. 9)

• When you need to touch worldviews or beliefs, which may affect the emotional world, teacher trainee should be with **moral courage and with moral resilience** in order to define it as an act that involves or create a moral education. (st. 87)

• This is one of the most significant components of the educational process. The development and nurturing of moral resilience creates an intelligent thinking, and containing society. The individuals who constitute this society feel confident about their worldviews. Educating for moral resilience has the power to prevent feelings of cultural inferiority. It empowers the individual's world of values and makes it possible to conduct interpersonal discussions on issues of principle, while feeling safe even if they create a cognitive dissonance (st. 42).

Some of the statements referred to the need to practice moral involvement with overt tools, such as examining the social milieu, integrating action plans into the process, engaging in dialogic teaching and learning, exposing and reflecting on processes, imparting knowledge relevant to the 21st century, and teaching about political ideologies and political theories and actions. Some examples follow.

The second theme referred to the practice of principles related to social objectives, i.e., internalizing core values while assessing the existing situation in an attempt to create an ideal reality. In terms of the range of possible functions for which moral resilience is necessary, respondents spoke of educating to develop an individual identity, a collective identity, resilience in facing moral courage, and

the ability to engage in political discourse. According to participants' statements, the practice of principles related to a social process can take place using functional tools, which may be overt or covert (Cuban, 1992). Teachers modeling being exposed through the empowerment process undertaken by teachers towards trainee teacher, ways of handling the crisis, optimism is broadcast, the psychological security of having the ability to set limits and establish values.

- Moral resilience is to develop and to strengthen a system that enables students to maintain reality life difficulties. That is, it provides ways to cope with situations characterized by a dissonance between what actually happens in reality, be it on the individual or on a broader social level, and the values in which we believe. The teacher should serve as a role model, emphasizing the importance of 'being there' and taking part in the students' moral development. The teacher's role is thus to teach students to cope with moral dilemmas and especially to educate toward a perception that 'if a link in the chain breaks, the chain is not destroyed, but can continue to function'. (st. 22, 90)

- ' [Moral resilience is] adhering —at any cost— to the moral principles one considers important, without veering from them in either deeds or standards, under any condition'. Another interviewee, stated 'Moral resilience means coping with situations in education in which one chooses not to give in or to cut corners in issues related to the moral principles and values which one upholds, even if the educational system demands otherwise…'. (st. 51)

- It is important to educate students to be able to acquire for themselves a set of values that is based on beliefs and social consciousness. Students' personal growth is enabled within a framework in which the students are aware of their own moral values…, it should be the lecturer who demonstrated complex behaviors such as patience, empathy, and sometimes a little optimism can help a student who feels weakened. (st. 20)

- 'Obviously, it's very important to demonstrate to students the kind of values that need to be followed. Students should have a toolbox of values as well as an image and a model to follow'. Another respondent stated, 'it is up to us --I mean the teachers-- to educate a generation with values, [to raise people who] can act and think for the community and the public'. (st, 110)

The ability to withstand crisis – Newman (2002) noted that among the complex array of factors that help establish mental resilience in adolescents, teachers play an important role. Teacher trainees tended to conflate mental resilience and morals. The weakness of this finding lies in the fact that the teacher trainees did not specify what they thought these values should address.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In the discussion of the notion of moral resilience, the concept was clearly viewed as embedded in a comprehensive framework, within which the individual is seen as part of a multifaceted society, and the process of establishing resilience is intended to empower the individual. The framework ensures that trainees' actions correspond to clearly defined codes, which include the development of an individual and a group identity, as well as the development of a personal worldview. The teacher trainees expressed the belief that only when they are able to exert their personal influences on the framework will they feels that they can afford to be morally resilient.

(Cefai & Cavioni, 2014, p. 144) affirms the need for resilience to be a part of teacher education, yet there are few examples of how this may occur. Participants' responses provide an indication of the necessary qualities that their teacher must have to be morally resilient. Such one must act consistently, demonstrate stability, be a capable decision maker, adhere to a comprehensive set of morals and values, and occasionally exhibit moral courage. They also noted that the environment plays an important role, and that teachers should be able to function within the regular framework of activities and factors that are typically involved in the educational endeavour. In Israel, teachers are provided with clear ethical guidelines; nonetheless, in cases in which certain moral behaviours constitute a clear risk (Baratz & Reingold, 2013) , some teachers might not dare to adhere to their principles and values if they clash with those dictated by the social or the organizational environment. The current political circumstances and present social climate in Israel influence the building of teacher training programs and the view of the lecturers which in turn have great significance in the process of empowering moral strength by their students .Dedicating an entire course or several segments of courses, such as philosophy of education or ethical education, to the issue of moral courage and moral resilience can help become more aware of the experiences

Teachers' resilience is motivated by their educational goals and their moral values, although these do erode in the course of the individual teacher's interface with typical workaday procedures (Edwards, 2011). In Israel, the Ministry of Education's Director General Code of By-Laws issues the guidelines describing teachers' professional standards periodically. In these publications, the gap between the teacher's ability to act with moral courage and to still keep the regulation is derived from moral resilience. As noted, resilience is affected by the teachers' personal biography, and by life and work circumstances. The moral resilience of a school team can be attributed to a strong cultural-organisational core. The framework defines the mutual expectations and the behavioural patterns that are used in various situations, according to which particular events are perceived as significant. This always what guides decision-making (Gu & Day, 2013). The Australian National Curriculum requires teachers to teach Personal and Social Capabilities (ACARA, 2012) such as self-awareness, self-management social awareness, contributing to civil society, advocacy for and service to others, understanding relationships and social management, decision making, conflict resolution and negotiation, building and maintaining relationships, leadership. Such skills are also widely acknowledged in the broader resilience literature (Beltman et al., 2011). Teachers are expected to teach these capabilities both in classroom lessons and in daily interactions with students, colleagues and members of the broader community, yet such capabilities are not specifically addressed in the standards for teacher education programs. Undoubtedly, by developing personal moral resilience, teachers-in-training will have the ability later on in their careers to exert their personal influence on the educational endeavour. Where moral culture and moral discourse exist and integrated into informal work routines, such discourse can lead to the development of shared beliefs and perceptions.

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