

Teachers with a Capital ‘T’ in Kyrgyzstan: moral purpose, self-efficacy and resilience

Nurbek Teleshaliyev

Wolfson College, University of Cambridge

A paper presented within the symposium:

Changing teacher professionalism through support for teacher leadership in Europe and beyond

at

ECER 2014

Porto, 2nd-5th September 2014

Abstract

This paper draws from an ongoing doctoral study that is based on the analysis of data from in-depth interviews with teachers and close observation of their work. The paper explores how moral purpose, self-efficacy and resilience contribute to helping experienced and effective teachers in Kyrgyzstan remain committed and resilient. The paper illustrates how teacher identity is formed over the years and explores how teachers respond positively to adverse conditions, particularly during the post-Soviet period in which teaching has become so unpopular. The paper suggests that the self-efficacy and resilience of teachers, many of whom are facing retirement, is driven by moral purpose. The experience of these teachers require attention if the teaching is to be sustained as a profession by the current and future generations of teachers in Kyrgyzstan.

Note: I acknowledge, with appreciation, financial support for my PhD from Wolfson College, the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge and the Open Society Foundations.

For correspondence, email: nt323@cam.ac.uk.

The current economic and social hardships for teachers in Kyrgyzstan deepened with the collapse of the USSR. Teachers, in particular, suffered a loss of social status (Silova, 2009). The wages of teachers, despite the long-awaited increment awarded in 2011, remain uncompetitive with those in the private sector, consequently many teaching graduates either do not become teachers or dropped out after two or three years (UNICEF, 2011). Many teachers resorted to supplementing their income by other means such as farming and small trade (Niyozov & Shamatov, 2006; Silova, 2009). Schools also lost the support they had previously received for building maintenance, textbook renewal, and provision of learning materials. Thus, the essential conditions for their work became extremely challenging and many teachers were forced to leave the profession. This has resulted in a continuing imbalance between the number of young teachers with less than five years of experience and those with more than 15 years of experience: 18 to 50 per cent in 2009 and 20 to 53 per cent in 2011 (NSC, 2011). Thus, teachers with more experience comprise the majority in Kyrgyzstan; they are a crucial resource for strengthening the profession.

I employ a frequently-used metaphor in Kyrgyzstan for the title of this paper and throughout – *uchitelya s bolshoi bukvy* (teachers with a capital ‘T’) to characterise those *Teachers* who are both considered highly by their colleagues and respected by pupils and parents for demonstrating high commitment to the profession. Teachers with a capital ‘T’, or *Teachers* as I refer to them in this paper, are exemplary in many ways. My interest is how their moral purpose, self-efficacy and resilience set benchmarks for quality teaching. I hope to understand how these attributes may be harnessed for the next generation of teachers.

My definition of experience includes Teachers who have been committed to teaching for 20 years, who demonstrate subject expertise and who are esteemed by colleagues and parents. The two decade threshold is especially important because these Teachers are likely to have trained as teachers in the USSR. I also define them as effective teachers, but I do so differently from the mainstream research on school effectiveness and teaching effectiveness (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000), which subordinates effectiveness to organisational productivity and input-output systems (Scheerens & Creemers, 1989). My research does not consider Teachers as effective through the prism of technocratic, statistical correlations and formal classroom organisation (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000); it recognises them as human beings in complex social interactions (Büeler, 1998 cited in Wrigley, 2003). Teachers are able to demonstrate a positive attitude, they adopt and sustain a fresh and innovative response to their teaching despite the adversities of the education system; they aspire for greater roles and aim for self-improvement. These characteristics are especially valuable in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan. Teachers who were trained in the USSR have survived severe crisis and seen major changes in the education system since the USSR collapsed in 1991; they have developed mechanisms for responding to those challenges. Teachers had to endure the diminished status of teaching as a profession, constant destabilising and ineffective reforms, and, of course, the declining

morale of their peers. Teachers need to demonstrate every day, how these challenges can be overcome.

From Teachers, we can learn about the ways in which they develop self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), resilience (Luthar *et al.*, 2000), and moral purpose (Fullan, 1993). These are attributes that drive commitment and professionalism.

Self-efficacy, resilience, and moral purpose

Three interrelated concepts provide guidance for exploring the importance of attributes of Teachers who have remained committed after 20 years in the profession: *self-efficacy*, *resilience* and *moral purpose*.

Self-efficacy involves the belief about whether one can accomplish an action (Bandura, 1997). Individuals who believe in their capacity to resolve problems stay efficient in their thinking during challenging situations by visualising options for success; this provides positive guidance for functioning (Bandura, 1989). Teacher self-efficacy is the result of complex cognitive processing and reflection on information received from a range of sources.

Self-efficacy is related to the notion of resilience: people with a high sense of self-efficacy have strong resilience. However, there is an important difference: self-efficacy relates to an individual's belief that they will succeed in the actions they undertake; resilience relates to an individual's ability to prevail in adverse conditions (Luthar *et al.*, 2000; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Tait, 2008). Resilience is also connected with self-regulation. In addition, international studies have found that resilience is an essential attribute for addressing everyday professional issues in teaching: meeting the needs of challenging pupils; balancing externally imposed standards with the needs of pupils; responding to curriculum requirements; maintaining physical, psychological and emotional well-being; and collaborating with colleagues (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Day & Gu, 2010). What is important for my research in this definition of resilience is the idea of positive adaptation to a challenging environment. This construct is particularly pertinent for teachers in Kyrgyzstan. Resilience is understood to be a dynamic *social construct* (Luthar *et al.*, 2000), which is accompanied by the interaction between three factors: personal, professional and situated. These factors are important in understanding teacher resilience: *the personal* (relating to the personal lives of teachers); *the situated* (relating to their school lives); and *the professional* (relating to their values, beliefs and the interaction between these and wider policy agendas) (Gu & Day, 2007; Day & Gu, 2010). Among the factors that teachers found to be important for resilience was 'inner vocational drive' or the strong sense of vocation that provides teachers with the determination to turn negative experiences in teaching into positive lessons

that make a difference to the lives of pupils (Day & Gu, 2010). Self-belief recalls Bandura's self-efficacy (1989) and is fundamental to the idea of moral purpose, illustrating the interconnectedness of these ideas with the notion of resilience.

Moral purpose is equally important for teachers (Hoyle & McCormick, 1976; Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996). Moral purpose is at the centre of teaching, providing meaning, guidance for commitment and well-being; it is also important for organisational change (Fullan, 1993).

Evidence shows that a strong sense of vocation sets clear goals and mission, and guides teachers throughout their teaching careers, including times when they need to be persistent and motivated (Gu & Day, 2007). Teachers who have a sense of vocation are driven by moral purpose to bring changes to the lives of their pupils (Day & Gu, 2010). Moral purpose plays a role in helping teachers not only become teachers but also to be devoted teachers (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Day & Gu, 2010). Huberman found the notion of a sense of vocation to be predictive: committed Swiss teachers who searched for innovation in their classrooms at earlier stages of their careers were more likely to be efficient later in their careers (Huberman, 1989). The degree of commitment to an action becomes greater when the decision about the action is made intentionally and voluntarily, and when the action and its consequences are more difficult to reverse (Schlenker *et al.*, 2009).

Thus, self-efficacy, resilience and moral purpose all contribute to the effectiveness of teachers. These factors are related to the personal and professional lives of a teacher and are interwoven in the contexts in which teachers find themselves. This means that it is not possible to identify the exact causes of resilience. My research, therefore, looks at Teachers' lives and work through the wide range of factors that influence their actions. The concepts of self-efficacy, moral purpose and resilience are central in this observation.

Methodology

I employ case study methodology in order to answer my research question 'What factors contribute to Teachers in Kyrgyzstan remaining committed and effective?' I do so because the defining characteristic of a case study is the exploration of a phenomenon within its context (Yin, 2009). The factors that affect the professional and personal lives of Teachers are interwoven with the context in which teachers work and live and, therefore, need to be understood in context. Yet the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context in my research are not readily discernible (Yin, 1994). The case study is a process of 'setting' the boundaries that helps to explore the phenomenon as a 'complex social unit' (Merriam, 1998).

My research involves eight individual cases of Teachers in four different schools, with two Teachers per each school. Two Teachers per school were selected according to set criteria, using purposeful sampling. Teachers were anonymously referred by their colleagues and school leaders those they considered to be the most respected, well-recognised experienced and effective teachers. The four schools are typical state-owned secondary schools in Kyrgyzstan in terms of area, language of instruction and size.

The data collection instruments include: (1) in-depth semi-structured interviews with eight Teachers in four schools; (2) focus groups with a group of teachers in four schools; (3) observations of classes of eight Teachers and meetings with other teachers that involved eight Teachers; (4) interviews with four school administrators; and (5) document analysis of eight Teachers, such as their portfolios. The data collection process took place in the period between November 2013 and June 2014.

Main research findings

The findings suggest that the concepts of self-efficacy, resilience and moral purpose are interrelated and mutually reinforcing; they also appear to be to some degree sequential. For the purpose of structuring this paper I, thus, consider them sequentially. I start with the moral purpose that attracts Teachers to the profession and makes sense of their commitment as Teachers. Moral purpose seems to be related to the formation of self-efficacy - Teachers' belief that they can succeed in teaching. Teachers' self-efficacy leads to their trusting their own judgement, which is related to a number of resilience factors; those factors that emerge in the interaction of the professional and personal lives of teachers.

Moral purpose

The initial call to teach is nurtured by several events in Teachers' lives. It starts with admiring their own teachers when they were pupils. Those teachers served as a role model for them. These role models demonstrated exemplary behaviour and helped them to think about their purpose in life.

I liked the way my primary school teacher way of communicating with children - she never shouted or raised her voice at anyone. I liked to copy her. Later, by looking at her, I wanted to give my pupils exactly what she gave me many years ago. (Marina, Manas School)

The initial will to commit to the teaching vocation was accompanied by at least two later events in personal lives - the positive influence of relatives and parents in favour of choosing the teaching profession, and the personal deliberate choice to become a teacher. Some Teachers had parents who were teachers and so became familiar with the environment of

teaching. Other parents encouraged their children to develop a humane and meaningful purpose for life.

My parents were teachers... My father used to say that teaching is not just a profession; it is all about the upbringing of and providing knowledge to a human being. (Aigul, Manas School)

What also seemed important was that Teachers had a very positive experience during their pre-service training at universities, which included courses such as pedagogy and psychology. Pedagogical practice in schools provided them with the first taste of their own teaching and contact with pupils. The first teaching experience remained a crucial moment in the formation of moral purpose. That moment brought a sense of conviction that they could and should teach and, thus, devote themselves to the teaching.

I was at pedagogical practice and conducted lessons for the first time. I received a positive feedback. At that time I realised that I could work with a class of children. I decided to continue teaching in school and I thought it was my occupation. (Klavdiya, Semetey school)

I liked pedagogical practice in university which started in my second year and lasted through to the 5th year of my studies. I practised as a teacher for one or two months per year. It was important to get feedback from real teachers and they all provided positive feedback about my teaching. As a result, I thought that I could do it and I believed in myself. (Chinara, Seitek school)

For Teachers, the moral purpose of teaching is about sharing knowledge with other teachers and passing it on to pupils. This is set as a life-long value, which provides meaning in their lives. The ultimate value for teachers here is to see their pupils learning. It is noticeable in the classrooms of Teachers that they seemed happy, engaged, interested and enthusiastic about their pupils' learning.

My first teacher, my father, my mentor taught me to share what I learnt with people. It turned into my life value. (Marina, Manas school)

My main goal is to share my knowledge with pupils by finding new methods of teaching. I am trying to be of use to other people. (Klavdiya, Semetey school)

Teachers strongly oppose unethical behaviour towards their pupils by other teachers, e.g. receiving expensive gifts from pupils and their parents, or not conducting a lesson. Such unethical behaviour undermines the moral principles of Teachers and work discipline among other teachers, i.e. it is opposite to what Teachers believe in. From the observations and focus groups, Teachers were characterised as teachers with high moral standards, firm principles and outstanding work discipline.

Teachers in our school do not follow labour discipline. They do not conduct their lessons but chat with each other in the canteen. Some conduct lessons properly because of inspection, not because of the children they are supposed to teach like this regularly. (Marina, Manas school)

There are teachers who bring up pupils in a negative way, e.g. they speak in their lessons to children about making money as a priority in their lives and that all teachers take bribes. I was offended when I heard that. (Larisa, Kanykey school)

Teachers think positively about the teaching at various stages of their lives. It seems that there is no single answer in defining a source of positive thinking - an optimist personality, a supportive environment or having a strong moral purpose. However, Teachers express their positive thinking (also see Table 1) because they have a clear meaning in their lives; this is guided by a strong moral purpose and professional fulfilment. The belief that pupils' lives can be changed through knowledge makes Teachers believe in what they do and think positively about their work no matter what the conditions are.

I like everything in teaching from my pedagogy practice at university: to prepare for classes, to study materials and think about. I like to conduct lessons, I like when pupils listen to you and ask questions, i.e. when I see that I bring some good for them. (Larisa, Kanykey school)

I am a happy person because of my profession. When I see pupils in a classroom I forget about everything. I forget about problems, adversities and my diseases. (Klavdiya, Semetey school)

Marina's story

When Marina was a school principal 15 years ago, some teachers in her school complained about her strict behaviour and about discipline and ethics in school. She decided to leave the post voluntarily because she was tired of intrigues behind her back and her son needed special care because he suffered from asthma. When she resigned, a teacher who she hired became a school principal and wanted her to leave. Marina found strengths within herself to stay in the school and be an ordinary Teacher.

I perhaps failed as a manager, but not as a Teacher. Those who complained about me behind my back did not kill faith in myself as a Teacher. They showed me the other way for my development. If I continued to be a school principal, I would not realise myself as a Teacher. Actually, I never lost belief in myself as a teacher. I am an optimist in life. Like in Tolstoy's novels, I fell and got up, fell again and got up again. It happens to me all the time. I still make mistakes and get up...I need to have a strong will to do it. (Marina)

For some Teachers understanding moral purpose was not an easy process. It took time and effort to ‘own the idea’ of serving the needs of pupils.

In the beginning of my career I focused on my subject, I wanted compliments about my work, I wanted to stand out among my colleagues etc. Now I feel proud of my ability to understand my pupils and the way they learn. I think it comes with time. (Chinara, Seitek School).

Self-efficacy

Teachers regard pupils holistically, with all the attendant social and personal problems. Teachers believe in helping their pupils to overcome or address their personal problems because these have an impact on pupil’s learning and well-being. Not all teachers in Kyrgyzstan would share the idea of helping their pupils to deal with social problems; in fact, more and more teachers are unwilling to perform duties as class tutor, i.e. to be responsible for upbringing¹. Teachers realise how difficult is to address the social problems of their pupils, but they have self-efficacy belief that they can help their pupils to improve their lives and encourage them to learn.

There is one female pupil in my class, whose father drinks and does not work and mother sits at home with a little baby. They live in need and one can see by the way this pupil dresses. I asked parents’ committee for help. Parents collected money and helped her. That pupil was so happy and thanked everyone. (Ainura, Semetey School)

Teachers have the self-efficacy belief that they can succeed in making every pupil learn better by addressing the learning needs of each pupil. Teachers try to adjust their learning modes to encourage every child learn.

Many teachers think that a pupil who falls behind other pupils will not succeed. I cannot think like that. I make efforts to allow a pupil to catch up with other pupils. I differentiate pupils by their level of knowledge and try to help them accordingly and to become better. I allocate much more time to those who fall behind other pupils. I help an average pupil to reach a level of an A-pupil, and a pupil who falls behind to reach an average level. Knowledge has to be accessible to all pupils. This is my main goal. (Gulnur, Seitek School)

Teachers develop mutually respectful relationships with their pupils. Such relationships are rare practice in traditional post-Soviet teaching practice. However, Teachers have the self-efficacy belief that a friendly attitude develops a better learning environment for pupils and results in building trust between Teachers and pupils.

¹ In the soviet system, teachers were traditionally responsible for both *obrazovaniye*, teaching, as well as *vospitaniye*, which is best translated as upbringing.

I do not require my pupils to sit still, quietly. I want them to feel free. I do not want them to be shy in front of me like with other teachers. As a result, pupils tell me their wishes and what happens at their homes. I treat them as equal partners. They treat me the same way. It all has a good meaning. Many teachers are surprised when my pupils sit quietly and study without me in the classroom. The main thing for me is to trust my pupils and in return they trust me. (Ainura, Semetey School)

Teachers have the self-efficacy belief that they have teaching expertise that can be shared with other teachers, even though they complain of a lack of time for sharing and learning between teachers. This self-efficacy belief demonstrates the altruism of Teachers towards other teachers, i.e. they can help to improve the pedagogy of other teachers and cultivate a professional learning community.

Teachers approached me voluntarily to learn from me after I learned critical thinking methodology and started to use it since 2000. I think I influenced many teachers back then. Now they know it all. I used to conduct training for our teachers every second week, to conduct open lessons for other teachers. (Ainura, Semetey school)

Teachers have the self-efficacy belief that they are in a better position to find the best teaching strategy for their pupils by using their professional judgement skill. With a lack of guidelines to implement newly introduced top-down policies, Teachers develop their own strategies to deal with these policies.

The new curriculum imposes time constraints. So, each lesson pupils have to learn a new theme without having enough time to solve tasks. So I try to adjust my teaching mode to this curriculum as much as I can, e.g. by spending less time on certain themes and allocating more time for more difficult themes. (Larisa, Kanykey School)

Teachers derive satisfaction from their pupils' achievements. Teachers' self-efficacy belief is about contributing to the achievements of their pupils. Thus, a pupil's success is considered to be their own success.

The happiest moments for me are when my pupils come prepared. My eyes get wet when I see my pupils getting only 'A' and 'B' marks. Some teachers associate their happy moments with getting an award or a certificate of otlichnik obrazovaniya², but I totally disagree with them. (Ainura, Semetey School)

Parents' recognition of Teachers' work boosts the self-efficacy belief of Teachers that they are able to make a difference to their pupils' lives. This social recognition is essential for Teachers to continue especially in adverse conditions. It naturally lifts their spirits up by appreciating their work and empowers Teachers in all directions.

² An award for an educator for the best practices in teaching and upbringing. A merit of distinction in teaching.

Parents support me as a teacher. If I recruit a class they try to bring their child only to my class. Psychologically, it is a very big support for me. (Klavdiya, Semetey School)

Resilience factors

The contextual factors are quite important to understand because they are related to the personal and professional lives of teachers and what influences their decisions about teaching. If Teachers are committed and will demonstrate self-efficacy, what will make them resilient?

Professional factors

Having a strong sense of vocation enabled Teachers stay in the profession during difficult times in their lives. Some Teachers realised that they could not do anything other than teaching and they therefore devoted their lives to teaching. They only realised that they remained passionate about teaching when they had to make difficult decisions about the future.

I never had a thought to leave the teaching profession, except the moments when I had serious health issues. When I got ill I thought I had to stop teaching and sit at home but I could not bear that idea. I thought about my class and children and came back to teach. (Ainura, Semetey school)

Some Teachers remained resilient because of their love for their subject. For these Teachers their favourite subject serves as something valuable that they can share with pupils. It is a point where a Teacher and a pupil meet.

I particularly like teaching mathematics in school. I think a teacher should be a master of his (her) own subject, and should know more than the curriculum requirements, i.e. should understand and love a subject. (Larisa, Kanykey School)

The expertise of Teachers gives them strong opinions about matters of pedagogy. It enables them to make the right decisions about their practice in top-down reforms. Their decisions about practice build on their pupils' learning needs. Such actions also set benchmarks for resilient behaviour for other teachers.

The majority of our teachers think that they need to exactly follow criteria developed for lesson planning. I refused to use those criteria because I understand that it limits pupils learning. I decide what works or what does not work for me. I also check whether it is appropriate for my pupils, i.e. whether it limits their creativity. (Ainura, Semetey School)

Personal factors

In the personal lives of Teachers, family support means a lot. Most of the Teachers interviews referred to the tremendous support provided by family members. Nevertheless, for female Teachers, in particular, it is a constant challenge of keeping a harmonious balance between teaching and the domestic responsibilities in traditional Kyrgyzstan society, where women stereotypically have to take responsibility for housekeeping. In families where female Teachers receive less support, Teachers still nevertheless demonstrate resilience.

My husband is against my working in school because he does not have higher education and works as a driver. When the food is not ready and he is alone at home he is not happy. My daughter helps to prepare food for my husband. My children help me and understand me. We found a common language with him when our children grew up. But before, when the children were young, I worked only one shift and came back home earlier. (Ainura, Semetey School)

All my life I do what I like, i.e. teaching, thanks to my family. If I did not have my husband next to me, like many female teachers do, I simply would not survive with my current wage. (Larisa, Kanykey School)

Teachers, who are retired but still teach, display a moral obligation to their pupils and worry about their further success. Teachers also feel socially unprotected and vulnerable; this is also one of the reasons why some of them still teach. However, it still requires resilience to remain in school, maintain high work standards and achieve the admiration of other teachers.

Sometimes I am so tired and I feel like I have no strengths left. But I have to work because I am a class tutor for my 7th graders and they have two more years to go. I cannot drop them right now because who would help them? Of course, I also need to think how to earn money for myself. I would not be frank with you, if I say that I work only because I like teaching. (Marina, Manas school)

The self-confidence of some Teachers helped them to learn from more experienced teachers at the beginning of their teaching career, but also be aware of their own personal strengths. It helped them later to be self-sufficient and self-assured about their professional growth.

I felt that more experienced teachers knew much more than I did. However, I was always self-confident in my abilities to learn. (Larisa, Kanykey school)

Situated factors

The recognition of Teachers' work by community members provides crucial support for Teachers, helping them to prevail in adverse conditions. These affirming moments in their lives make them stronger and more positive about their work. Teachers feel appreciated, positive and happy about their work and status in the local community, especially when the social status of a teacher in the country remains low.

Many people remember that I taught their children. That is why I am an absolutely happy person. When I walk in the streets of our village everybody greets me and

knows me because they respect me because I am a teacher. My achievement is people's recognition. (Marina, Manas school)

Teachers recognised the importance of mentoring during their years as novice teachers. Mentoring and collaboration with other teachers provided a basis for resilience throughout their careers. As evidence, Teachers recall their memories of being novice teachers and being given help in contemporary situations with novice teachers in their schools, although many are left without any guidance.

At the later stages in their work, Teachers are considered to be experts in their subjects, i.e. they share their knowledge and skills with other teachers. This makes them feel accomplished and important to other teachers and well-positioned in school. Their portfolios also show that Teachers are 'authors', i.e. develop their own materials, and are highly respected by other teachers. It provides a boost for resilient Teachers when their experience is recognised by other colleagues.

At a certain stage of becoming a teacher there must be a person who can help you in order not to get lost. I had a mentor who directed me when I was lost. Lately, I saw a novice teacher crying and I asked her what happened. She told me that no-one helped her to learn and she was going to quit. I talked to her and taught her few things. She comes to me for advice on a regular basis. She shares her success stories with me now. (Marina, Manas School)

Some experienced teachers come to me and learn from my experience. I share all I can with them with a great pleasure. (Klavdiya, Semetey School)

The creation of a supportive environment by the school leadership was recognised frequently by Teachers. Teachers think that school leaders must play a crucial role in providing an enabling environment for the teachers' learning community. Teachers expect school leaders to do more to support teachers (also see Table 2).

I do not understand why our school leadership is more interested in maintaining the classrooms than pedagogy. Education and upbringing should be a priority and maintenance comes second. (Aigul, Manas school)

School leaders do not have time to provide methodological help for teachers. They want to make sure that all papers are in order if someone comes to inspect. They work for inspections and tasks from the top.... (Oleg, Kanykey school)

Aigul's story

Lately Aigul of Manas school received a presidential award and otlichnik obrazovaniya. She applied for the award on a competitive basis and was selected by the Ministry of Education as a winner on a provincial level. But before going to get the award, she was called by the district department of education and her school principal to be accused of nepotism, as if she

got the award because of some connections. She was seriously insulted. Also, a school principal told all teachers in the school not to congratulate her. Fortunately, teachers were very proud of her and congratulated her.

If school leaders do not assess properly a teacher's work, a teacher is less likely to have an incentive. Elder teachers have experience and are more self-sufficient, but younger and novice teachers need encouragement from school leaders when they, for instance, conduct open lessons for other teachers or organise school events. (Aigul)

Teachers seek for support from school leaders for pedagogy. This support plays a vital role in Teachers' resilience. Teachers need to have like-minded people around them, who may help to understand their confusion and share their professional thoughts. Some people consider simple communication with other people as an important impetus for staying effective.

Teachers also lack a professional physical space in school to gather, communicate, relax and feel they belong to the school.

We have kept discussing in our school for 10 years that we need a room of emotional relief, where teachers may relax and talk to each other. Teachers communicate rarely with each other these days. After their lessons finish all teachers run home. (Larisa, Kanykey School)

Teachers recognise that individualisation of teaching is a real threat to professional learning community in school. As a result, there is less support for individual teachers, which diminishes the morale of teachers.

Every teacher in our school works on her own. I do not see productive mutual professional exchange among teaching staff. We share our professional ideas rarely. We mostly talk about academic standing of pupils at our pedagogical gatherings. (Klavdiya, Semetey School)

Discussion

The self-efficacy and resilience of Teachers is built around their moral purpose. The deliberate choice of to teach that was more than 20 years earlier provides remains an uncompromising meaning and value for a lifetime. No matter how adverse conditions are for Teachers, they still think positively about their failures and successes, and they find strengths to serve the needs of their pupils. It is evident that Teachers are well-respected and recognised by their colleagues, for that reason their experience and opinions are an important inspiration for helping other teachers to stay committed and resilient.

The evidence of these interviews suggests that a series of factors influence a Teachers' self-efficacy and resilience.

- It is important to recognise Teachers in the context of their personal lives and the role their family members play to help them show resilience and commitment. A balance between their personal and professional lives provides harmony, and so makes Teachers feel happy and accomplished.
- Quality pre-service teacher training should be more extensive and pragmatic to enable future teachers to feel satisfied with their choice of profession. It is essential that teachers trial teaching before becoming teachers.
- Novice teachers should be closely mentored to ensure higher rates of teacher retention. Otherwise, in current adverse conditions the retention rate for novice teachers risks declining even further.
- Teachers should feel appreciated for their expertise and professional achievements as widely as possible in the community. It makes them understand that they are valued by society and that their lives are not meaningless.
- High ethical standards and work discipline should be carefully monitored by school leadership and professional learning community
- Teachers with a capital 'T' should be provided with more opportunity to lead and train other teachers to ensure that their expertise is properly used and their legacy of moral purpose is preserved. This experience can be applied more strategically for teacher retention and the recruitment of novice teachers.
- Teachers recognise the vitality in creating and maintaining a supportive school environment. Teachers expect support from school leaders to unite all teachers in school and address the problems of pedagogy and upbringing. It is important that issues of individualisation are addressed and collaboration between teachers is encouraged. Teachers ask for supportive school environment in their schools to be able to address the needs of their pupils.

Finally, it is essential that research on the resilience, self-efficacy and moral purpose of Teachers continues as there are many things that are undiscovered about the personal and professional lives of teachers.

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